

## International and Interdisciplinary Data Access: the IPY Experience

CARLSON, David<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>IPY International Programme Office

Consistent with existing international guidelines, the International Polar Year 2007-2008 (IPY) adopted a free and open data access policy. This policy received wide agreement from leaders of IPY Projects as well as endorsement from national data centres and from international sponsoring organizations ICSU and WMO. However, implementing and supporting a free and open access policy across the breadth of IPY science and across the range of participating data centres proved difficult. The barriers and challenges encountered during IPY will seem familiar to many World Data Centres, while some of the IPY solutions, including a Polar Information Commons and renewed attention to data publication, offer new possibilities and new insights into practical aspects of open data access. These lessons from IPY should inform the goals and practices of the new ICSU World Data System initiative.

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