

ANNEX I

**EDINBURGH ANTARCTIC DECLARATION
ON THE INTERNATIONAL POLAR YEAR
2007-2008**

Edinburgh Antarctic Declaration on the International Polar Year 2007-2008

We – the Antarctic Treaty Parties – are meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland from 12 to 23 June 2006 for the XXIXth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting. Our discussions of the international management of Antarctica are this year enhanced by a full day's consideration of the International Polar Year 2007-2008 and its importance for our Antarctic future.

This International Polar Year builds on the historic achievements of the three previous initiatives which took place in 1882-83, 1932-33 and 1957-58. It is a joint initiative of the World Meteorological Organisation and the International Council for Science, and its aim is to provide better observation and understanding of the Earth's polar regions, and to focus the world's attention on their importance. Fifty years ago, the international scientific and logistical cooperation of the International Geophysical Year paved the way for the successful negotiation of the Antarctic Treaty. This Treaty has stood the test of time and has secured Antarctica as a continent of peace and science ever since. As scientists from over 60 countries now embark on the final planning stages for this intensive burst of activity focusing on the polar regions, we, the Antarctic Treaty Parties, express our support for a successful International Polar Year. We believe that the scientific research undertaken during the International Polar Year will increase knowledge of the Antarctic and will yield a better understanding of the major terrestrial, ocean and atmospheric systems that control the planet. The polar regions are sensitive barometers of climate change, and we value their biodiversity. Their health is vital to the well-being of the earth's systems and its inhabitants.

We, the Antarctic Treaty Parties, commit ourselves to full support for the scientific endeavours of those engaged in International Polar Year projects and logistics. In particular, we will:

- give political support to the International Polar Year, by championing its aims, both within our own countries and internationally; and
- provide as much financial support as possible for International Polar Year programme projects.

We support the objective of delivering a lasting legacy from the International Polar Year. In particular, we would welcome work by the World Meteorological Organisation and the International Council for Science to synthesise the results from the International Polar Year and to compile a report for the Secretary-General of the United Nations on its key findings. We believe such a report would be of value not only to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting but also to the Arctic Council and the global community more widely. In addition, we, the Antarctic Treaty Parties, intend to promote outreach from the International Polar Year, not least through distribution of educational material to institutions and the general public.

We will continue to uphold and to further the principles of the Antarctic Treaty. We will also champion the global importance of the polar regions in international forums.

IV. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

This will include:

- analysing and using scientific data and information collected from the polar regions during the International Polar Year, which could contribute to future assessments by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; and supporting efforts to tackle climate change;
- increasing international collaboration and coordination of scientific studies within Antarctica, including through the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, so as to maximise expertise in the study of the continent and its surrounding waters;
- collaborating more closely with the Arctic Council, and promoting cooperation between scientists for the benefit of research in the Antarctic and the Arctic;
- strengthening the scientific and logistical cooperation which underpins international project work in Antarctica;
- explaining the unique environment of Antarctica, striving always to protect it, and minimising environmental impacts;
- enhancing cooperation between all the components of the Antarctic Treaty System, and regularly considering ways to improve its effectiveness; and
- urging more States to accede to the highly successful Antarctic Treaty and its Environmental Protocol.

Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting XXIX 19 June 2006