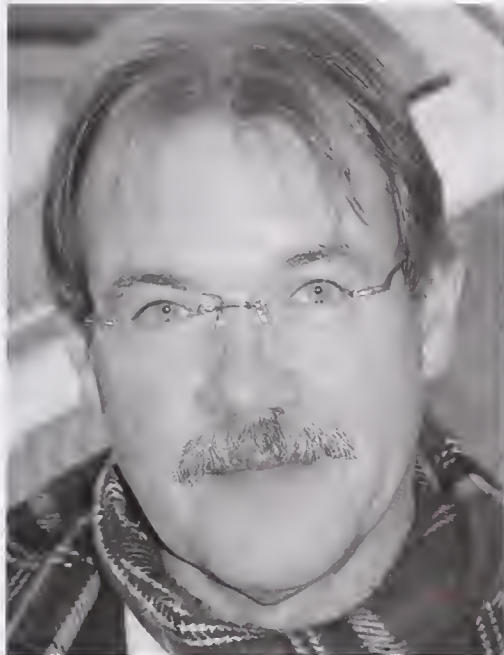


Obituary to Karl-Heinz Lampe, Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig

* October, 14th 1953 in Fürstenau / Osnabrück

† September, 14th 2010 in Mechernich

On September, 14th 2010, our dear colleague and friend Karl-Heinz Lampe was snatched away from his active and productive scientific life at the mere age of 56 due to a treacherous disease.



Karl-Heinz studied biology at the universities of Hannover, Wien, and Kiel, where he completed his dissertation on parasitic insects in 1983. Until 1985, he worked as a scientific assistant at the University of Kiel. In 1986, he became a curator at the Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig (ZFMK) in Bonn, where he was in charge of the collections of Hymenoptera, Auchenorrhyncha and Orthoptera, and later became head of the biodiversity informatics. He was a pioneer of digitalization of natural history collections, and the first prototype of his collection database was implemented long before the rise of the digital revolution. After the reunification of Germany, he was responsible for the acquisition of the first computers in the Museum für Naturkunde in Berlin together with Prof. Dr. Clas Naumann, the former director of the ZFMK. Together with Dirk Striebing, his colleague from Berlin, he developed the BIODAT collection-database, which facilitated the addition of the ZFMK collections to the newly founded Global Biodiversity Information Facility. Karl-Heinz participated in many international meetings and groups, such as the Taxonomic Database Working Group, and was always welcome as a lecturer and a participant in discussions. As part of the BIOTA Ostafrika project, he successfully managed the digitalization of collections at the Nairobi National Museum in Kenya.

Karl-Heinz's interests were not limited to natural history collections, but also spanned to cultural history. For more than a decade he assisted in developing the CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model, an ontology that enables the exchange of information from different fields of cultural heritage; the German version of the book "Definitions of the CIDOC CRM" was released just before his death. His achievements live on in WissKI, a project on transdisciplinary approaches in documentation funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, in which he worked together with colleagues from the Germanisches Nationalmuseum and the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg. Thanks to Karl-Heinz's efforts, the CIDOC CRM was expanded to fit the needs of biodiversity and cultural history data. He understood the inter- and transdisciplinary dialog like nobody else. These were not just buzzwords for him, as he filled them with life through concrete teamwork with many partners from other scientific fields.

On September, 27th 2010 a special memorial ceremony for Karl-Heinz was held at the ceremonial hall of the ZFMK. His family, together with the staff of the ZFMK and colleagues from other institutions, paid their last respects to him. The valedictions and speeches made it clear how much his colleagues appreciated his kind nature and scientific abilities. His ability to be an attentive listener and an entertaining conversation partner was valued by everyone who accompanied him on his numerous travels and excursions. His cooperativeness and collegiality were rare qualities in a scientific world that is dominated by competition and vanity. His shining optimism never left him; despite his illness, he continued participating in projects and collaborating with partners.

"Kalle" was a friend and companion to us! We completed many projects and discussed and planned many more. It was his personal concern that the running projects will be continued and completed in accordance with his vision. We will try to achieve this, knowing that he is irreplaceable – Kalle will live on in our memories and through his work.

Klaus Riede & Mark Fichtner