

International Polar Year 2007-2008

A concerted worldwide effort is underway to plan scientific and educational activities for the upcoming International Polar Year (IPY). Scheduled to officially begin in March 2007, IPY promises to advance our understanding of how the Earth's remote polar regions impact global climate systems, to bring about fundamental advances in many areas of science, and to fire the enthusiasm of young men and women for future careers in science and engineering.



The vision for U.S. participation in IPY was formulated by the U.S. National Committee for IPY, established by the [Polar Research Board](#) of the [National Academy of Sciences](#). Articulated in *A Vision for the International Polar Year 2007-2008*, the Committee identified seven recommendations for the U.S. science community and agencies to address during IPY. The U.S. IPY effort should:

- Use the IPY to initiate a sustained effort aimed at assessing large-scale environmental change and variability in the polar regions;
- Pioneer new polar studies of coupled human-natural systems that are critical to U.S. societal, economic, and strategic interests;
- Explore new scientific frontiers from the molecular to the planetary scale;
- Use IPY as an opportunity to design and implement multidisciplinary polar observing networks that will provide a long-term perspective.
- Invest in critical infrastructure (both physical and human) and technology to guarantee that the International Polar Year 2007-2008 leaves enduring benefits for the nation and for the residents of northern regions.
- Excite and engage the public, with the goals of increasing understanding of the importance of the polar regions in the global system and, at the same time, advance general science literacy in the nation.
- Participate as leaders in International Polar Year 2007-2008.



The [International Council for Science](#) (ICSU) in conjunction with the [World Meteorological Organization](#) (WMO) formally established an

International Polar Year in 2007-2008, the 125th anniversary of the first polar year and the 50th anniversary of the International Geophysical Year. ICSU/WMO formed an International Planning Group to facilitate the development of an IPY program and to provide project integration where appropriate. To date, more 50 nations have made a commitment to support the IPY science goals.

The IPY "year" actually will extend from March 1, 2007, until March 1, 2009, to allow researchers to conduct two annual observing cycles in each polar region, particularly in the isolated parts that are prohibitively cold and dark for roughly six months of the year.

All U.S. federal agencies engaged in research and education will participate actively in IPY. The White House [Office of Science and Technology Policy](#) has identified the [National Science Foundation](#) (NSF) as the lead federal agency for coordinating U.S. IPY activities.

This site is designed to provide researchers, educators, the news media and the general public with information about federally supported IPY research, expeditions, resources, events and related activities.

This Web site is maintained by the National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230 USA. Send comments or questions to: ipy-public@nsf.gov.