

Press Release

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Joint press release of the Cluster of Excellence "The Future Ocean" and GEOMAR | Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel

Further Top Level Support for Kiel Marine Sciences Continuation of the Cluster of Excellence "The Future Ocean" granted

June 15, 2012 /Kiel. Today the federal Grants Committee for the Excellence Initiative approved a further five year funding period for the Kiel Cluster of Excellence "The Future Ocean". This decision brings with it considerable further funding for top international research in the marine and geological sciences at Christian Albrechts University in Kiel (CAU), GEOMAR | Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel, the Institute for the World Economy (IfW) and the Muthesius Academy of Fine Arts and Design. The Grants Committee is made up of scientists, the science ministers of the federal states and representatives from the German government. The decision of the committee was eagerly anticipated today in Kiel.

"This decision is not only an acknowledgement of our expertise in marine research. It demonstrates above all, that we are following the right path with our Kiel Concept of connecting differing scientific cultures," says Professor Thomas Bosch, Vice President of the CAU.

In the second funding period from November 2012 to October 2017, Kiel marine scientists will build on the successes of the past six years. The focus here will continue to be on interdisciplinary research. For this the Kiel experts have identified eleven future-oriented thematic areas. These deal with natural resources in the sea as well as biological diversity and gas exchange between the ocean surface and the atmosphere. Newcomers to the research team at Kiel University are scientists from political science and environmental ethics, who will work more intensively on questions of societal relevance, for example, the responsible use of marine resources or the question of worldwide governance structures.

"Innovative research means research across the boundaries of different disciplines. We will continue to broaden this approach. There is no other institution in the world that approaches marine science in as interdisciplinary a manner as we do," says Professor Martin Visbeck, Chair of the Cluster of Excellence "The Future Ocean". "Only with such a broad range of topics as those we cover in the Cluster of Excellence "The Future Ocean" can the ocean be explored in its entire depth."

With the new research fields the Kiel scientists want to provide above all a scientific basis for sustainable ocean management. "In future with our research results we will better address the needs of decision makers from politics, industry or science. Only together we can develop ideas and new paths toward environmentally sound use of the oceans", explains Visbeck. "To this aim we will engage in dialogue more intensively than we have up to now. "

The interdisciplinary research of the Cluster of Excellence "The Future Ocean" at Kiel University has a power of attraction far beyond the borders of Schleswig-Holstein. "Germany has already recognized that marine science is a research field of great societal relevance for the future. Kiel Marine Sciences have managed to combine their scientific excellence, which they have in their individual disciplines, with the unique interdisciplinary approach of "The Future Ocean" and thus to

create a real added value,” says Professor Peter Herzig, Director of the GEOMAR | Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel. In the second phase we want the network – not only in Kiel but also with our cooperation partners worldwide – to become *the* contact point for decision makers.”

With the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW) world-wide leaders in economics contribute their expertise to the Cluster of Excellence “The Future Ocean”. In ocean research economic analyses play an increasingly important role. This is especially true in the valuation of raw materials in the ocean or in regard to the economic importance of storage processes for carbon dioxide. “For strategies and new concepts for alleviating climate change we must also take economic impacts into account”, emphasizes IfW President Dennis Snower. “For this reason the cooperation between economic and marine research in the Cluster of Excellence is very important.”

The Cluster of Excellence “The Future Ocean” wants to get the public interested in marine research and introduce them to current research topics. To this end, communications designers, architects, film makers and artists of the Muthesius Academy of Fine Arts and Design are developing new forms of science communication. “The Muthesius Academy was able to set striking accents already in the first phase of the Cluster – foremost with various formats for visualization of the topics and results of ocean research. In the coming five years the art academy will broaden its engagement with research projects of its own”, announces Muthesius President Professor Rainer W. Ernst.

About the Cluster of Excellence “The Future Ocean”

The Kiel Cluster of Excellence “The Future Ocean” is a research network of more than 200 scientists from the Christian Albrechts University in Kiel (CAU), the GEOMAR | Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel, the Institute for the World Economy (IfW) and the Muthesius Academy of Fine Arts and Design (MKHS). The goal of the interdisciplinary network of marine and geological scientists, economics experts and medical, mathematics, legal and social scientists is to investigate ocean and climate change together, to reevaluate the risks and opportunities and enable world-wide sustainable management of the oceans and their marine resources. The Cluster of Excellence “The Future Ocean” is funded within the framework of the Excellence Initiative of the German Science Foundation on behalf of the German federal and state governments.

Links:

www.futureocean.org Cluster of Excellence “Future Ocean”
www.uni-kiel.de Kiel University
www.geomar.de GEOMAR | Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel
www.ifw-kiel.de Institute for the World Economy
www.muthesius.de Muthesius Academy of Fine Arts and Design

Images:

Images are available for download at www.geomar.de/go/kommunikation

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