

ANTARCTIC

Soviet Scientists Continue Studies in Antarctica

"There are two convoys of sleighs pulled by tractors moving at the same time in the frozen wastes of Antarctica", radios the Mirnyi Observatory. The first is carrying cargo and fuel to the "Vostok" Station. The second is transporting a mobile drilling rig.

The study of the ice-cap, essential for long-range weather forecasting, will be continued at a testing-ground 100 kilometres from the coast. The conditions of navigation here turned out to be different from what the charts suggested.

At one time, cartographers had to correct the outlines of the Chelyuskintsy Peninsula several times. It turned into an island, and then disappeared altogether. Cape Vityaz' broke off from Enderby Land and became a floating iceberg. There are many such examples.

Careful observations of the size and conditions of the ice cover, its internal structure, the rate of movement, and the configuration of the coasts make up an important part of the research programme. According to recent calculations, there are approximately 30 million cubic kilometres of ice concentrated in Antarctica. In the central part of the continent, this enormous block of ice reaches a thickness of four kilometers.

Another problem is that the overall global atmospheric circulation, the geographic zoning of the Southern Hemisphere, the patterns of marine currents, and the level of the Pacific Ocean are all related to