

Editorial

Obituary – Dr Yves Frenot (1958–2022)



Yves Frenot will be greatly missed by his friends and colleagues around the world. His long and impressive career has left a tangible legacy in Antarctic and sub-Antarctic research, collaboration and policy.

Yves participated in 14 expeditions to the French sub-Antarctic islands (Crozet, Kerguelen and Amsterdam islands) between 1982 and 2004, including a winter on Crozet Island, as well as expeditions to Spitsbergen and Heard Island. He also voyaged to Dumont d'Urville station three times in his role as Director of Institut Polaire Français Paul-Emile Victor (IPEV). In 2018, on board the maiden return voyage of the new *L'Astrolabe*, Yves was awarded the French Order of Merit.

Yves was a prolific publisher on many aspects of the sub-Antarctic, with over 65 scientific publications and numerous reports, conference presentations and popular science communications covering topics such as terrestrial biodiversity (plants, animals, soils, ecophysiology), the impacts of climate change, primary succession after glacial retreat and the dynamics of invasive species.

From 1989 to 2003, Yves managed teams at both the national and international level. At the EcoBio department (UMR (Unité Mixte de Recherche) CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) 6553, Rennes), Yves was the deputy director of the 'Station Biologique de Paimpont' from 1994 to 2002, and he also led the research group 'Impact of climate change' (UMR EcoBio). In the mid-1990s, he led the 'Biosol' research project, which was supported by the French Polar IPEV and focused on the study of soils and terrestrial fauna and flora. Yves was passionate about researching and protecting biodiversity in extreme environments. His collaboration with Thierry Micol, Pierre Jouventin and Véronique Sarrano produced a ground-breaking synthesis of research that led to protection (Nature Reserve Terres Australes Françaises) for the French Southern Territories (Kerguelen, Crozet, Saint Paul and Amsterdam islands).

In 2003, Yves joined the French Polar IPEV (Plouzané, France), where he was deputy director in charge of managing scientific programmes until 2010, after which he was appointed Director for two consecutive terms until 2018. During that period, Yves had a growing influence on the development and expansion of research activities in the polar regions and was responsible for research infrastructure, including the Franco-German research station AWIPEV (the merger of the German Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research (AWI) and the French Polar IPEV) in Spitsbergen, the Antarctic station Dumont d'Urville in Terre Adélie and the Franco-Italian station Concordia on the Antarctic plateau. He also played an important role in many national and international committees, including membership of the scientific committee of the Centre d'Etudes Nordiques (CEN), Laval University (Québec, Canada), from 2008 to 2020, being the French representative at the annual meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings (ATCM; vice chairman 2005–2009 and then chairman 2010–2014 of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP)), vice chairman of the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programmes (COMNAP), and member of the executive board of the European Polar Board (EU-PolarNet) until 2017. In 2018, Yves was appointed as Counsel for Science and Technology to the French Ambassador to the United States of America. Yves worked tirelessly in his various capacities to strengthen the links between science and governance.

Yves was a true champion of international cooperation in research and governance. His participation in the Australian Antarctic Expedition to Heard Island in 2000 led to a close collaboration between French and Australian scientists, as well as facilitating the use of *L'Astrolabe* for shipping support for Australian expeditions, particularly to Macquarie Island. Yves was influential in facilitating French involvement in the International Polar Year 'Aliens in Antarctica' Program 2007–2008, which saw an international team of scientists from nine nations investigate the likelihood of the introduction of non-native species across a wide range of national Antarctic programmes and tourist operations.

It was Yves' intelligence, integrity, capacity for hard work, cooperative nature, enthusiasm and good humour that allowed him to achieve so much in terms of polar scientific cooperation and guiding policies. His friends and colleagues will miss him enormously, but his influence on the protection of Antarctic and sub-Antarctic regions will continue.

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