

International Helgoland Symposium 1992
The centennial of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland
“The challenge to marine biology in a changing world”:
Opening address

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Sehr geehrter Herr Minister, Honourable Minister, Dr. Riesenhuber,
Sehr geehrter Herr Bürgermeister, Your Worship, the Mayor of Helgoland,
Werte Vertreter des öffentlichen Lebens, esteemed members of the Public Service,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I should like to welcome you all, who have come from far and wide – from 42 countries all told, to the island of Helgoland, to celebrate the centennial of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland.

I especially welcome those scientists who, not belonging to a privileged cadre, and owing to political changes in eastern Europe, are now able to come to us for the first time: colleagues from the new German states, from Estonia and Lithuania, from Russia and the Ukraine.

Sadly, we have received cancellations from scientists from former Yugoslavia. The war there has made it impossible for them to take part.

The international, resounding response to the announcement of this Symposium which marks the centenary of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland has exceeded all our expectations. More than 450 participants have registered. The programme comprises 130 lectures and more than 150 posters. Nine research vessels from home and abroad will pay a visit to this island during the celebrations.

We have been especially honoured by Dr. Richard von Weizsäcker, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, who has agreed to be the patron of this symposium, and by Dr. Riesenhuber, Minister of Research and Technology, who is present here today and will give the introductory lecture.

The holding of this symposium on the island of Helgoland was made possible by the efforts of employees of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland, especially Mr. Holtmann, Mr. Goemann and Mr. Pflaumbaum, who have donated many hours of unpaid overtime repairing the Nordseehalle which had been closed for several years, due to disrepair. They deserve our special thanks and appreciation.

It will be crowded in this hall. However, I hope you will understand that we did not want to refuse admittance to anyone who had planned to come.

Many colleagues were active in the preparation of this symposium, particularly in designing the programme and keeping in contact with the participants. I would especially like to thank Dr. Siebers, A. Gebhard, and J. Willführ-Nast.

The Federal Ministry of Research and Technology has generously provided funds for the symposium. The Commission of the European Community has supported us with grants towards the travel expenses for young scientists from European countries. Further funds have been donated by the Humboldt Foundation and by the International Maritime Organisation in London. The community of Helgoland has, from the very start, supported our plans in every conceivable way. We are very grateful, and thank you one and all.

A very special thank-you to those scientists who will be presenting the results of their work. May they increase our knowledge, and thus further our understanding of the environment. Furthermore, we shall be considering questions regarding the profounder meaning of our scientific work and the responsibility the scientist assumes towards nature and society as a whole.

I herewith open the Symposium:

"The challenge to marine biology in a changing world" and now ask Dr. Riesenhuber to take over.