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Trailing the Ocean Currents

Gerold Siedler, marine scientist from Kiel, celebrates his 80th birthday

10th September 2013 / Kiel. Whether it's the Gulf Stream, Brazil or Agulhas Current, the deep currents in the western Pacific or the subtropical counter-current in the Indian Ocean: Oceanographer Gerold Siedler knows them all and has contributed much to the basic research in these areas. On 13th September the renowned scientist celebrates his 80th birthday and will be joined by colleagues from around the world in a colloquium at GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel.

Gerold Siedler has investigated a lot of the dynamics of ocean currents. Some of this momentum must have had a positive feedback on him since he is still very active at the age of 80. Currently he is working on a comprehensive book on ocean circulation and climate. Marine research has been the focus of most his life after he first laid a sound theoretical foundation with a degree in physics, mathematics and geophysics. For almost 40 years, from 1960 to 1998, he taught and conducted research at the Institute for Marine Sciences at Kiel University, the predecessor of today's institute, the GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel. From 1976 to 1978, he was director of the Institute for Marine Sciences, and in 1991-1992, he was Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at Kiel University. The time in Kiel was interspersed by many, partly extended research stays at leading marine research institutions worldwide.

The list of his scientific publications is long and contains many fundamental papers on ocean currents from all parts of the world ocean. Most of his research concerned the Atlantic. In the last two decades, there was additional emphasis on the Pacific and Indian Ocean. Gerold Siedler frequently worked on research vessels, he participated in nearly 30 major expeditions, often as the chief scientist. He became an internationally respected oceanographer who was instrumental in shaping many international programmes. Particularly noteworthy are his substantial contributions to the World Ocean Circulation Experiment (WOCE). As part of WOCE, for the first time an internationally coordinated monitoring programme for the entire world ocean over a period of more than 10 years was conducted.

During his long academic career, he established a global marine research network and passed on his knowledge to students and researchers in Kiel as well as many other universities and research institutions. Much of this knowledge can also be found in textbooks to educate and instruct future generations of oceanographers.

"The courses by Gerold Siedler provided me with a unique insight into the complexity of ocean currents which motivated me most notably," said Prof. Dr. Martin Visbeck, the current head of Physical Oceanography group at GEOMAR. "Gerold Siedler has greatly expanded our knowledge of the oceans and made an important contribution to the overall understanding of global ocean circulation," Visbeck continued.

Professor Siedler himself is looking forward to the colloquium and to a reunion with long-time colleagues and former students. "The colloquium is a great honor for me and I feel rather proud that I was able to expand our knowledge of the oceans," says the birthday celebrant.

Links:

www.geomar.de GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel

www.geomar.de/fileadmin/content/news/Events/2013/2013-09-13-Siedler-Symposium.pdf Programme of the colloquium

www.geomar.de/mitarbeiter/fb1/po/gsiedler/ Further information about Prof. Gerold Siedler

Images:

Under www.geomar.de/n1485 a photo is available for download.

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