



Catherine Maillard began under the direction of the two notable pioneers in French oceanography: Henri Lacombe and Paul Tchernia. She took part in the MEDOC cruises in the Gulf of Lion in the Mediterranean during the winter of 1969 at which time she shared the cruises with Michèle Fieux, the first woman oceanographer on board French research vessels. In 1972, she presented her Ph.D. thesis on deep water formation in the Red Sea and began a distinguished career in physical oceanography. During the international GATE (GARP Atlantic Tropical Experiment) program in 1974 she was chief scientist on a cruise to the Mid-Atlantic and during 1975-1976 she spent time on board BOHRA2, the buoy moored off Marseille in the Gulf of Lion. After a stay at WHOI working alongside Phil Richardson, she returned to France to join the Centre National pour l'Exploitation des Oceans (CNEXO) in 1976 and later the oceanography laboratory in Brest led by François Madelain. Continuing the work initiated at WHOI, in 1986 she published the Atlas of the North Atlantic. Catherine then moved briefly to IFM in Kiel before taking part in studies in North Atlantic deep water circulation and of meddies in 1991. She also organised two MEROU cruises in the Red Sea (1982) and took part in the Confluence cruises in the South Atlantic as well as being in charge of staff training for two Indonesian Research vessels.

However, we are honoring her primarily for her work on oceanographic databases. In the 1980s, she took over the responsibility of rebuilding the French oceanographic data centre (SISMER) and built up a network of joint cooperation in the scientific community, which greatly enhanced the international image of SISMER. She successfully submitted and carried out several European Projects such as Medar/Medatlas and more recently Seadatanet. These projects helped to create a close working relationship between European data centres and scientific users for data sharing and normalisation. The success of the International Marine Data and Information Systems (IMDIS) conferences initiated in Brest in 2005 demonstrated how important the questions of data exchange are. Catherine has been a driving force in oceanographic data management. She has always attempted to involve the data management community in all countries, whatever their political tendency, as well as sharing her knowledge and skills in the field of data management. From data collection to data management through an ocean research experience, Catherine Maillard has demonstrated that the three communities can work in a close and friendly relationship to the benefit of all.