

PRESS RELEASE



OZEANEUM Stralsund

(February 2018) On July 11 2008, German Chancellor Angela Merkel inaugurated OZEANEUM located on Stralsund's harbour island – the biggest newly-constructed museum at the time funded by the state. Behnisch Architects had designed a building that would give the UNESCO World Heritage town of Stralsund and its historical cityscape a distinct contemporary touch.

Counting over half a million visitors each year, OZEANEUM has become a first-rate tourist magnet. The museum is run as a non-profit Limited Liability Company and does not receive any funding. In May 2010, OZEANEUM was awarded "Europe's Museum of the Year 2010". The building's structure is made up of four amorphously formed building complexes that resemble rocks being washed around by the sea. Each complex is connected by one light-flooded foyer made of glass. When entering the building, three original whale skeletons already catch the visitor's eye. An unsupported escalator leads to the exhibition areas. It is 34 metres long – as long as a blue whale. About 50 partly huge sea water aquaria will take the visitor on a unique journey through the underwater world of the northern seas. The discovery tour starts with Stralsund's harbour basin in the Baltic Sea aquarium. All the way through bodden waters and eelgrass meadows, past the chalk coast and across Scandinavia's Archipelago Sea, the visitors experience the diverse local flora and fauna.

The biggest fish on display on the Baltic Sea tour are sturgeons which are shown in their natural habitat – the mouth of a river. In the spring of 2013, OZEANEUM's aquarists succeeded in breeding common jellyfish for the first time. Since then, these fascinating beauties can be marvelled at independent of the seasons in the Baltic Sea exhibition. Meanwhile, compass jellyfish have also been successfully bred.

The tanks of the North Sea aquarium show the biosphere of the North Sea and the North Atlantic. An elaborately designed tunnel aquarium is dedicated to Heligoland, Germany's only rocky island. OZEANEUM's largest tank contains 2.6 million litres of water. It is part of the "Open Atlantic" display and is home to schools of mackerel, two nurse sharks and various species of rays. Two 20-ton acrylic panes, each 30 centimetres thick, provide an 80-square-metres panoramic view on two levels. Since 2015, specially built aquaria display cold water corals. In front of and behind the scenes, more than 4 million litres of water permanently rush through the aquaria's water circulation systems. The initial filling of the tanks required 150 tons of salt. According to the exhibition organisers' concept, the aquaria are the living completion of all five exhibitions and their numerous original and rare pieces put on display such as various self-made zoological and botanical preserved specimens. OZEANEUM also presents Europe's biggest Baltic Sea exhibition including a plankton installation, a Baltic Sea relief to touch and elaborately arranged typical living environments displayed in large, triangular showcases.

One museum – four locations:

MEERESMUSEUM

Katharinenberg 14–20
18439 Stralsund
Tel.: +49 3831 2650-210
Fax: +49 3831 2650-209

OZEANEUM

Hafenstraße 11
18439 Stralsund
Tel.: +49 3831 2650-610
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NAUTINEUM

Kleiner Dänholm
18439 Stralsund
Tel.: +49 3831 2650-355

NATUREUM

Darßer Ort 1–3
18375 Born
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A permanent exhibition on the Exploration and Utilisation of the Sea as conceived by the German Marine Research Consortium, the World Wide Fund for Nature and other partners was opened in July 2011. Among others, it involves a deep-sea diving trip, shows original exhibits and focuses on aspects of German marine research as well as overfishing and methods of sustainable fishing.

Further expositions show the biodiversity of the world oceans or feature a more hands-on approach to marine life for children at the Children's Sea area, which was completely redone in 2017. One of the main attractions is the Humboldt penguins on the museum's roof terrace. These agile feathered swimmers can be observed through large windows. Visitors may witness the daily commented penguin feeding at 12:00 am and enjoy a unique view of Stralsund's old town from a height of 14 metres at the same time. Four penguin chicks hatched in the spring of 2017. Dr. Angela Merkel, bestselling author Frank Schätzing and other supporters took on animal sponsorships for these endangered animals.

The 1:1 Giants of the Seas exhibition in cooperation with Greenpeace is truly breathtaking: Several life-size whale models float under the ceiling. The biggest is a true to the original 26-metres-long blue whale. The exhibition also shows a plunging sperm whale fighting with a giant squid, an orca and a humpback whale beside her young. Everything culminates in a spectacular multimedia show with humpback whale songs or the sperm whale's clicking that helps them detect their prey at a depth of up to 3,000 metres. Real-life models of a manta ray and an ocean sunfish are on display as well.

OZEANEUM also welcomes visitor groups and provides a wide range of educational offers for school classes, preschools or day nurseries. During the summer months, pedagogically trained staff members go on "Become a Beach Detective!" tour at the beaches of the region where children and teenagers can playfully discover the local flora and fauna directly on the beach. One aim is to draw the youngsters' attention to the ever-increasing littering of the oceans with plastic waste. OZEANEUM is certified as family-friendly by the Mecklenburg-West Pomeranian tourist association and barrier-free by the German seminar for tourism.

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