

Dear readers,

The Baltic Gender project ends by end of August. Thus, the **Baltic Gender** newsletter provides you a last time with information on upcoming events, women networks and interesting reading about females in (marine) science. During the course of the project, our newsletter has been published every four months and is also available for download under the following link: www.baltic-gender.eu.

We report on recent and upcoming project activities and outcomes. In this issue, we look back on recent activities including the final conference. What did Baltic Gender achieve? What's going to stay? What recommendations and products are available to foster institutional changes? – Have a look at our review summary! Furthermore we conclude the portray series with a Baltic Gender team member who was interviewed by the European Platform of Women Scientists (EPWS) as woman scientist of the month in May.

Enjoy reading this final issue & Thank you for your attention

Project news

18th of June 2020, Baltic Gender Final Meeting & Conference



Baltic Gender project is ending at the end of August 2020 after 4 years of fruitful collaboration between its eight partner institutions in the Baltic Sea region.

On the 18th of June 2020, Baltic Gender held its final conference as a webinar with the participation of 200 participants from all over Europe and the rest of the world.

The opening talk given by the project coordinator, Prof. Katja Matthes, was followed by four impulse presentations given by members of the project on key resources produced by Baltic Gender. These resources can be used to advance gender equality and to support structural changes in marine science.

The presentations were followed by an intense discussion, which was fed by questions from the participants and moderated by Prof. Susan Buckingham from the Advisory Board of the project.

The presentations and links to the resources can be found on the webinar webpage under: <https://www.baltic-gender.eu/de/webinar>.

[Portraits (from top left to bottom right): speakers Prof. Dr. Katja Matthes, Dr. Ines Weber, Dr. Britta Thege, Dr. Helena Valve, Nikole Lorenz, and moderator Prof. Susan Buckingham] □



Baltic Gender presentation at the EGU General Assembly 2020, 4-8 May 2020

On the 5th May, Baltic Gender participated in the online format of the EGU session on (EOS 6.1) "Promoting and supporting equality, diversity and inclusion in the geosciences". The presentation "Gender aspects in Marine Science" can be found here: <https://meetingorganizer.copernicus.org/EGU2020/EGU2020-15174.html>.

Baltic Gender Mentee Meike Stumpp granted Emmy Noether Research Group

In the beginning of this year, Dr. Meike Stumpp, a Baltic Gender mentee from the second mentoring round, was granted an Emmy Noether Research Group by the German Research Foundation (DFG). „Participation in the Baltic Gender Mentoring program surely influenced my decision to apply for such a competitive research program as the Emmy Noether Program by the DFG.“, Meike Stumpp says. „Being able to confidentially discuss and receive advice on personal and scientific questions was helping me a lot to gain confidence and motivation to apply – especially considering that the dual career situation with my husband and a life with two small kids is relatively challenging.“ Over the course of the next 6 years, Meike Stumpp will receive funding for establishing her research group to work on the digestive and metabolic physiology of marine invertebrate larvae. Beside understanding the function of the digestive system in an evolutionary context, the project will also shed light on how environmental change, such as ocean acidification, will impact the physiology of invertebrate larval stages, that are vital for recruitment success and survival of benthic organisms, e.g. echinoderms or mussels.

(Meike Stumpp / Kiel University, Germany) □



Latest Baltic Gender outcomes:

[April 2020] Report on the activities in the established grass-root networks

This report analyses funding opportunities for employees at critical career moments (e.g. re-entry positions) considering national regulations and best practices in the 8 partner institutions of Baltic Gender. Report can be downloaded here: <http://oceanrep.geomar.de/49593/>. □

[April 2020] Report on best practices for re-entry into science after a critical career break

This report analyses funding opportunities for employees at critical career moments (e.g. re-entry positions) considering national regulations and best practices in the 8 partner institutions of Baltic Gender. Report can be downloaded here: <http://oceanrep.geomar.de/49517/>. □

Check also the **Baltic Gender Blog** to read the latest entries: [\(http://www.oceanblogs.org/balticgender/\)](http://www.oceanblogs.org/balticgender/). □

News from Baltic Gender partners & Other news

Prof. Dr. Katja Matthes becomes the first Female Scientific Director of GEOMAR

Prof. Dr. Katja Matthes, the coordinator of Baltic Gender, will take over the scientific director position at GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel on the 1st of October, 2020.

