

Press Release



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A new lighthouse for marine research

12.07.2023/Kiel. Starting in September 2023, GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel will move into its new extension building next to the Schwentine. The move will unite all research divisions, administration and central facilities at one location. In addition, the research will receive a more modern infrastructure. A unique marine science campus develops a marine research for GEOMAR.

decades of preparations and planning, seven years of

With the start of the move in September, a project planned for almost 20 years ago will become reality: Four research divisions, administration and central facilities will be able to cooperate more easily and with greater focus across marine science disciplines according to the GEOMAR strategy at one location. In addition, researchers will benefit from the modern infrastructure with various laboratories, climate chambers and the seawater pipeline as well as the conference area, library and computing centre. The building designed by Staab Architekten GmbH will make an impression far beyond the state capital of Kiel – a new lighthouse for marine research.

More than ever, we will be able to harness our expertise for marine research under the proverbial common roof. The new building takes this into account with modern infrastructure and enables direct exchange. A unique marine science campus develops at the Seefischmarkt. In this inspiring and excellently equipped environment, we continue to pursue our mission to understand the ocean and its functions and to contribute to its protection and preservation for future generations, Director Matthes continues.

The idea of merging the two locations was already present in 2004 when the Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences IFM-GEOMAR was founded from the Institute of Oceanography (IfO) and the Research Centre for Marine Geosciences GEOMAR. However, the change from the Leibniz to the Helmholtz Association required a new start to the planning process. Finally, in 2012, an architectural competition was launched, and Staab Architekten GmbH convinced the jury with its design. With the robust corten steel base and the five three- to five-storey cubes on top of it, the ensemble they designed follows the shape of a ship. The characteristic façade elements made of aluminium and glass are reminiscent of boat sails and reflect the maritime atmosphere.

The total cost of the project, which was originally planned and launched on a much smaller scale, is currently estimated at 138.200 million euros (net). In addition to the new extension building, the project also includes the new construction of the Core and Rock Repository, the parking facility with the bicycle parking garage, the seawater intake system from the Naval Arsenal to GEOMAR and parts of the initial equipment. The costs are divided 90 percent by the federal government and 10 percent by the state of Schleswig-Holstein.

