

Media Release

Voith Turbo

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New research vessel of the Federal Republic of Germany to be equipped with eVSP

- In operation from 2026 for national and international marine research
- eVSP and VIT enable sustainable and efficient operation
- High performance in dynamic positioning makes safe and precise work possible even in adverse conditions

HEIDENHEIM, GERMANY. The start of construction of the Meteor IV was marked with the keel laying at the Neptune shipyard in Rostock in mid-July 2023. The specialized vessel, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, is expected to be completed and ready to start making an important contribution to national and international marine research in 2026. Focus will be on environmental and climate topics. The results of the investigations will supply new building blocks for the solutions to society's great challenges of today and tomorrow.

The 125-meter-long ship will be fitted out with state-of-the-art research equipment enabling it to carry out its multifunctional and interdisciplinary tasks. This will include laboratories and high-precision echo sounders as well as research winches for measurements in the deepest ocean trenches.

The Meteor IV will also have high-precision positioning systems enabling high-precision work to be carried out. At the heart of these systems is state-of-the-art propulsion technology from Voith: Two powerful electric Voith Schneider Propellers (eVSP 32X8/285) at the stern, supported by a Voith Inline Thruster (VIT 2000-1650H) and a retractable rudder propeller at the bow provide the necessary thrust for the research vessel. The extremely fast response time of the eVSP enables high performance in accurate dynamic positioning and excellent maneuverability, which clearly surpasses that of comparable propulsion concepts, even in rough waters.

The Meteor IV is designed for a service life of 30 years at 345 days of use per year. This high usage rate in combination with the long service life was also a reason why the operators and the shipyards decided in favor of the eVSP. The innovative ship propulsion system features high reliability, low wear, and low maintenance – especially since the propulsion system does without a gearbox.

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Another advantage of the eVSP: The propulsion system has an extremely low level of vibration and includes an integrated roll stabilization system, which can reduce vessel roll. This greatly enhances passenger comfort and working conditions for the maximum 71 people (36 nautical and technical crew members and 35 researchers) on board. It will also make it possible for them to work more safely when the ship is in rough waters.

Page 2 of 3

“The high efficiency of the eVSP makes operation of the vessel not just more economical but also more sustainable,” adds Dr. Dirk Jürgens, Vice President Research & Development at Voith Turbo Marine.

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Page 3 of 3

Research vessel Meteor IV of the Federal Republic of Germany with two electric Voith Schneider Propellers (eVSP) and a Voith Inline Thruster (VIT). Image source: FR. FASSMER GmbH & Co. KG

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