

Claudia Schmid

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I always loved the ocean, and spent nearly every summer vacation in the Mediterranean region, mostly on or in the water. My biggest talents in school were physics and mathematics, which made the decision to combine my love for the ocean with a career in physical oceanography an easy one. I enrolled at the University of Kiel (Germany) in 1986 to study physical oceanography at the Institute of Marine Science. Throughout a large part of my time as a student, I had opportunities to go to sea and thereby learn a lot about data collection and analysis. Probably the most exciting cruise I have been a part of was one where we were chasing Mediterranean salt lenses. It involved plotting the data throughout the cruise and adjusting the cruise track to map out these features and find their center. We also seeded these eddies with RAFOS floats to track their movement over several years. The chief scientist for this cruise was Rolf Käse, a theoretical oceanographer who loved going to sea and who became my master's thesis advisor. The thesis involved performing model experiments to increase understanding of eddy movement in the ocean.

Once I had my master's degree, I went to work in the Marine Physics Division on a project lead by Walter Zenk. The

goal was to measure the circulation of Antarctic Intermediate Water using RAFOS floats and hydrographic observations. During that time, I began working on my PhD, studying the dynamics of Antarctic Intermediate Water circulation with Gerold Siedler as my advisor. After finishing my PhD in 1998, I was interested in going abroad and had the opportunity to become a postdoctoral associate at the University of Miami Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, working at NOAA's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory in the Physical Oceanography Division led by Silvia Garzoli. During that time, I continued studying aspects of Antarctic Intermediate Water circulation using data from profiling floats. I also became involved in the Argo project, which was initiating an array of 3,000 profiling floats in the open ocean. Achieving global data coverage with regular sampling was a dream come true, and it motivated me to become involved in data management in addition to being a co-principal investigator for this project. I also joined the PIRATA (Prediction and Research Moored Array in the Tropical Atlantic) project to deploy Atlas moorings in the northeastern tropical Atlantic, a region where tropical

storms form and where the measurements collected help to improve estimates of the heat balance. In addition to the scientific importance of this project, it gives me an opportunity to go to sea once in a while as chief scientist for mooring recovery and redeployment cruises. During these cruises, we also collect hydrographic data along a repeat section at 23°W that helps monitor the oxygen-minimum zone in the northeastern tropical Atlantic.



Claudia during small boat operations performed as part of the 2013 PIRATA (Prediction and Research Moored Array in the Tropical Atlantic) Northeast Extension cruise that serviced PIRATA moorings. NOAA's research vessel *Ronald H. Brown* can be seen in the background.