Prof. Matthes has been a full professor of Marine Meteorology at GEOMAR and Kiel University since 2012. Her main expertise lies in the field of climate variability and climate change, especially the influence of the Sun on the climate. She is the author or co-author of more than 75 peer-reviewed articles in scientific journals and a contributing author of the current 6th IPCC report. In 2013, together with other women in leadership positions at GEOMAR, Prof. Matthes founded the Women's Executive Board (WEB) at GEOMAR and, in 2016, she took on the coordination of the Baltic Gender project. In May 2020, she has been selected as the women scientist of the month by the European Platform of Women Scientists (EPWS).

More information can be found here: <https://www.geomar.de/en/news/article/fuehrungswechsel-am-geomar>.

Master suppression techniques workshop in Lund

(A contribution by workshop participant Sofia Åkesson, Ph.D. Student, Lund University)

On the 12th of March, a workshop about Master suppression techniques was held at Lund University. Does it exist within the academy? Well, at least the workshop had many curious participants from the Department of Geology and Department of Physical Geography and Ecosystem Science. First Katarina Billing, certified psychologist & journalist, explained the 13(!) most common comment techniques to watch out for, with a specific focus on what is common in academia. Afterwards, the participants discussed their experiences and later on shared one case for everyone with followed group discussion. Reflections on who participated; most were females and in the earlier stage of the carrier - is it a sign of change or a need? □

Grassroot network meeting at SYKE, Finland – Equality work in the face of the new decade

On the 6th of March, SYKE had its 7th grassroot meeting with 22 participants (17 female/ 5 male). The event was organised under the title "SYKE equality work in the face of the new decade".

This event sought to generate discussion about the worth of the Baltic Gender measures (such as mentoring programme, portfolio sparring and leadership training) for SYKE and for the development of its Gender Equality Programme.

The event was opened by the Director General Lea Kauppi, who provided summary of the "state of art" of (gender) equality promotion in SYKE. After that a group of SYKE employees told about their experiences about Baltic Gender activities. The feedback was very positive, and there was a general understanding that many of the measures should be integrated to SYKE GEP.

The ending of the Baltic Gender project was seen as regrettable, but the joint vision was that many of the activities could be continued.

Our Yammer -group "Equal opportunities in SYKE" goes on and it has 30 registered followers. □

Upcoming events

29–31 July 2020 Sydney, Australia: **Network Gender & STEM Conference 2020 – POSTPONED to July 29–31, 2021**. Details: <http://www.genderandstem2020.com.au/>

24–27 August 2020 Kiel, Germany: International Marine Conservation Congress - IMCC6 – **TO BE HELD ONLINE**. Details: <https://conbio.org/mini-sites/imcc6>

16–18 September 2020 Madrid, Spain: **XI European Conference on Gender Equality in Higher Education" POSTPONED to 15 – 17 September, 2021**.

Details: <http://upm.genderequalityconference2020.com/>

Women networks

AcademiaNet

- Data base with profiles of excellent female researchers from all disciplines in Germany (since 2010) and Europe (since 2012)
- platform initiated, founded and hosted by Robert-Bosch Stiftung (2010–2019);
- taken over and continued by Swiss National Science Foundation (since January 2020 profiles and content sites maintained again)

epws (European Platform of Women Scientists)

- since 2005; >100 member networks in 40 countries
- international non-profit organisation
- represents >12,000 female scientists in Europe and beyond to give them a voice in EU research policy

eswn (Earth Science Women's Network)

- shaped 2020, expanded 2005 (online center), officially launched 2014 as a non-profit, member-driven organization

FemConsult **Note: Website functions only partially in English available**

- data base of more than 3,000 female scientists with doctoral or post-doctoral qualification from all disciplines and working at universities, non-university research institutions, industry and commerce from the German-speaking countries

