

## **Diary 26 – 1 November 2012**

### **Time of frustration and cold hands**

Frustration because the weather always deteriorates towards the last flight of the year and cold hands because this is the time where everything needs to be taken down or changed to winter setup. Small screws and nuts disappear so easily when one tries to disassemble automatic methane chambers with mittens on so bare hands are better - but much colder. The temperatures are down below -15 C by now and with a slight wind, the chill makes bare hands freeze within seconds – brrr.

Luckily the cosiness of the station is still waiting for us to come back to in the afternoon when the sun have set – Jørgen makes sure the generators and the heaters are running so we can share the daily task of preparing plenty and luxurious meals to soothe the dark times of waiting. However, fresh vegetables and fresh fruit are now just a memory of the past. However, they cannot take the cinnamon rolls away from us – at least not until the egg runs out (still three eggs left in the fridge).

Personnel at station now include Jørgen Skafte taking care of logistics, Lars Holst Hansen taking care of the BioBasis programme while Maria Rask Pedersen and Mikkel Tamstorf are taking care of the GeoBasis programme. Julie Falk left a week ago – eager to get back to civilization after 1½ month of measurements. It's Maria's first time during this part of the year so I'm here to help her with the change of GeoBasis programme to winter mode including securing stations and getting the winter power in operation. It exists of three fuel cells running on methanol that will (hopefully) produce enough power to keep the eddy covariance and energy balance measurements running until early May when the first people arrives in the spring and power again is delivered from the generators. Lars has finished the last observations and Jørgen have emptied the water and sewage systems so we are now all ready to go with a couple of hours' notice – waiting around for the Twin Otter to find its way through the low pressure systems. We have now been waiting for three days – first because of bad weather here on the coast and yesterday and today because of bad weather in Iceland. Wonder how cold it will be around Christmas time - and whether we will have snow for Christmas? Until now only a few cm of snow has arrived and that is not enough for getting the skis or the snowmobiles out. Makes it easier to change the stations to winter setup but less fun getting around in the valley and without the possibility for snowmobiles we will have to leave the station in St. Søndal until spring comes.

Waiting time is killed with computer work, DVD's, organising around the station and just hanging out discussing the remote possibility of an aircraft landing within a few hours. I do hope this will be the last newsletter of the year from Zackenberg.

Mikkel Tamstorf