

Preface

In 2013 we celebrate the 27th anniversary of the 1st Polar Expedition to Spitsbergen organised by the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS) in 1986. Since then, UMCS carried out twenty-four Expeditions in Spitsbergen. During almost three decades 69 researchers from the UMCS and other national and international institutions participated in several research projects that focused on the natural environment of the NW part of Wedel Jarlsberg Land. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of expedition members the research in Bellsund region is intrinsically associated with the UMCS. Present book summarises almost 30 years of polar research conducted by UMCS Expeditions.

The publication of this book has also another dimension. In recent years we have experienced the important generation change among UMCS polar researchers. At the same time the application of new methods and technologies has significantly modified the quality of environmental observations in the polar regions. Therefore, it was important to document the previous work of UMCS researchers and their contribution to the better understanding of mechanism controlling the evolution of polar environments.

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