

Press Release

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Photo exhibition about ocean acidification premiered at GEOMAR Solvin Zankl and Nick Cobbing provide insight into a fascinating field of research

20 September 2016/Kiel. In a photo exhibition by the German research network on ocean acidification BIOACID, the two nature photographers Solvin Zankl and Nick Cobbing present BIOACID members at their work and introduce organisms that current ocean acidification research focuses on. The exhibition is a contribution to the Science Year 2016*17 – Seas and Oceans and is presented at GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel, east shore campus, until 21 October. A website and a web app with further information complement the exhibition.

From the Arctic to the tropics, ocean acidification changes the life in the sea. In an exhibition of images by the nature photographers Solvin Zankl and Nick Cobbing, the German research project on ocean acidification BIOACID shows how its members investigate “the other carbon dioxide problem” and what kind of organisms they focus on.

The British photographer Nick Cobbing joined the 2010 field experiment on ocean acidification in Svalbard which also was the scientific test for the KOSMOS mesocosms developed in Kiel. Inside these floating “giant test tubes”, researchers from 15 countries mimicked a level of ocean acidification that might occur in the coming decades. Based on their samples and measurements, they found how the plankton community of the Arctic reacts to rising carbon dioxide concentrations. Nick Cobbing’s pictures tell of a special scientific mission in the wide, still untouched Arctic landscape.

Solvin Zankl, an internationally renowned nature photographer from Kiel, frequently participates in research projects of GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel and the Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research. His contributions to the exhibition introduce BIOACID researchers and open up the fascinating world of plankton. He was present when the mesocosm experiment 2015 revolved around a tiny organism with great importance for the global climate: the single-celled calcifying alga *Emiliana huxleyi*. He headed to the cold water coral reefs off the Norwegian coast on expeditions with Germany's only manned research submersible JAGO and captured the colourful life of tropical coral reefs. With his photo-microscope, he portraits planktonic organisms which can normally barely seen with the naked eye: Sea urchin larvae buzz like little spaceships through the marine universe, jellyfish dance ballet and copepods display their frustration about their fate as fast food for fish.

QR codes direct visitors on their smartphones to image descriptions and comprehensible background information in an internet-based web app. All photos, graphics, texts and videos are also available on the online platform for the exhibition www.ozeanversauerung.de in German and English. Comments and questions are answered by researchers on Twitter at @BIOACID_project and #BIOACIDexhibition.

In the past decades, ocean acidification research has received growing recognition on the international scientific agenda – also driven by the efforts of BIOACID. Numerous experiments in

the laboratory and in the field revealed how individual organisms are affected by rising carbon dioxide concentrations in seawater. More sophisticated studies now demonstrate just how the complex marine communities reacts to changes in the ocean chemistry and whether it is possible to extrapolate findings from the laboratory to nature. At the same time, it is investigated how rises in temperature, loss of oxygen, eutrophication, pollution and other factors further affect the life in the sea. In this way, scientists obtain a comprehensive overview based on which they can estimate how the ocean will change and what consequences this will have for society.

The BIOACID photo exhibition “Ocean Acidification: The Other Carbon Dioxide Problem” is supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research as part of the Science Year 2016 – Seas and Oceans. More information about the Science Year: www.wissenschaftsjahr.de/2016-17

BIOACID in brief:

Under the umbrella of BIOACID (Biological Impacts of Ocean Acidification), 10 institutions examine how marine ecosystems react to ocean acidification, how this affects the food web and the exchange of material and energy in the ocean and how the changes influence the socio-economic sector. The project is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and coordinated by GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel. A list of member institutions and further information can be found on the website www.bioacid.de

Exhibition:

GEOMAR East Shore Campus („Alte Kantine“)
Wischhofstraße 1-3, D-24148 Kiel
20 September – 21 October 2016
Monday to Friday, 9-15h

Internet:

www.ozeanversauerung.de
www.oceanacidification.de

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/BIOACID.project

Twitter:

https://twitter.com/BIOACID_project

Images:

Images are available for download at www.geomar.de/n4711-e

Contact:

Maike Nicolai (GEOMAR Communication & Media), Tel.: (+49)0431 600-2807, presse@geomar.de