

Once upon a time

there was a microorganism in the deep sea

Dr. Pamela Rossel from the bridge working group "Marine Geochemistry" (Institute for Chemistry and Biology of the Marine Environment/Max-Planck-Institute for Marine Microbiology) is the author of the short story "Lucas, our common ancestor in the deep sea volcanoes".

Lucas adventure was published together with eleven other stories, fairy tales and poems in the e-book "Once upon a time – a scientific fairy tale", which is now available for free download.

Pamela Rossel was born in Chile and has lived with her family in Bremen for twelve years. We met her at her workplace at the Institute for Chemistry and Biology of the Marine Environment at the University of Oldenburg.

How did the e-book idea originate?

In the Science Year 2016*2017 Seas and Oceans, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research together with Wissenschaft im Dialog awarded a university competition. Under the heading "show your research" a total of 150 projects were submitted, of which 15 received a grant of € 10,000 each.

How many people worked on the e-book?

Altogether, we have been 29 scientists working on the book at the MARUM - Center for Marine Environmental Sciences at the University of Bremen. There were many different tasks. Some took care of concept, marketing or finance, while others wrote, illustrated or translated the stories. The native language of most authors was Spanish, just like mine, followed by German and English. First, the English e-book was finished. Meanwhile, the German and Spanish versions became available.

One of the stipulations of the award was to finish the project in one year. Was time enough?

It was a lot of work! And in fact, much more than we had anticipated. Especially the translations of all texts in three languages were very time consuming. I first wrote my story in Spanish and then translated it into English. Furthermore, I have translated part of other stories and also edited the Spanish e-Book. In addition, my second child was born, so I took advantage of the maternity leave to work on this project. I remember this time as a good period of my life but also very intense.

Which age group is the e-book aimed at?

First and foremost we wrote it for schoolchildren, as well as for parents, grandparents and other adults who read the book to younger children. All texts are understandable and exciting. Technical terms are largely explained in a glossary at the end of each

story. So everyone can decide for themselves how deep they want to immerse in science. We want to reach as many readers as possible in this way.

Are readings planned?

So far there have been eight readings in Bremen, several of them during the Maritime Week. I would imagine that we can offer others - in different languages - if there is interest. A reading in Haus der Wissenschaft in Bremen, on the 27 April 2018, is scheduled.

Has all the work been worthwhile?

In any case. For us scientists, communicating scientific topics in a way that is understandable and interesting for a broad audience was a challenge, which we consider to be very important and gladly accepted. We have received a lot of positive feedback and have since been recognized as one of the three best projects in the competition.

Dr. Pamela Rossel was interviewed by Simone Wiegand, Institute for Chemistry and Biology of the Marine Environment (ICBM)