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Helmholtz centres facilitate Open Access Publishing with Copernicus Publications

In order to further promote the idea of Open Access in the sciences, six Helmholtz centres have signed a contract with Copernicus Publications so far. Thus, author's contribution to science through Open Access channels will be facilitated. The future publication fees that the authors incur with publication of Open Access papers will be centrally billed.

With Open Access publishing scientific papers can be read, shared and reused for free online. Thereby, Open Access business models change the financing: scientific institutions provide funds to finance the production and dissemination of a publication through so-called publication fees.

One goal of the Helmholtz Association is to promote Open Access publishing. That includes alleviating the scientists of publication fees. "We are very pleased about the message the Helmholtz Association is conveying by directly supporting Open Access publishing and its authors through incurring the publication costs. It is a good sign that more and more centres have chosen this method," explained Martin Rasmussen, Managing Director of Copernicus Publications. "This conveys an increasingly higher acceptance of Open Access."

With 28 fully peer-reviewed journals and 14 access-reviewed scientific discussion forums, Copernicus Publications is the largest Open Access publisher in the field of geosciences. Several of these publications have been edited by scientists from the Helmholtz Association.

The following Helmholtz Centres with geoscientific research interests have signed the contract: the GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel, the Helmholtz Centre Potsdam – GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences, the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research – UFZ, the Research Centre Jülich, the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, and the German Electron Synchrotron – DESY. This paves the way for the entry of other Helmholtz Centres.

"According to the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to knowledge in the sciences and humanities, the Helmholtz Association had already decided in 2004 to promote Open Access to make the results public to society, science, economics and politics," confirmed Roland Bertelmann, Library Director of the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences.

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The Helmholtz Association has not only supported the contract for openly accessible publications, but also the development of innovative forms of scientific quality assurance. Most of the publications of Copernicus facilitate a public peer-review whereby the reader can access referee reports and comments from the scientific community. Here the goal is to use these discussion contributions to improve the article such that the result is a particularly high quality publication.

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