

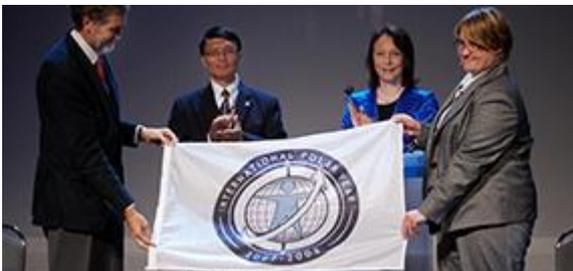
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## International Polar Year officially closed

Published: 12.06.2010



The International Polar Year 2007-2008 (IPY), the largest polar research and education venture ever undertaken, formally came to an end at a ceremony in Oslo on Saturday 12 June - the final day of the IPY Oslo Science Conference.

The IPY sponsors, the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), thanked the many thousands of participants who have made IPY a spectacular international success, before passing the baton on to those who will secure the legacy of this important initiative. They include the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and the WMO Executive Council Panel of Experts on Polar Observations, Research and Services.

As a part of the official closing ceremony, Professor Jeronimo Lopez-Martinez presented a summary of this IPY from the perspective of the ICSU-WMO Joint Committee for the IPY, the body responsible for overall scientific planning, coordination, guidance and oversight of IPY 2007-2008, of which he is co-Chair.



Photo: John Petter Reinertsen/Samfoto

Dr. Jeronimo Lopez-Martinez. "The overall scope of IPY is hard to overestimate and its total "footprint" may not be fully known for many years," he explained. "However, only one year after the conclusion of IPY field activities there are clear early indicators of the success of the programme."

Professor Lopez-Martinez mentioned a number of examples, including a surge in multidisciplinary polar scientific activities (as illustrated by the more than 2000 papers and posters presented at the Oslo Science Conference, spanning many themes and disciplines); extensive new circumpolar data baselines and improved observing systems; enhanced international collaboration and stronger links between the Arctic and Antarctic science communities; an enthusiastic new generation of polar scientists; the active engagement of Arctic residents in IPY activities; and the unprecedented involvement of educators and increase public awareness about polar regions.

#### **Summary report in September 2010**

Professor Lopez-Martinez also took the opportunity, on behalf of the IPY Joint Committee, to express deep appreciation to the many national and international organisations that have been involved in IPY, and especially to the many thousands of participants who have worked so hard to make it a major success and an enduring example of international collaboration.

The IPY success story will be captured in a summary report that is now being prepared. The title will be *Understanding Earth's Polar Challenges: International Polar Year 2007-2008*, and it will be published in September 2010.

Professor Jeronimo Lopez-Martinez said that the report, "tells the story from the unique perspective of the Joint Committee, with the help of more than 100 contributors; from the earliest planning almost a decade ago to the current challenge of ensuring a robust IPY legacy. It involves tens of thousands of participants, and highlights the global influence of the polar regions." The report will be freely available on the web and in hard copy on request. It will cover the planning and implementation of IPY over a 10-year period and present some preliminary results. The list of authors and reviewers of the report includes over 250 people.



Photo: John Petter Reinertsen/Samfoto

**Dr. Elena Manaenkova. Sound understanding of the polar regions**

"IPY was founded on the ideas and energy of thousands of scientists, educators, technicians and many more," said Dr Elena Manaenkova, Assistant Secretary General of WMO. "As co-sponsors of IPY, we would

like to express our most sincere thanks to all the participants and the organisers who have made this venture one of the biggest internationally coordinated research programmes ever undertaken." Deliang Chen, Executive Director of ICSU, added, "IPY has paved the way for a sound understanding of the polar regions at a critical time for society's relationship with Earth. The collaboration among many nations and among many scientific disciplines has been critical to the success of IPY, and it is crucial that the energy and partnerships that converged in IPY are sustained in the long-term."

#### **Handing over the flag**

The ceremony was opened by Gerlis Fugmann, President of the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) - a group that originated and flourished during IPY and will continue to provide momentum for polar research, education and outreach in the years to come. Ms Fugmann also took part in the formal closing at the end of the ceremony today.

"I have the honour to officially close the fourth IPY," announced Dr Manaenkova, before Professor Lopez-Martinez, on behalf of the Joint Committee, handed over the the IPY flag to Ms Fugmann, as a symbol that the next generation of researchers must take responsibility for continuing the momentum of IPY and polar research.

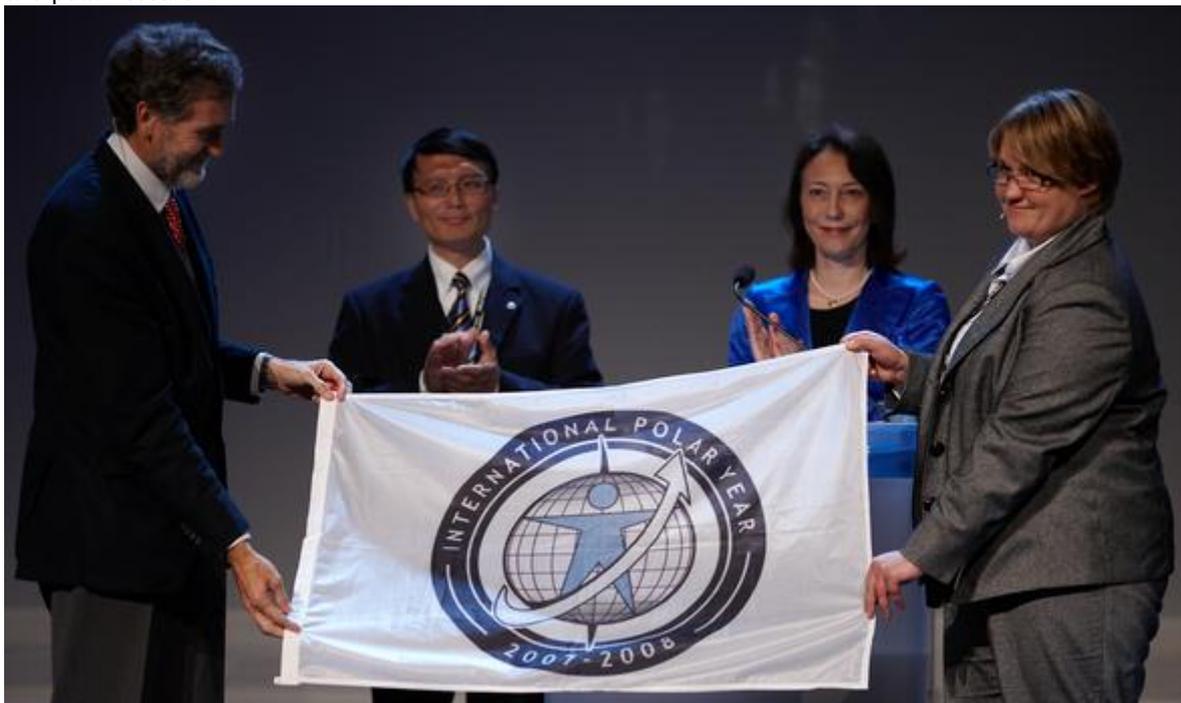


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Dr. Jeronimo Lopez-Martinez is passing on the IPY flag to Gerlis Fugmann while Deliang Chen and Elena Manaenkova are applauding.

Last updated: 12.06.2010

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