Femdat **Note: Website only partially in English**

- Swiss data base of highly qualified women (since 2001) with job offers (since 2006)
- swiss women career portal (log-in required)
- tips & knowledge for job entry, career and switching

FEMtech-Expertinnendatenbank

- database of female experts
- initiative of the Austrian Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT)
- further categories: news, events, knowledge, funding

FIF (Contact point women into EU Research) **Website in German with partial information in English**

- initiated 2001 by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
- to provide women in Germany with information and service relating to the EU's research framework programmes (currently: Horizon 2020); only advisory services – no funding
- offers for female scientists: (i) seminars, workshops & lectures on EU research funding and participation chances, (ii) first information about funding opportunities, (iii) consulting during application, (iv) information about being a consultant to the EU

GEPRIS **Note: project information available mainly in German language**

- online database made available by the DFG
- provides information on current DFG-funded research projects

INWES (International Network of Women Engineers and Scientists)

WICGE (International Network of Women in Coastal Geoscience and Engineering)

Interesting reading

Colleen Flaherty. **Early journal submission data suggest COVID-19 is tanking women's research productivity.** (April 21, 2020) Source URL: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/04/21/early-journal-submission-data-suggest-covid-19-tanking-womens-research-productivity>

Rama Salla Dieng. **Tired all the time: caring, parenting and home working during Covid-19.** (22 Apr 2020) Source URL: <https://www.coronetimes.net/parenting-home-working-covid-19/?fbclid=IwAR2eD4JQ90kj9WAgDPPZ1-GTpgkhoGirH99VWnGtlwSXnYBLwnm9Ii7vH9I>

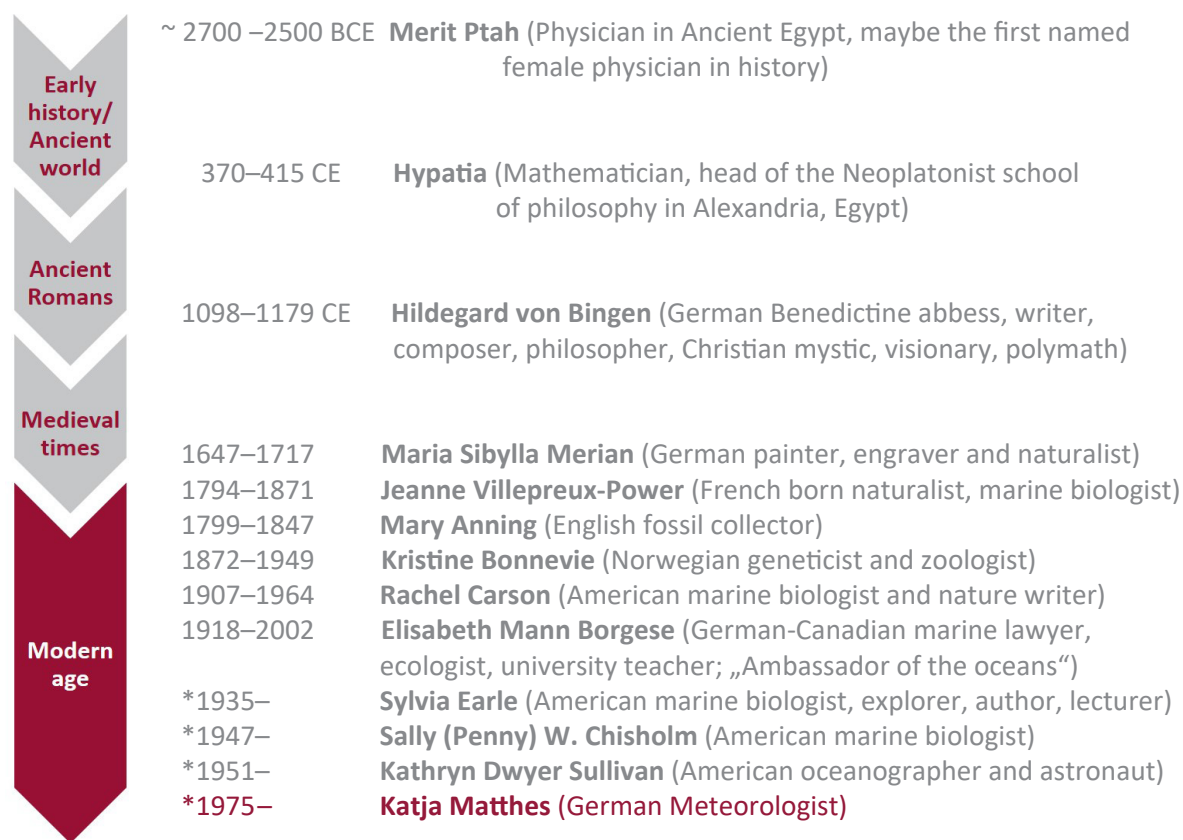
Denon Start, Shannon McCauley. **Gender underlies the formation of STEM research groups.** *Ecol Evol.* 2020; 00: 1– 10. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.6188>

