

Press Release

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Bridging the Atlantic – German – Canadian Cooperation in Marine Sciences strengthened – Kiel-Halifax Cooperation Agreement Signed

June 3, 2011/Halifax/Kiel. Marine scientists of the Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences (IFM-GEOMAR) in Kiel, Germany and the Halifax Marine Research Institute (HMRI) in Halifax, Canada signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen their cooperation in the field of marine sciences. The agreement was signed in connection with the official opening of the Halifax Marine Research Institute that took place on June 2, 2011 in Halifax. The Scientific Director of the new institute is Professor Douglas Wallace, formerly of IFM-GEOMAR.

The North Atlantic is an important working area for Canadian as well as for German marine scientists. For example, off the Canadian east coast, in the Labrador Sea, marine scientists of both nations have been working for many years to better understand processes operating in this key region of the world ocean. The area is one of the few places where the ocean's deep water is formed, which impacts the warm water transport and climate of the northern North Atlantic and "pumps" oxygen and fossil fuel-derived CO₂ into the deep ocean. This is only one theme amongst several that marine scientists from both sides of the Atlantic want to address together in the future.

The move of Professor Douglas Wallace of IFM-GEOMAR to the Dalhousie University in Halifax makes this an appropriate occasion to strengthen German-Canadian cooperation in the field of marine sciences. Prof. Wallace, an internationally-renowned marine chemist who has worked in Kiel since 1998, has been awarded one of 19 Canada Excellence Research Chairs that Canada has established to strengthen its international competitiveness in research and development. Each Excellence Research Chair is allocated funding of 10 million Canadian Dollars. Professor Wallace will also become scientific director of the newly founded Halifax Marine Research Institute (HMRI) which opens officially on June 2. The opening will be followed by a scientific workshop with participation of several German and Canadian institutes and Universities. The workshop is supported by the German Ministry of Education and Research and the Canadian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

"I am looking forward to the new challenges in Canada", Prof. Douglas Wallace says, "but I'm also leaving Kiel, and Germany, with some sadness". "My 13 years in Kiel have been an extraordinary experience", Wallace continues. "but due to strengthening of the intensive cooperation in marine research that we've established today, I'll be able to keep up close interactions with former colleagues. The Atlantic Ocean can bind us together more than it separates, due to our common interests and concerns for its future".

"We view Professor Wallace's new role in Canada as an opportunity and we want to cooperate closely with the new Institute in Halifax to address jointly the many challenges in the field of marine research", comments IFM-GEOMAR's director Prof. Peter Herzig who is already a member of the external advisory board for the HMRI. "There's no doubt that Professor Wallace's departure will leave a huge gap in Kiel. But we will seek excellent candidates to fill his position and, additionally,

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Das Leibniz-Institut für Meereswissenschaften ist Mitglied der

we will benefit from working closely together according to the cooperation that we have established today”.

Links:

www.ifm-geomar.de IFM-GEOMAR, Kiel

<http://www.dal.ca/> Dalhousie University, Halifax

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