

# Meet the expert

To learn more about the Arctic, we put some questions to Dr. Mark Serreze. He is the director of the National Snow and Ice Data Center at the University of Colorado Boulder.



**Q: What first made you interested in the Arctic?**

**A:** I grew up in Maine where we have real winters, with a lot of snow and ice. I loved sledding, skating, and making snow forts.



Dr. Serreze in the Arctic

**Q: What does the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC) do?**

**A:** We advance the understanding of Earth's frozen regions—known as its cryosphere—and the changes taking place there. This helps with decision-making in service to humanity and Earth. We take great pride in what we do.

**Q: What do you love most about your job?**

**A:** I love teaching students about the Arctic, doing research, running NSIDC, and going to the Arctic. There's always something different going on, so it never gets boring.

**Q: What has been your favorite experience in the Arctic?**

**A:** It was probably my first visit. I was on top of a little ice cap on a rare clear day and could see probably 50 miles (80 km) in every direction. It was magical.

**Q: What do you wish more people knew about the Arctic?**

**A:** The Arctic acts like the planet's refrigerator. Like the Antarctic, the Arctic helps to keep us cool. It also plays a key role in regulating weather.

**Q: What can we do to help protect the Arctic?**

**A:** While things like turning out the lights seem very small, they can help us to think differently about how we use energy. We waste so much. Changing the mindset will help us win the battle against climate change.



# Meet the expert

To learn more about the Antarctic, we put some questions to Dr. Virginia Morandini. She researches Antarctic wildlife with Oregon State University, with a grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation.



**Q: What first made you interested in the Antarctic?**

**A:** I have a strong sense of adventure. I always wanted to be a scientist to help to understand our planet, and I was fascinated by polar exploration and penguins.

**Q: What kind of research do you do?**

**A:** Our research focuses on understanding penguin populations and climate change in one of the most remote places on Earth.



Dr. Morandini with Adélie penguins

**Q: What do you love most about your job?**

**A:** I love being part of a small crew of scientists isolated for months in Antarctica, working with the biggest Adélie penguin colony on the planet.

**Q: What is it like in the Antarctic?**

**A:** Antarctica is the coldest and the windiest continent on the planet, with oceans full of life.

**Q: What is a typical day like when you're working in the Antarctic?**

**A:** I wake up in my tent, surrounded by snow. I have breakfast with the crew, and then I spend the day working in the penguin colony.

**Q: What has been your favorite experience in the Antarctic?**

**A:** I learned to live in extreme conditions, with no showers, only frozen food, water from melting snow, and sleeping in tents—and I loved it!

**Q: What do you wish more people knew about the Antarctic?**

**A:** Antarctica holds most of the world's fresh water and unique wildlife, but commercial fishing and climate change increasingly impact its fragile environments.

