



Outreach in Ocean Sciences as a Direct Contribution to Education

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Ocean sciences exert a considerable fascination on the general public, but in schools the importance of the oceans as a part of the earth-, climate- and eco-system is only marginally reflected. Although outreach measures by research institutions and organisations provide an increasing amount of materials for use in the classroom, they rarely consider how this information can actually be integrated into school teaching. At IFM-GEOMAR in Kiel, Germany, a number of programmes have gradually built up a competence network in educational outreach, in which the direct cooperation with teachers carries topics from ocean sciences into the classrooms. A key element for this is mutual benefit, where the research institution offers time and resources for education and in return receives support from schools for outreach activities and sometimes even for scientific work. School projects extend from a few days to a whole school year and include theoretical work, laboratory experiments and field trips, but also “oblique” approaches like video projects or game development. Started at a local scale, increasingly these initiatives encompass international cooperation with secondary schools at the locations of the institution’s research partners through EU-financed projects like CarboSchools or Comenius Regio, and they are beginning to offer materials for school use that have been tested in classrooms across Europe.