

Ninetieth birthday of Reimar Lüst - A life dedicated to science and research

Prof. Dr. Reimar Lüst celebrates his 90th Birthday on the 25 of March 2013. The Max Planck Institute for Meteorology (MPI-M) in Hamburg congratulates this brilliant astrophysicist, scientific statesman, former president of Max Planck Society (MPS), and close friend of the institute, on this special occasion.

The MPI-M was founded in 1975, with the support of Prof. Lüst who at the time was the president of the MPS. With the establishment of the MPI-M, the Max Planck Society recognized the importance of climate research long before climate change became a pressing societal issue. Prof. Lüst retired with his wife in Hamburg where he maintains his office within the MPI-M and where he continues to play an active role in advising the institute and other scientific bodies.



*Prof. Dr. Reimar Lüst
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Reimar Lüst (born 1923) can reflect back at a singular career in science. He studied physics and received his PhD in 1951 under Prof. Dr. Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker at the Max Planck Institute for Physics in Göttingen.

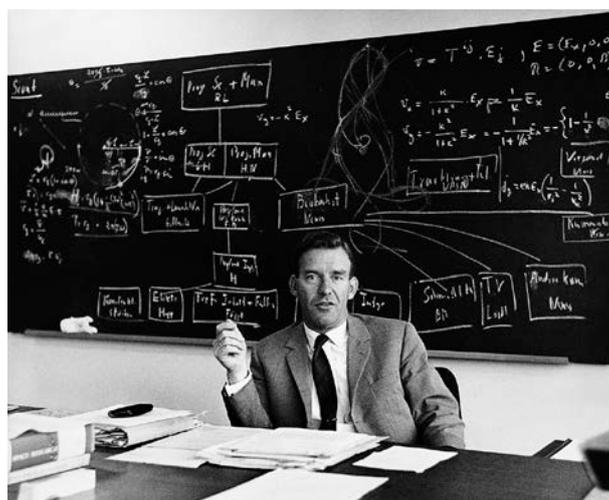
After several research periods and teaching assignments at different renowned universities in the USA, Prof. Lüst became a director of the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics in Garching near Munich in 1963, which he led until 1972. In Garching he laid the foundation for German space research and exploration. Using French rockets, barium containers were carried to high altitudes to create artificial comet tails. This work demonstrated that ionized particles in natural comet tails, were oriented by the solar wind. During this time he was also instrumental in setting up the European space agency ESRO. He was ESRO's Director of Science (1962 - 1964) and Vice President (1968 - 1970). From 1965 to 1972, Prof. Lüst also was a member of the German Council of Science and Humanities (Wissenschaftsrat), becoming its head in 1969.



Prof. Dr. Reimar Lüst and former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt at Bucerius Law School Hamburg on 12 November 2012. The ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius awarded its Medal of Honor to Prof. Lüst. © David Ausserhofer.

In 1972 Prof. Lüst became the President of the Max Planck Society and served for two terms totally twelve years. In the following six years he was the General Director of the European Space Agency (ESA) followed by his appointment as President of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation from 1989 to 1999.

Prof. Lüst played an instrumental role in the founding of the Jacobs University Bremen. He became a member of the planning committee of the former “International University Bremen” in 1998 and chaired the Board of Governors of this newly launched university from February 1999 to December 2004. He remains the honorary chairman of Jacobs University’s Board of Governors, and on the occasion of its 10th anniversary, Prof Lüst was awarded the Jacobs University’s first honorary doctorate.



Picture from the book „Der Wissenschaftsmacher - Reimar Lüst im Gespräch mit Paul Nolte“, Verlag C.H. Beck.

Prof. Reimar Lüst has received numerous awards; most recently he was awarded the ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius Medal of Honor for his merits in science.

Prof. Lüst has spent his lifetime championing the ideas of scientific research, advancing scientific institutions, and expanding the frontiers of human knowledge. It gives all of us at the MPI-M the greatest pleasure to wish this extraordinary individual the happiest of birthdays.

Max Planck Society:

<http://www.mpg.de/183324/reimar-luest>

Book recommendation:

„Der Wissenschaftsmacher - Reimar Lüst im Gespräch mit Paul Nolte“, Verlag C.H. Beck

A panel discussion of Reimar Lüst and Paul Nolte was recorded on 08.04.2008 at MPI-M. The DVD is available at MPI-M (in German).

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