

RV Zeeleeuw to Serve for Kenya



The Flemish government's oceanographic research vessel RV Zeeleeuw was officially handed over to the Republic of Kenya on 3 May 2013. The ship will sail under the Kenyan flag and will be named RV Mtafiti, which is Swahili for "researcher"™.

The donation of the vessel fell within a collaboration between Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) and [Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute](#) (KMFRI). On 19 October 2012 the two institutes signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for bilateral collaboration in the field of marine sciences.

The name is said to be appropriate, since RV Zeeleeuw has served Belgian and international marine researchers in the southern bight of the North Sea, for thirteen years.

Also in Kenya the ship will continue to serve marine research and will be managed by the KMFRI.

Co-operation VLIZ and Kenya

The 3 May 2013 the final documents for the handover of the vessel were signed by Mr. Mutua Kilaka (Financial Secretary for the Kenyan Ministry of Finance). Within the frame of the MoU, VLIZ will co-ordinate and facilitate the translocation of the vessel, co-operate in all scientific operations such as providing and placing scientific instruments on board of the ship, training IT staff, scientific assistants, students, etc. The research vessel itself will further strengthen the co-operation between Belgium and Kenya in the field of marine research, technology and education.

Training and transfer

Until the end of May 2013, the elected Kenyan captain and engineer and the RV Mtafiti will be prepared for sailing. If all goes well, the RV Mtafiti should leave the harbour of Ostend and set sail to Mombasa via the Suez Canal mid-June 2013. The journey should take approximately 33 days, with the arrival at the harbour of Mombasa around mid-July 2013 where the research vessel will receive a great welcome ceremony to fit this milestone in marine research at the West-Indian coast.

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/news/rv-zeeleeuw-to-serve-for-kenya>
