

WFWP Stuttgart, Germany Karl-Heinz Riesch's International Day of the Ocean

Ute Lemme
June 8, 2019



The UN Day of the Ocean has been celebrated annually on 8 June, since 2009. Its purpose is to awaken international awareness about current challenges connected with the ocean.

WFWP Stuttgart/Germany had invited Karl-Heinz Riesch, who served for 33 years as a deep-sea fishing captain, to give a presentation. His wife, Elisabeth Riesch, prepared salmon sandwiches and sushi, laid out on tables decorated with shells and sand. The 17 participants enjoyed drinks, snacks, cakes, filled rolls and other tasty items before Ute Lemme officially opened the program.

Karl-Heinz Riesch gave an account about the importance of the ocean, using projected pictures and videos. The ocean covers 71 % of the earth's surface, and only a small portion has been explored. The deepest areas reach about 11000 meters. It is possible to fish near the coast, on shelf sea and up to a depth of about 1600 meters. In some areas, pack- ice and icebergs are to be found in the water. Storms move the water and enrich it with oxygen. The ocean contributes to protecting the climate; it binds CO₂ and stores warmth and sea plants deliver 17% of the atmospheric oxygen. Sea animals and algae make an important contribution to human nutrition, and the sea provides not only salt but also many natural resources such as natural gas, mineral oil, manganese, methane etc. Tides and winds can be tapped into as energy sources, and there are many important sea routes for the transport of goods of all kind.

Our speaker also drew our attention repeatedly to threats faced by the ocean. In order to prevent over-fishing, catch quotas have to be set. As the climate warms, so does the sea, corals die and a wonderful underwater world is lost. Trash has thoughtlessly been dumped in the ocean and plastic waste is a threat to sea-life as well as man. The ocean already contains more plastic than fish.

Following some general remarks about the significance of the sea and its use by man, Karl-Heinz related some personal experiences from his life as a ship's captain and fisherman.

Afterwards we had the opportunity for some Q and A as we sat together and enjoyed more snacks.

Our deepest thanks go to Karl-Heinz Riesch and his wife for this special afternoon.

Reported by Ute Lemme (English Translation Catriona Valenta)
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