



## Status Conference Research Vessels 2026

### Breakout Session: OFEG and OFEG Tech (05.03.2026)

#### Chair:

Dr. Jörg Bialas (GEOMAR, OFEG Tech Contact, moderator)

#### Speaker:

Dr. Nicolas Nowald (MARUM, OFEG Tech Contact Germany)

Dr. Doreen Sator (PtJ, OFEG Contact Germany)

Dr. Zeynep Erdem (NIOZ, OFEG Contact Netherlands)

#### Notes:

Dr. Susanne Fretzdorff (PtJ)

#### Presentations and Panel Discussion:

The History of OFEG and OFEG-Tech, participating nations, and the barter system for ships and equipment were presented.

OFEG arose from the need to pragmatically facilitate international cooperation in marine research, particularly when national capacities are insufficient in terms of time or logistics. At the same time, OFEG-Tech addresses the technical level and thus the question of how large marine equipment and its availability, exchange and use can be better coordinated internationally. Several nations are involved, contributing their capacities and procedures to this framework – with the common goal of making cross-border cooperation practicable.

OFEG offers opportunities for international cooperation between seafaring nations. Available periods in the cruise schedules of the barter ships are identified and can be offered to OFEG partners for use. For German seagoing marine researchers, there is the possibility of requesting a research vessel from another OFEG partner via a barter system with an approved cruise proposal.

The purpose of the regular meetings within the OFEG-Tech group is to (i) exchange knowledge and experience, (ii) identify opportunities for “bilateral training” and explore the exchange of technicians, and (iii) discuss common issues and raise them at the OFEG level or at the European level.

The panel discussion clearly demonstrated how (German) marine researchers can make use of OFEG and OFEG-Tech, and how effectively the exchange of knowledge, experience, and equipment works.

### Concluding Remark

OFEG is a strong network for efficient marine research through exchange and technical cooperation. The exchange of technical expertise within the OFEG Group is an extremely valuable tool for all the involved parties.