



The developing framework of IPY 2007-2008

D. Carlson

IPY International Programme Office, British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, UK

The opportunity to focus research and public attention on polar regions during an international Polar Year has drawn very strong world-wide interest, through more than 1000 expressions of interest, and recently through several hundred coordinated proposals. These proposals put forward a wide range of physical, biological and social sciences covering both polar regions. This set of activities offers unique opportunities compared to previous large science programmes. Many projects focus on processes that occur in both polar regions, that link polar regions, or that connect polar regions to larger-scale planetary processes – the Polar Year has planetary impact. Many projects develop integrated physical, biological, economic, and social models of polar ecosystems – this combination of geophysical and social sciences offers enormous challenges and opportunities. Finally, IPY will draw an unprecedented degree of public attention, through films and television, education at all levels, and all modern electronic communication tools.