



PRESS RELEASE

OZEANEUM

(Version: August 2026) On 11 July 2008, former German Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel inaugurated the OZEANEUM on Stralsund's harbour island—at the time, the largest new museum building in Germany to be supported by federal funding. With this spectacular construction designed by Behnisch Architekten, the UNESCO World Heritage city's harbour panorama gained a bold, contemporary landmark. Attracting more than half a million visitors each year, the OZEANEUM quickly became a major cultural magnet. In May 2010, it was named European Museum of the Year, and by 2026 the museum had welcomed more than ten million guests since its opening.

The OZEANEUM consists of four organically shaped building sections linked by a glass atrium flooded with natural light - like pebbles awash on the seashore. The white ship-steel façades resemble sails billowing in the wind. Upon entering the museum, visitors are greeted by three suspended whale skeletons. A 34-metre-long free-standing escalator—the length of a blue whale—leads upwards to the exhibition galleries.

The galleries display rare originals as well as carefully prepared specimens of marine animals and plants. Europe's largest Baltic Sea exhibition is found in the OZEANEUM, featuring an oversized "plankton cloud", a tactile relief model of the Baltic Sea, and large triangular showcases representing characteristic habitats. Since July 2011, the exhibition Exploration and Use of the Seas, developed with the German Marine Research Consortium, WWF and other partners, has offered visitors a simulated dive into the deep sea—accompanied by original objects highlighting the German marine research programme. The exhibition also addresses issues such as overfishing and sustainable fishing practices.

Fifty seawater aquariums take visitors on a unique journey through the underwater world of the northern seas. The Baltic Sea aquarium route begins in Stralsund's harbour basin, then passes through Bodden (lagoon) waters and seagrass meadows, past Rügen's chalk cliffs, and along the skerries of Scandinavia, revealing the extraordinary biological diversity of the Baltic Sea.

One museum – four locations:

MEERESMUSEUM

Katharinenberg 14–20
18439 Stralsund
Tel.: +49 3831 2650-210
Fax: +49 3831 2650-209

OZEANEUM

Harald-Lastovka-Platz
(formerly Hafenstraße 11)
18439 Stralsund
Tel.: +49 3831 2650-610
Fax: +49 3831 2650-609

NATUREUM

Darßer Ort 1–3
18375 Born
Tel.: +49 38233 304
Fax: +49 38233 70448

NAUTINEUM

Kleiner Dänholm
18439 Stralsund
Tel.: +49 3831 2650-355

deutsches-meeresmuseum.de/en

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The North Sea and North Atlantic section showcases habitats ranging from tidal flats to the open Atlantic Ocean. An exceptional tunnel aquarium is dedicated to Heligoland, Germany's only high seas island. The OZEANEUM's largest tank, holding 2.6 million litres of water, underwent an extensive renovation in early 2018. Here, schools of fish, sharks and rays glide above an authentic replica of an 11-metre-long shipwreck. Two massive acrylic panels, each more than 30 centimetres thick and weighing over 20 tonnes, together provide over 80 square metres of viewing space on two levels. Smaller, specially constructed tanks have housed a population of cold-water corals since 2015—the only ones of their kind in Europe. In total, more than four million litres of "seawater" circulate through the OZEANEUM's systems—all produced in the OZEANEUM from tap water.

The museum's rooftop terrace harbours another highlight: a colony of Humboldt penguins. Visitors can watch these endangered birds both on land and under water, while enjoying panoramic views of Stralsund's historic city centre from a height of 14 metres. Former Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel and other patrons have taken on sponsorships of these threatened animals.

The visitor journey of the OZEANEUM concludes with the impressive Giants of the Sea 1:1 exhibit, created in cooperation with Greenpeace. Suspended from the ceiling, life-size models of whales fill the hall—from a 26-metre blue whale, to a diving sperm whale locked in battle with a giant squid, to orcas, humpback whales with calves, and a beluga mother with her young. The immersive show 'The World of Whales' uses 360° sound and impressive animations to convey interesting facts about marine mammals and the threats they face.

Year after year, the OZEANEUM receives awards for its family-friendly and accessible visitor experience. In recognition of its comprehensive facilities for visitors with disabilities, the OZEANEUM has been certified by the nationally recognised accessibility label „Reisen für Alle“ (Travel for All).

Outside the OZEANEUM, a 200-metre-wide flight of steps down to the water's edge invites guests to relax and enjoy the view across the harbour and Strelasund. A light installation evokes the shimmering movements of shoaling herring.

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For more information:

www.deutsches-meeresmuseum.de/en/ozeaneum

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