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## **Germany's Seven Seas: Marine Biology and Ecological Imperialism During the Long Twentieth Century**

This research project aims to reexamine the emergence of marine biology as global environmental science from the last third of the nineteenth century to the end of the Cold War Era. This narrative about German marine biology moves beyond a straightforward history of science and is influenced by the approach of ecological imperialism and investigations of how “environmental awareness” emerged historically through colonial and post-colonial encounters with the sea.

Case studies examine scientific field work, cultural imagination, and economic overexploitation as different paths leading to a more complex understanding of global environments and environmentalism. For example, the investigation of animal behavior studies undertaken in marine laboratories and aquariums demonstrates how scientific models of the “global” and the “environment” came into being from the 1870s to the 1930s. Analyses of marine biological expeditions from the 1890s to the 1980s can illustrate how contacts of scientists with marine animals shaped cultural perceptions of the sea that led to conservation measures. Different approaches to dealing with overexploitation in the sector of fisheries development politics from the 1950s to the 1980s reveal the fact that notions of the emerging “global environmentalism” were merely perspectives of the industrialized West. Sea animals and their changing meanings are links between these case studies.