the formation of the seamounts and the plateau they start with will give us a better understanding of similar features on land and what impact they might have on resource development Associate Professor Whittaker said.

The voyage will also deliver a range of benefits for our Pacific neighbours, including mapping large areas of the seafloor, cataloguing deep-sea corals, and completing detailed observations of marine life such as seabirds.

Several of the deep-sea coral samples we collected are thought to be new species and will now be sent for further analysis and identification she said.

In an innovative program, two teachers on board the voyage shared the research in real time with students via video links with schools across Australia and the United Kingdom.