

OCCR Flash – News from the Oeschger Centre

Welcome to the first edition of the OCCR Flash! The *Oeschger Centre for Climate Change Research (OCCR)* is the centre of excellence for climate research of the University of Bern. We pool forces of research groups and focus on interdisciplinary research in the fields of natural, human and social sciences as well as economics and law.

Holistic Climate Research

Since the OCCR was founded in 2007 it has established itself as the focal point of climate research at the University of Bern. It now counts more than 200 members from 10 research institutes at 4 faculties. This fact underlines the ambition to carry out truly interdisciplinary research. The co-operation of all relevant scientific fields is the only feasible way to deal with the various levels of global climate change: regionally embedded and globally linked. To achieve this aim we support our members in different ways: from funding to common infrastructure and management support. The OCCR does not only conduct research of high international standard, but also runs the Graduate School of Climate Sciences offering a specialised, internationally oriented Master's and Ph.D. programme in climate sciences.

CH2014 Climate Impacts – a new national report

The OCCR takes the lead and launches new scientific initiatives. We coordinate a national report on climate impacts for Switzerland, a study that will be based on quantitative analyses using the new CH2011 climate scenarios. Publication is planned for 2014. The initiative aims at assessing a range of climatic impacts on different sectors such as agriculture, water, biodiversity, forest, extreme events, and infrastructure in Switzerland.

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A high-tech ^{14}C AMS replacement for the Oeschger Counter

More than 50 years ago, Hans Oeschger made science history with the invention of his ^{14}C -measuring device, the 'Oeschger ^{14}C decay Counter' at the University of Bern. Upon the initiative of Andreas Türler, Sönke Szidat and the numerous groups working in paleoclimatology, the OCCR will open a new ^{14}C AMS laboratory with the MIni radio-Carbon Dating System (MICADAS), an instrument built at ETH Zurich. The new laboratory will be used to trace environmental radioactivity, sources

of aerosol and CO_2 emissions, and specialize on compound-specific ^{14}C measurement of very small samples for dating purposes. The new device is expected to be operational in summer 2012.

How to use historical documentary data in modern risk assessment

The OCCR plays an active role in GCOS (Global Climate Observing System) and the dissemination of scientific knowledge. Part of the GCOS activities is EuroClim-Hist, an online database developed at the OCCR by Christian Pfister and colleagues. This unique tool allows the interested public to access 50'000 entries on past climate and extreme events since 1500 which were gathered from historical documents. Together with MeteoSwiss, we organize a symposium called *The Relevance of Historical Documentary Data for the Debate about Climate and Natural Hazards* to publicly launch this database. It will take place on 3 May 2012 at the University of Bern and is directed at practitioners involved in the management of natural risks. www.oeschger.unibe.ch/events/conferences/euroclimhist



The Oeschger Centre is named after the Bernese physicist Hans Oeschger (1927–1998). His pioneering work provided fundamental knowledge for the understanding of the Earth system.

For an overview of OCCR activities and events see www.oeschger.unibe.ch

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