

## The Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research

Polar and Marine research are central themes of Global system and Environmental Science. The Alfred Wegener Institute conducts research in the Arctic, the Antarctic and at temperate latitudes. It coordinates Polar research in Germany and provides both the necessary equipment and the essential logistic back up for polar expeditions. Recent additional research themes include North Sea Research, contributions to Marine Biological Monitoring, Marine Pollution Research, Investigation of naturally occurring marine substances and technical marine developments.

The Alfred Wegener Institute (AWI) was established as a public foundation in 1980. It includes the [Alfred Wegener Institute in Bremerhaven](#), the [AWI in Potsdam](#) (1992), the [Biologische Anstalt Helgoland](#) and the [AWI in List/Sylt](#). It is a member of the [Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres](#); the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research ([BMBF](#)) covers 90% of financing, the state of Bremen 8% and the states of Brandenburg and Schleswig-Holstein provide 1% each. The AWI employs over 900 staff and has a total budget of more than 100 million Euro in 2012.

### Research institute and international partners

The Institute's research mission is to improve our understanding of ocean-ice-atmosphere interactions, the animal and plant kingdoms of the Arctic and Antarctic, and the evolution of the polar continents and seas. Given the major role played by these regions within the Earth's climate system, global change is a central focus of the research effort at AWI.

AWI collaborates in numerous international research programmes and maintains close contacts with many universities and institutes in Europe and farther afield. It sends scientists to other institutes throughout the world, to other research ships and stations, and invites scientists from other nations to cruises aboard "[Polarstern](#)", as well as to Bremerhaven and Potsdam. About a quarter of those participating in "Polarstern" expeditions are scientists from abroad.