Chris Woolston. **US national academy pushes to make grants contingent on gender equity.** *Nature* 580(7802): 296, 2020 04. DOI: [10.1038/d41586-020-00865-0](https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-020-00865-0)

Meredith Nash & Robyn Moore (2020). **'When I look in the bathroom mirror, I see all the women standing behind me': An evaluation of a leadership development program for women in STEM.** *Journal of Sociology.* <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783320911453>

Jenessa Duncombe (2019). **Women in oceanography still navigate rough seas.** *Eos*, 100 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1029/2019EO125909>

Brief history of women in [marine] science – Part 12



Past and present – Female scientists in portrait

Katja Matthes
(*September 23, 1975, Berlin, Germany)
– Meteorologist

Every month EPWS interviews a distinguished woman scientist in 10 questions.

In May 2020 EPWS has given the floor to Prof. Dr. Katja Matthes, GEOMAR Helmholtz Center for Ocean Research in Kiel and Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Germany, and coordinator of the Baltic Gender project.

EPWS: What made you want to go to science? How did you decide to choose your discipline and your particular field of research? Did you have an inspiring model (parent, relative, teacher, literature, etc.)?

I loved Mathematics, Physics and Geography in school and was always curious about Nature and how things work. During my last high school years, I once visited the Meteorological Institute of the Free University in Berlin and discovered my passion for meteorology. I knew from the beginning on that I wanted to work in research to understand the ongoing global warming and how

the climate system works. This wish was further strengthened during my first study semesters. I was very much inspired by Karin Labitzke, a female professor at the institute, who became my PhD advisor. She was at that time the first and only female physics professor in Germany and had an internationally renowned working group that attracted a number of very successful female scientists. She supported my participation at international conferences early on (I attended my first EGU – European Geosciences Union-meeting with the results of my diploma thesis) and was always there to provide career guidance.

EPWS: What do you work on? How important is your research topic for science development or society?

I work on understanding and quantifying natural climate variability and in particular the role of the Sun as one of the most important natural climate forcing agents beside volcanoes. Understanding natural climate variability is important to improve climate change predictions. Due to the periodicity of solar variability, in particular on a decadal scale, the Sun has the potential to

improve decadal climate predictions. In times of global change and rapid changes to our environment, people are in particular interested in improved forecasts for the upcoming years on a regional scale. Therefore, my work on improving decadal climate predictions directly benefits society, which always has been and still is a big motivation for me.

EPWS: What is your greatest success as a researcher (and as a teacher if you teach), the one you are most proud of? Could you share the memory of a great personal satisfaction during your research career with us?

I was really proud to be asked to contribute to the upcoming 6th IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) assessment report in two ways. I was responsible for providing the solar forcing dataset for all the climate model simulations that have been conducted for the IPCC report and I am a contributing author to the chapter on natural forcings. It is personally very satisfactory if your own research is recognized in this way and you have the feeling that it is truly important for society.

As a teacher, I was very proud when my preferred course about Stratospheric Physics and Dynamics, that I do change and adapt with lots of efforts and motivation every time and in which I involve the students actively, got the best grade in the German system (1.0) from the students afterwards. Again, it is personally very satisfactory that efforts and passion are recognized.

EPWS: In which country/countries have you been doing research?

