



INTERNATIONAL 2007-2008 POLAR YEAR



International Polar Year 2007/08

A Unique Opportunity for Science Communication

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Polar science is interesting, fascinating, and important for our future. In times of climate change and empty coffers it becomes more and more important to communicate research to the public. The International Polar Year, with thousands of scientists from more than 60 countries investigating the Polar Regions is a unique opportunity to raise interest and awareness worldwide and to develop communications means that work for different audiences and across borders. International Polar Days, the IPY website and launch events are examples for international public outreach activities.

Audiences:

We want the general public to be informed and responsible, we would like young people to pursue careers in science and we want stakeholders to spend more money on research projects.

Methods:

Media - Media are an efficient tool to reach all audiences. In order to use it, we need:

- to raise interest of journalists (e.g. seminars for journalists, journalists joining expeditions)
- to give up-to-date information: press releases, press conferences
- to provide background information (dialogue partner, website) and multimedia (images, films, animations)

Teachers - Teachers reach the next generation of polar scientists. In order to address them, we need:

- to raise interest and awareness for polar topics (e.g. allow teachers to participate in expeditions)
- to provide current information (website, talks, information materials, ...)

Events - Events are a useful tool to reach the general public

(e.g. launch event, science festivals, public talks,)

Exhibitions - Exhibitions are a useful tool to reach persons not related to science

(e.g. artists on expeditions, photo exhibitions, science centres, ...)

Platforms - Websites are useful platforms to gather and spread information

(e.g. <http://ipy.org>, in Germany: <http://polarjahr.de>)

Results from Germany for the first half of IPY:

29 press releases that initiated more than 600 articles on web pages, in newspapers, radio and TV

6 teachers participated in polar expeditions

90 events (talks, public events, readings)

13 exhibitions

11 polar expeditions with scientists writing blogs / expedition reports for web pages and magazines

27 science projects that provide information for the general public on the German IPY website

150 visitors/day at the German IPY website

Legacy

It is our responsibility as scientists, universities and research institutes not only to share our knowledge and to provide information for all those interested in IPY, but also to actively promote current research topics. Bringing all the different players – scientists, communication experts, media, artists, museums and teachers – together in order to develop efficient communication tools is one of the main goals and an important legacy of IPY outreach efforts.

General Public

Scientists

Media

Students

Teachers

Stakeholders



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