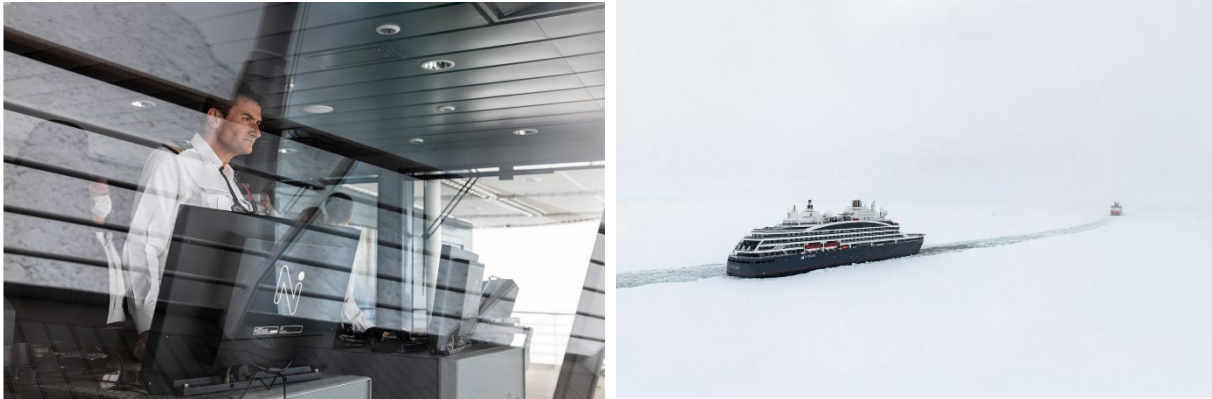




Le Commandant Charcot working together with RRS Sir David Attenborough in Antarctica



Le Commandant Charcot, a luxury polar exploration ship from the French cruise company PONANT, teamed up with the British polar research ship RRS *Sir David Attenborough* in their mission to support the [International Thwaites Glacier Collaboration](#).

Le Commandant Charcot and RRS *Sir David Attenborough* have both recently entered service in 2021, with their missions to operate in the polar regions. While the RRS *Sir David Attenborough* is focused on science and the logistical support of British research stations, *Le Commandant Charcot* was purpose-built to take guests on voyages to high latitudes, whilst conducting scientific research along the way. When it was realised both ships would coincidentally meet in Carroll Inlet at 73°15 south, it offered the perfect opportunity to combine the capabilities of both ships to work in tandem.

Le Commandant Charcot features a unique PC2 hull design, with the ability to sail in ‘double-acting mode’, specifically enabling the ship to tackle thicker and more dense ice; she does this more quickly and efficiently by sailing backwards. *Le Commandant Charcot* opened a channel by sailing astern, with the RRS *Sir David Attenborough* following behind, working to widen the channel. This collaboration enabled a 3NM channel to be opened in just 3 hours. Despite creating a channel and getting close to the depot site, once *Le Commandant Charcot* had departed for her next destination, the sea ice conditions were against the ship, and the RRS *Sir David Attenborough* turned around. It is now seeking an alternative location nearby to depot cargo for Thwaites Glacier. There is a long-standing belief amongst polar professionals in collaboration and support where possible; and that we can achieve more by working together.

“When we realised we had the opportunity to work together to support the RRS Sir David Attenborough we immediately set off. This cooperation fully illustrates the values of PONANT, which was founded by sailors and is committed to scientific endeavour and shows just what can be achieved through teamwork”, explains Captain Patrick Marchesseau on board *Le Commandant Charcot*. *“Additionally, it was a unique opportunity for our guests to see first-hand the challenges involved in polar science. We are already discussing the possibility to continue to collaborate with the RRS Sir David Attenborough on future voyages, where our itinerary allows.”*

Le Commandant Charcot is an LNG-electric hybrid vessel. She’s the world’s first PC2 Polar Class ship, making her the safest and most capable polar exploration passenger ship in the world, as well as one of the most luxurious. *Le Commandant Charcot* offers voyages to explore deep into the Antarctic and all the way to the North Pole, and simultaneously invites scientists from around the world to make use of her onboard laboratories to conduct research to further our understanding of these remote regions.

ABOUT PONANT

Founded in 1988 by French Merchant Navy officers, PONANT offers a new style of cruises under the French flag with its own concept of sea travel and commitment to promoting sustainable and responsible tourism. Centred around sailing to exceptional and unusual destinations aboard refined design yachts, where lifestyle and excellent cuisine take pride of place, the promise of a voyage with PONANT is that it will be truly unique and authentic.

For more information: www.ponant.com

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