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Petersen Award for Prof. Dr. Edouard Bard

Public lecture at GEOMAR by internationally renowned specialist for the reconstruction of ocean-climate interactions

14 November 2013/Kiel. Are current climate changes caused by humans or are they part of natural fluctuations? To answer this question, we have to know about natural climate fluctuations in the Earth's history. Among the world's most renowned scientists to reconstruct past climate developments is the French paleo-oceanographer Dr. Edouard Bard. For his highly regarded work, he will be awarded the Excellence Chair of the Prof. Dr. Werner Petersen Foundation on Tuesday, 19th November. This award also includes a research stay and a public evening lecture at GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel.

The memory of mankind is short, in fact much too short to provide information about long-term climate variations since these have time-scales over centuries, millennia or even tens of thousands of years. So if scientists want to find out if current climate changes are artificially caused by humans or are simply part of natural cycles, they have to rely on other sources of information, for example on the memory stored in different parts of our planet such as traces of climate change in the ocean floor, in the ice of the polar regions, or in fossil coral reefs.

One of the world's foremost experts in this field is the French paleo-oceanographer Dr. Edouard Bard, Deputy Director of the European Centre for Research and Education in Environmental Geosciences (CEREGE) in Aix-en-Provence, France, and member of the prestigious Collège de France in Paris. His work has been fundamental, especially for the precise dating of past climate events. As one outstanding example, the work of Professor Bard and his colleagues on high-precision Uranium/Thorium dating of fossil corals provides the exact chronology of sea level changes in the past. It also serves as the basis for the calibration of radio-carbon dating (¹⁴C method), which is of utmost importance not only for climate researchers but also for archaeologists and historians. In addition, Professor Bard is highly committed to making scientific knowledge available to the public, as he has done, for example, in the context of several popular books on the subject of climate variability. In recognition of his outstanding achievements, the Prof. Dr. Werner Petersen Foundation will present him with the Excellence Chair on Tuesday, 19th November, an award endowed with a research grant in the amount of Euro 20,000. The ceremony will be held during a public evening lecture at GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel.

Title of the lecture: "Sea level, ocean and climate after the last ice age"

Location: Auditorium of GEOMAR, east shore campus, Wischhofstrasse 1-3, 24118 Kiel

Time: Tuesday, 19 November 2013, 5:00 pm

In this lecture, Professor Bard will talk about the rapid climate changes at the end of the last ice age 21,000-6,000 years ago. You are cordially invited. Admission is free. Please note that the lecture will be held in English. The award is also connected with a research visit of Professor Bard at GEOMAR Kiel. "The visit will be a good opportunity for us to strengthen our cooperation in generating reliable climate reconstructions, to share the latest findings, and to initiate new projects," says Prof. Dr. Martin Frank, deputy director of the research unit paleo-oceanography at GEOMAR. The reconstruction of past climate changes is also one of the research priorities at

GEOMAR and the respective institutes of Kiel University, one of the leading locations for climate-related isotope analysis and age determination in Germany.

In addition to the professional exchange with his colleagues in Kiel and the planning of new projects, Professor Bard will share his experiences with young scientists in a special lecture series.

Background Information on Dr. Edouard Bard:

Prof. Bard received his master's degree in 1985 in Engineering Geology at the University of Nancy (France) and his doctorate in 1987 at the Université de Paris 11 Orsay. Subsequently, he worked at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University (New York, USA) and the French Commissariat l' Energie Atomique et aux Energies Alternatives (CEA) in Gif-sur-Yvette, France. Since 1991 he conducts research in southern France and, until 2001, was a professor at the University of Aix-Marseille III, a visiting professor at Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA) and the University of Bern (Switzerland). Since 2001, Edouard Bard is the Chair of "Development of Climate and Ocean" at the Collège de France, Paris, while his laboratory is located at CEREGE. Since 2010 he has also been a member of the French Academy of Sciences, and since 2007 a deputy director of CEREGE. For his work he received numerous awards and honours, including the Macelwane Medal of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), and this year the Wegener Medal of the European Geosciences Union (EGU).

Images:

Images are available for download at www.geomar.de/n1600

Contact:

Prof. Dr. Martin Frank (GEOMAR; RD1-Paleoceanography), mfrank@geomar.de
Jan Steffen (GEOMAR, Communication & Media), Phone: +49-431 600-2811,
jsteffen@geomar.de