



Smithsonian at the Poles: Contributions to International Polar Year Science

The Smithsonian Institution announces a polar science symposium in early May 2007, as one of the inaugural U.S. contributions to celebrate the International Polar Year (IPY) 2007-2008. "Smithsonian at the Poles: Contributions to International Polar Year Science" is being convened by the Office of the Under Secretary for Science.

The symposium will present research findings by Smithsonian scholars and their collaborators from Arctic and Antarctic research, with particular attention to changes in polar systems past, present and future, and their global impact. The symposium will carry on a tradition of polar science that began nearly 150 years ago and resulted in some of the world's foremost collections and archives of Arctic and Antarctic materials.

The symposium is scheduled for May 3-4, at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian Castle in Washington, D.C. The two-day event will feature an introductory plenary session followed by concurrent sessions of invited papers and panel discussions, evening public and keynote lectures, and tours of collections. The expected audience includes Smithsonian scholars and research staff, university-based scientists and students, program managers and representatives from federal agencies, congressional staff, news media and the general public.

More than 35 scholars will discuss their papers on the following six themes: polar astronomy; systematics and biology of polar organisms; environmental change and polar marine ecosystems; IPY histories and legacies; methods and techniques of under-ice research; and cultural studies. Sessions will feature disciplinary presentations from both the Arctic and Antarctica.

Speakers will include research leaders from the Smithsonian and their National Science Foundation-supported polar research partners. The Smithsonian speakers will represent the Institution's research units (Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, National Zoological Park, National Air and Space Museum), Smithsonian Archives and the Office of the Under Secretary for Science. A special aim of the symposium is to network Smithsonian studies with other federal agencies during the International Polar Year.

Results will be disseminated to scholars and the public through publications, Web sites and the news media. Symposium papers will be published by Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press as a proceedings volume, available in print by mid-2008.

For up-to-date symposium information, see www.si.edu/ipy.

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Symposium Co-Chairs