

41/2022

Providing opportunities for 20 years: GAME program celebrates anniversary

Since 2002, German and international Master's students have been able to learn independent scientific work in a unique way worldwide.

5 November 2022 / Kiel. Preparing young researchers for everyday scientific life – this has been the concept of the Global Approach through Modular Experiments (GAME) program of GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel for 20 years. Within the framework of GAME, master students conduct experiments in binational two-person teams at 40 partner institutes worldwide and prepare their theses based on the collected data. The anniversary of this successful collaboration was honored with an alumni meeting and evening reception at GEOMAR.

Planning one's own scientific project, deciding on a direction for the experiment, organizing data collection and independently carrying out a statistical analysis – universities often do not teach these important components of later everyday scientific life in the necessary depth. This gap has been closed for 20 years by the Global Approach through Modular Experiments (GAME) program of GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel. The anniversary was celebrated at GEOMAR with an evening reception and an alumni meeting of former GAME participants. In addition, this year's group presented their research results.

"We want to give young scientists the opportunity to get a taste of the reality of everyday scientific life during their studies. This way they can start their further career well prepared," explains Dr. Mark Lenz, experimental ecologist at GEOMAR and scientific coordinator of the program since 2004. "They know better what to expect and are more experienced in implementing projects. They may already have their first scientific contacts at other institutes as a result of working together abroad," adds Professor Dr. Arne Körtzinger, marine biogeochemist at GEOMAR and scientific director of GAME.

In total, 270 students from 31 countries and 40 partner institutes worldwide have participated in the program in the two decades that GAME has been in existence. German master students and students from one of the partner institutes work together in teams of two in a self-coordinated experiment over a period of one year, collect data and combine them in a master thesis at the end. Each year, 18 students can participate in the program.

"With our anniversary event, we not only want to celebrate the long existence of this program, which is still unique in marine research, but at the same time thank all the people who have accompanied and supported us along the way. Thanks to their commitment, we can now look back on 20 successful years," says Professor Dr. Martin Wahl, ecologist at GEOMAR, who developed the concept in 2002. The topics of the experiments are regularly changed and range from microplastics in the ocean to the feeding behavior of marine organisms in climate change to the current focus – light pollution and its effects on mussels.

GEOMAR Director Dr. Katja Matthes says on the anniversary: "It is the great strength of GAME to give young, motivated students the chance to participate in a unique training program and at the

same time to lay the foundation for the young scientists of tomorrow. I congratulate everyone involved on the project's milestone birthday and wish the program many more successful years." Open-water experiments on larval settlement behavior under the effects of light pollution are scheduled for 2023. At this stage of development, mussels, barnacles, snails and other animals settle on solid surfaces in the sea. The process could be influenced by artificial light.

Please note:

GAME is funded by the Klaus Tschira Foundation as well as Bornhöft Industriegeräte, Hydro-Bios, Hydrotechnik Lübeck, LimnoMar, the Lions Club Kappeln, Müllverbrennung Kiel, Offcon and SubCtech.

Links:

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

www.geomar.de/game Program GAME and project podcast

<https://www.oceanblogs.org/game> GAME-blog

Images:

At www.geomar.de/n8744 images are available for download.

Kontakt:

Ann Kristin Montano (GEOMAR, Communication and Media), Tel.:+49 0431 600-2811, media@geomar.de