

Prof. Dr. Adrian Jäggi new Chair of the SGC

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Since January 2023, Prof. Dr. Adrian Jäggi, Director of the Astronomical Institute of the University of Bern (AIUB), is the new Chairman of the Swiss Geodetic Commission (SGC, <https://www.sgc.ethz.ch/index.html>), a commission of the Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT, <https://scnat.ch/>). He replaces the previous president of the SGK, Prof. Dr. Markus Rothacher, who was former assistant at the AIUB. Adrian Jäggi thus joins a long tradition of close relations between AIUB and the SGC.



On the advice of General Dufour as well as the Swiss Natural Science Society (SNS) - today's Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT) - the Federal Council declared in 1861 that Switzerland would join the Central European Degree Survey. The SNS therefore requested that a Swiss Geodetic Commission (SGC) be created, which would unite the most important geodesists and astronomers in Switzerland and would be charged with pending work. The Federal Council agreed, so that already on August 22, 1861, the SNS elected Prof. Dr. Rudolf Wolf, who had been director of the observatory in Bern until 1855 and founder of the Federal Observatory after his move to Zurich, as president of the SGC. Wolf opened with his "Geschichte der Vermessungen in der Schweiz als Historische Einleitung zu den Arbeiten der schweiz. Geodätischen Commission" of 1879, a series of publications edited by the SGC, in particular the long series of "Astronomische-geodätische Arbeiten in der Schweiz" (today under the title "Geodätisch-geophysikalische Arbeiten in der Schweiz"). The "Bernese" participation in the SNS/SGC was further cultivated especially by Max Schürer, who was its member from 1946 to 1980 and held the presidency of the SGC from 1972 to 1980. Ivo Baueršima was also a member from 1980 to 1996, Werner Gurtner from 1984 to 2009, Gerhard Beutler from 1988 to 2012, and Rolf Dach and Adrian Jäggi have been members of the SGC since 2010. The archive of the Astronomical Institute contains numerous historical documents such as manuscripts, correspondence, reports and minutes of the SGC, which date back to the founding period of the SGC and partly come from the estate of Theodor Niethammer (1876 - 1947), a geodesist from Basel and director of the Astronomical Institute of the University of Basel and president of the SGC, due to his death and Schürer's succession as president of the SGC. The SGC supported the Astronomical Institute of the University of Bern in the areas of the satellite observatory in Zimmerwald. This support continues to this day.