**A NOVEL APPROACH TO FLUORESCENCE QUANTUM YIELD DETERMINATION IN THE SOUTHERN OCEAN**

Bone, E.L.1, 2, Waldron, H.N.1, Thomalla, S.J.2and Bernard, S.2

The fluorescence quantum yield (FQY) of marine phytoplankton refers to the ratio of photons emitted as fluorescence to those absorbed by the individual cells and serves as a first order estimate of photosynthetic efficiency. Chlorophyll concentration, pigment packaging and various photoprotective mechanisms influence FQY. The Southern Ocean is a complex high-nutrient low-chlorophyll region characterised by strong seasonal cycle dynamics. This important regulator of global carbon export is often under sampled due to weather-restricted access and the high cost of research cruises. Initial *in situ* studies will lead to improved understanding of the factors that influence FQY variability and will ultimately allow for enhanced remote sensing capabilities of this important region, furthering investigations into species composition, light environment and nutrient availability from space. A JFE Advantech Multi-Exciter Fluorometer (MFL) was used to derive fluorescence data at 9 different excitation wavelengths; a wavelength-specific FQY was determined by relating these fluorescence data to LED-specific irradiance and spectrally averaged phytoplankton-specific absorption. Initial results indicate that the repurposing of the MFL may serve as an accessible, cost-effective tool to study variability in FQY. This will in turn aid in the development of superior Southern Ocean-specific FQY algorithms and allow for further regional characterisation of phytoplankton dynamics.

Further correspondence: Emma Bone, emmalewisbone@gmail.com; Howard Waldron, howard.waldron@uct.ac.za; Sandy Thomalla, sandy.thomalla@gmail.com; Stewart Bernard, sbernard@csir.co.za

*1. Department of Oceanography, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, 7700, Cape Town, South Africa*

*2. Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, 15 Lower Hope Street, Rosebank, 7700, Cape Town, South Africa*