



# International Polar Year 2007-2009

Athena Dinar  
British Antarctic Survey



**British  
Antarctic Survey**

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL



## What is International Polar Year?

- Biggest co-ordinated scientific effort for 50 years
- Over 230 programmes focussed on Arctic and Antarctic research into climate change, biodiversity, impact on people
- Thousands of scientists from at least 60 countries
- Change the way we understand our world
- 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of International Geophysical Year 1957-1958
- Sponsored by the International Council of Science & World Meteorological Organisation



## International Polar Year – timeline

- Science programmes went 'live' on 1 March 2007
- National and international launch events
- Science programmes and campaigns run for up to two years
- Grand finale 2009...leaving a legacy of greater scientific knowledge, collaboration, engagement , education and relevance to society



## IPY – aims and aspirations

- Increased international science collaboration
- Big effort to answer the big questions affecting the polar regions
- Scientific discoveries that will change our understanding of the polar regions
- Unprecedented levels of public engagement



## Opportunities for polar communicators

- Lots of opportunities for engagement in ‘hot topics’  
eg. climate change, biodiversity and human impact on the environment
- Opportunity to focus skills, knowledge and expertise
- Opportunity to showcase our organisations/country’s top quality science in a global communications campaign
- Opportunity to engage the next generation of scientists
- Best practice – maximise impact and minimise effort



## IPY – from a BAS perspective

- Science programmes designed with IPY in mind
- Enabled a ‘hook’ as based on real science
- Branded PR and educational projects:



Ice Station Antarctica

- Lots of opportunities for partnerships
- Live Earth 2007 – Rothera Station band participated
- Ice Station Antarctica – international travelling exhibition
- BBC NHU Frozen Planet
- BAS organised UK launch of IPY at Royal Society – Princess Royal & celebrity endorsement



## IPY – has it worked?

- Early days – science papers still being written up
- Improved networks of scientists, communicators, artists and members of the public
- Increased international profile of the polar regions – 1000s media outputs since 1 March 2007; 100s educational projects/initiatives
- As based on real science – yes!





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