

European Geosciences Union General Assembly 2008



Vienna, Austria, 13 – 18 April 2008

The International Polar Year (IPY): from Greenland to Antarctica through Arctic dirty snow.

Press conference: Tuesday 15 April, 15:00-16:00

Session: CR1 Tuesday 15 April, 17:30-19:30, Lecture Room 13, [Programme >>](#)

The 2007-2008 International Polar Year (IPY) continues a legacy of internationally coordinated activities to advance polar research. Timing could not be better: recently unexpected and astounding changes occurred in the polar regions. This press conference will focus on some of these changes: melting in Greenland, the collapse of the Wilkins ice shelf, acceleration and thinning of Antarctic ice and the role of black carbon in Arctic snow.

The research projects concerned with these phenomena go beyond pure scientific questions as they have additional relevance through their impact on humans, both indigenous populations and, through sea level, over one-third of the global population. The projects are also linked through the complexities of interactions between ice and snow; air and fine particulates transported by it; and ocean and the vast amount of heat it contains. Complexities which challenge scientists and require not only international efforts, but also an interdisciplinary approach.

This IPY includes 170 research projects and over 50 outreach projects: it is arguably the most important IPY ever because it arrives when we urgently need to understand recent, extreme changes in the high latitudes. IPY provides an important galvanizing element to formulate, plan and ultimately execute necessary research. What is learned will be important to everyone on this planet.

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The International Polar Year <http://www.ipy.org/>

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