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In memory of DVW President Prof. Dr. Ing. Karl-Friedrich Thöne

An obituary by HAGEN GRAEFF*

Since the »Declaration of Bremen« (»Bremer Erklärung«) from 2008 the geo societies DVW (German Society for Geodesy, Geoinformation and Land Management) and DHyG (German Hydrographic Society) are friendly connected. On 15 July 2016 the President of the DVW Prof. Dr. Ing. Karl-Friedrich Thöne died unexpectedly at the age of 59 years. At a deeply moving sea burial off the island of Föhr we said farewell.

Author

Hagen Graeff was President of the DVW until 2008.

This text is a shortened translation of the obituary published in ZfV (DVW journal).

Prof. Dr. Ing. Karl-Friedrich Thöne was born 4 August 1956 in Neu-Garstedt (district of Hamburg-Harburg). From 1976 till 1982 he studied Geodesy at the Technical University of Berlin and with a following scholarship he went to Portugal for further studies on agricultural restructuring in the context of the EU accession. Over the years his professional focus was set on land development starting in 1985 in the Administration of Agricultural Structure of Lower Saxony. Further stations in his professional career were:

- 1990: Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry;
- 1996: Head of the Department Land Development;
- 1994: Ph.D. in Engineering, »Die agrarstrukturelle Entwicklung in den neuen Bundesländern. Zur Regelung der Eigentumsverhältnisse und Neugestaltung ländlicher Räume« (»Development of Agricultural Structure in the new Federal States. Regulation of Ownership Structures and Rural Reorganisation«).

In 1998 Prof. Dr. Ing. Karl-Friedrich Thöne started his career in the Thuringian Ministry for Agriculture, Nature and Environment and as head of department he was responsible for 2000 employees. One of his greatest achievements was the creation

of the public-law institution »Thuringian Forestry« (»Thüringer Forst«) showing his deep interest in rural development, forestry and environmental protection. The »Green Belt« (»Das grüne Band«) was another regional project of international significance he was very much engaged in.

Prof. Dr. Ing. Karl-Friedrich Thöne held numerous honorary positions and represented our professional interests in various committees, councils and advisory boards. At the Technical University of Dresden he was honorary professor for international land policy and at the Technical University of Munich he held lectures in the international Master study programme on land management and land tenure for professionals.

On 1 January 2001 Prof. Dr. Ing. Karl-Friedrich Thöne was elected Vice President by the DVW. Eight years later he became President of this society. For almost 16 years he represented, formed and supported the society's interest in an excellent way. This extraordinary engagement was only made possible by the understanding support of his wife Jutta and daughter Mareike.

During these 16 years Karl-Friedrich Thöne was the driving personality behind the DVW's continuous development. Closer cooperation, a sense of community and more intense communication among members and work groups became everyday practice, as well as our presence on Twitter, Facebook, Xing and the *DVW-news*. Preserving and renewing without giving up traditions were significant elements during his presidency. Taking part in Europe and representing national interests in the world association FIG was another passionate goal of Karl-Friedrich Thöne. Also the INTERGEO conference and trade fair stands for his great achievements.

Karl-Friedrich Thöne was not only DVW President, he was a personality who generated ideas and when necessary convinced with unconventional ideas and solutions. The DVW has lost a friend and an advisor, a politically motivated creator and an important geodesist. He leaves footprints, which will be hard to fill. We – the national associations of the DVW, the working groups and the board members – are full of admiration and thankfulness for his achievements.

We will honour his memory at all times. [👉](#)

