



The emerging framework for IPY 2007-2008

M Beland (1) and I. Allison (2)

(1) Meteorological Services of Canada, Quebec, Canada, (2) Australian CRC and Australian Antarctic Division, Hobart, Australia.

The fundamental concept of the IPY 2007-2008 is of an intensive burst of internationally coordinated, interdisciplinary, scientific research and observations focused on the Earth's polar regions. The official observing period of the IPY will be from 1 March 2007 until 1 March 2009. The main geographic focus will be the Earth's high latitudes, but studies in any region relevant to the understanding of polar processes or phenomena will be encouraged. The IPY aims to exploit the intellectual resources and science assets of nations worldwide to make major advances in polar knowledge and understanding, while leaving a legacy of new or enhanced observational systems, facilities and infrastructure. Arguably the most important legacies will be a new generation of polar scientists and engineers, as well as an exceptional level of interest and participation from polar residents, schoolchildren, the general public, and decision-makers, worldwide.

A document "A Framework for the International Polar Year 2007-2008" has recently been published which outlines the scientific framework for IPY 2007-2008 and proposes a strategy for developing programme implementation. An international ICSU/WMO Joint Committee has been formed to lead the programme and an International Programme Office established. An Expression of Intent Call yielded 1000 submissions from the community illustrating the scale of enthusiasm for the programme. The progress in developing the International Polar Year will be outlined to provide a setting for subsequent presentations of emerging major research programmes under the IPY 2007-2008 umbrella.