

Press Release

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International Coordination in Marine Sciences – IFM-GEOMAR chairs the POGO Group–

26 January 2011/Kiel, Seoul. The International Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans (POGO) is a forum of the directors of major oceanographic institutions around the world to promote global oceanography, particularly the implementation of international and integrated global ocean observing systems. The POGO membership includes about 40 institutions and organisations from 30 different countries, amongst them the Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences (IFM-GEOMAR) in Kiel, Germany. At its 12th Annual Meeting, held in Seoul, South Korea (24 January – 26 January 2011), Professor Peter Herzig, Director and CEO of IFM-GEOMAR, assumed the chairmanship of the POGO Group. The meeting focuses on questions related to global and regional integrated ocean observation systems.

The ocean covers more than two thirds of the Earth's surface with an average depth of 4000 metres. Despite modern technology, field observations and measurements are still a challenge, especially as remote sensing by satellites can only monitor the oceans surface. Nevertheless, the oceans play a key role for global climate, food supply of a growing population, resource management and global transportation. Addressing these major issues of the future is a major challenge for the international marine science community and requires international cooperation and coordination. To use limited resources most efficiently, the world's leading institutions of marine sciences joined together 12 years ago to form the Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans (POGO). Now POGO has about 40 members in 30 countries around the globe and a strategy meeting is held every year. During the 12th Annual Meeting that takes place in Seoul, South Korea, from 24 January to 26 January 2011, the Director and CEO of the Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences (IFM-GEOMAR) in Kiel, Germany, Professor Peter Herzig, has taken the chairmanship of this international strategic planning group.

„Today networking in marine research is far better than it was in 1999 when POGO was founded“, Professor Peter Herzig says. „Especially in the field of ocean observation a significant progress has already been done. Now we have a global network of 3000 profiling floats continuously delivering data from the upper 2000 metres of the oceans. This programme was put together about a decade ago and is a prime example of successful international cooperation“, Herzig explains. “To be most beneficial, the strategy must be to share responsibilities and provide data to the public. In the field of physical oceanography we already achieved major milestones, but in other disciplines improvements are still needed.” At the 2009 International Ocean Observation Symposium in Venice, Italy, promising approaches were presented and future strategies discussed. The POGO group will push these ideas and plans forward: „It is essential to hold annual meetings among the institutes' leaders to agree on common strategies and to implement them at home afterwards “, Professor Herzig says. For his term in office, Herzig is expecting that progress in marine resource research will be made: „This is a broad field, it involves a lot of money and we urgently need a coordinated approach. I'm very curious to see how we will be able to achieve results also in this important field.”

Links:

<http://ocean-partners.org> Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans (POGO)
<http://www.ifm-geomar.de> The Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences (IFM-GEOMAR)

Figures:

At www.ifm-geomar.de/presse images are available for download.

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