

PRESS RELEASE

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An Ocean of Collaborative Opportunities

Transatlantic conference 'German Canadian Concourse' connects maritime ventures in Germany and Canada

In its fifth edition on November 17, the transatlantic conference series German Canadian Concourse (GCC) brought together thought leaders from various maritime sectors and related industries to showcase existing cooperation between Canada and Germany in the field of ocean data analytics and to explore the potential for future ocean ventures. Titled "Across the Data Pond – Analyzing a Sea of Ocean Data: Germany's and Canada's deep dive into Ocean Analytics and its potential for spurring a new industry niche", the GCC 2016 addressed the connection between scientific research and business eco-systems related to the maritime big data challenge.

A prime example for a German-Canadian initiative presented at the conference was the PASSAGES project under Airbus Defence and Space's lead, in cooperation with Dalhousie University in Halifax and Fraunhofer FKIE in Wachtberg, jointly funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). PASSAGES is a beacon project for the German government in line with the National Masterplan for Maritime Technologies. "PASSAGES not only demonstrates a data fusion concept for better situational awareness in the arctic sea, but also is a role model for bilateral research and technology joint ventures in the field of maritime security," says **Dr. Camilla Mohrdieck**, System Lead Engineer at Airbus Defence and Space.

The transatlantic symposium, which simultaneously took place in Berlin at the premises of Canada's Embassy and in Halifax, interlinked by video-conferencing, featured a rich supporting program for the purpose of illustrating relevant industry and research activities at the two Concourse locations. In cooperation with the Institute for Ocean Research Enterprise (IORE), the Halifax part of the Concourse organized a Field Trip to the new Center for Ocean Ventures & Entrepreneurship (COVE) to discover a collaborative facility for applied innovation in the ocean sector. "The idea of COVE brings together many different topics into one conversation and considers solutions that have worked in one industry and could have a dramatic impact on the ocean economy. To that end, we are focussing on collaborating outside our borders," says **Sheila Paterson**, COO at IORE, describing COVE's mission on the GCC panel and adds towards the Berlin audience: "We are working on bringing a delegation of German businesses to COVE during Nova Scotia Oceans Week in June 2017."

As a matching initiative on the German side the Concourse featured a presentation of the Ocean Technology Center (OTC) in Rostock which aims to provide a subsea test area for underwater technology and business development. **Prof. Dr. Uwe Freiherr von Lukas**, Associate Director at the Fraunhofer Institute for Visual Computing and board member of the Subsea Monitoring Network, shared his vision of the OTC concept and concludes: "Our attendance at the GCC offers us a great opportunity of match-making with Canadian partners as we are very interested in establishing a linkage across the Atlantic for sharing experiences and engaging in joint development projects."

Atlantic Canada and the maritime states of Germany are predestined partners in the maritime sector. The Hanseatic City of Bremen, with a strong industrial footprint in the maritime and aerospace sector, took a stake at this year's marine-oriented GCC by hosting a networking reception. "The maritime industries have remained one of the main pillars of Bremen's economy. Nowadays they strongly connect to the Bremen space start-up scene," explains **Senator Martin Günthner**, Minister of Economic Affairs, Labour and Ports of the Federal State of Bremen, in his welcome notes. **Dr. Barbara Cembella**, Cluster Manager at Bremeninvest, welcomed the Berlin audience to the Permanent Representation of the Federal State of Bremen emphasizing the importance of relations between the State and Canada. The decision to hold the 2016 GCC in Halifax, in turn, reflected the city's growing importance as a centre for forward-looking initiatives in the maritime sector and was endorsed by the **Honourable Stephen McNeil**, Premier of Nova Scotia with the words: "Nova Scotia looks forward to continuing to build upon the warm relationship we have with Germany by strengthening German-Canadian cooperation in ocean analytics."

The German Canadian Concourse has been mandated by several attendees at the conference to facilitate match-making opportunities with partners across the Atlantic. "Already in the run-up to the GCC, we have been approached by various organizations which look for contacts in Canada and Germany to engage in transatlantic ocean ventures. We are pleased that our platform is able to offer added value for innovative initiatives with a transatlantic focus," says the GCC Chairman, **Dr. Matthias Mück**.

Further information:

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