I have mostly worked in Germany. For my postdoc phase, I spent three years in the US, but I also spent some shorter time periods for research in Japan, France and the UK. I really enjoyed the intercultural exchange with colleagues in and from other countries and the work experience in other research systems. Something that we all miss during the current corona crisis! We try to overcome this with videoconference meetings, which works well for a while, but meeting in person at some point is also necessary.

EPWS: What is your agenda for the coming months?

I will prepare myself for the next step in my career and position myself for this new challenge.

Did you meet any barriers (personal/social/structural) during your career as a scientific researcher? Did you benefit from mentoring?

After my PhD in a friendly and gender-balanced research group, I became aware of the gender-

issue and unconscious bias at several points during my career. I always had the impression that I needed to work more and harder than my male colleagues in order to be recognized. And I do think that women have to struggle more with combining work with a family, as they are the ones that give birth.

I remember that I kept my first pregnancy secret until very late (I was almost 8 months pregnant



Kiel Lighthouse for checking meteorological instruments, 08/2019 (Photo: private)

and it was getting difficult to hide) because I was afraid that my new Postdoc working contract could fail. It was unfortunate but I still believe that this was the right decision at the time since my German host was very critical about it. This was in contrast to my US host who warmly welcomed and supported me. I was further inspired during my time in the US by women working in science and being able to combine work and family. I attended a couple of networking events of the Earth's Science Women's Network (ESWN) in Boulder/Colorado – and it was completely normal to attend with a little baby (our second child that was shortly born after our first one in the US). The Postdoc time in the US was very inspiring scientifically and personally. After I returned to Germany, I participated in two mentoring programs for women, which were key to my career. Without attending those programs and having two very supportive (male) mentors as well as a very supportive husband, I would not be there where I am now.

What is the situation of gender equality in your working field? In the countries where you have been working, were there gender equalities policies and did you experience their effects?

What do you suggest for a better implementation of gender equality in science?

There is still a lack of women in leadership positions

in marine science and this is only changing slowly, although there are enough female early career scientists in the field. Even though there are gender equality plans and gender measures in Germany and many European countries, the key to reach gender-equality are structural changes in the institutions. This will lead to an increase in women's participation in decision making and hence promote gender equality careers and finally also stimulate excellence in science and technology by integrating the gender dimension in research.

Working in the US as a young postdoc was inspiring because I got to know the "stop-the-clock" concept for female early career scientists on a career ladder track. For the time women scientists were having and raising little kids, the counting of scientific achievements was stopped – this is something that is also slowly recognized in Germany and Europe and I really try to push this in tenure committees etc. Funding agencies in Germany and Europe are for example giving a 1.5 to 2-year bonus per child when calculating publication indices.

To overcome the unconscious bias and really work on gender balance and structural changes in marine sciences, I founded first a grass-root network at GEOMAR, the Women's Executive Board (WEB), in 2013 and then led in the past four years the EU project Baltic Gender.

I think we know the gender equality problem very well by now, it is time for implementation of what we have learned. It needs people that are ready to actively change the structures in the academic field as well as in the society!

Did you experience networking between women scientists? Can you comment your answer and explain why yes or not?

Yes, I experienced this not only in the mentoring programs for women that I attended but also in the grass-root networks (ESWN, WEB, etc.). I think networking between women scientists is a real key if you want to stay in science, as it helps a lot to realize that there are other women with exactly the same challenges and feelings.

If you could start again your life, would you choose again to be a scientist? What would you change?

Yes, I would definitely choose to be a scientist again and wouldn't change anything!

Could you leave a message to young European women scientists?

If you really love the science you are doing, keep on going, it's worth it. We need more women scientists in leadership positions in Europe! You need a long breath, a supportive partner and family, a good network and a mentor!

Text cited from: epws European Platform of Women Scientists Blog, Woman Scientist of the Month by EPWS News , <https://epws.org/woman-scientist-katja-matthes/>, May 04, 2020. Accessed: May 05, 2020

Photo: private [Retrieved from: <https://epws.org/woman-scientist-katja-matthes/>, accessed: May 5, 2020]

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