DESERVE is a Helmholtz Virtual Institute funded from the Initiative and Networking Fund of the Helmholtz Association.

Helmholtz Virtual Institutes bring together the key competencies of one or more Helmholtz Centres with those of one or more universities. Further national and international partners may be involved as associated partners, thus turning Virtual Institutes to centres of international scientific excellence.

Virtual Institutes have their own executive and management structure, and develop special measures to qualify their young researchers.

The Helmholtz Association is dedicated to pursuing the long-term research goals of state and society, and to maintaining and improving the livelihoods of the population. To this end, the Helmholtz Association carries out top-level research to identify and explore the major challenges facing society, science, and the economy.

DESERVE offers the unique opportunity to integrate the scientific results already achieved or presently elaborated in the Dead Sea region into a joint scientific approach based on earth, water, and environmental sciences.

DESERVE is designed as a cross-disciplinary and cooperative international project of the Helmholtz Centres of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ), and Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Studies (UFZ) with well-established partners and associated partners from Germany, Israel, Jordan, and Palestine.
**THE DEAD SEA**

A Two-edged Environment

The Dead Sea is a unique environment located in the Dead Sea Rift Valley. The fault system of the Dead Sea Rift Valley forms the political borders among Israel, Jordan, and Palestine. Climate change and extensive exploitation of groundwater and surface water even aggravate the situation. These processes are closely connected to the physiological and geological structure of the Dead Sea basin and result in three key challenges: Environmental risks, water availability, and climate change. They can be only mastered in an interdisciplinary research effort involving all riparian countries.

DESERVE is aimed at studying coupled atmospheric, hydrological, and lithospheric processes, such as sinkholes, flash floods, and earthquakes. This interdisciplinary research approach will contribute to a sound scientific understanding of the ongoing processes. Furthermore, it allows for the development of prediction models, remediation strategies, and risk assessments with respect to environmental risk, water availability, and climate change.

DESERVE aims to improve the interdisciplinary education of young researchers and to establish a spirit of cooperation among the different disciplines of earth and environmental sciences. Interdisciplinary Winter Schools will put this into practice.

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