



The International Year of Planet Earth (2007-2009)

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The International Year of Planet Earth was proclaimed for 2008 by the UN General Assembly and the UN Year is in the core of a triennium that started in January 2007 and will be closing by the end of 2009. Through UN proclamation, it has gained the political support by 191 UN nations, which is for the first time ever that the Earth Sciences have been that high on the international political Agenda.

The International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE) was initiated by the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and UNESCO and was actively supported by all Earth science Unions in ICSU and by the great majority of the Earth Scientific bodies in the world. The aim of the Year, encapsulated in its subtitle Earth sciences for Society, is to raise public and political awareness of the role that Earth scientists can play to make this planet a safer, healthier and more prosperous place for the next generations. IYPE has a Science and an Outreach Programme. The Science Programme has ten Themes (Groundwater, Hazards, Health, Climate, Resources, Deep Earth, Ocean, Megacities, Soils, and Life). Expressions of Interest and proposals should be submitted to the IYPE Secretariat (www.yearofplanetearth.org) and will be evaluated by Science Implementation Teams for seed money funding. The same bottom-up mode is applied for the Outreach Programme which aims to operate as a funding body, receiving bids for financial support - for anything from web-based educational resources to commissioning works of art that will help reinforce to the general public the central message of the Year. In 38 countries and regions a National IYPE Committee has been established and 20 more are expected to emerge before 2008. That would make the IYPE the Greatest GeoShow on Earth!