The IPY data policy and opportunities for humanities and social science circumpolar research data management

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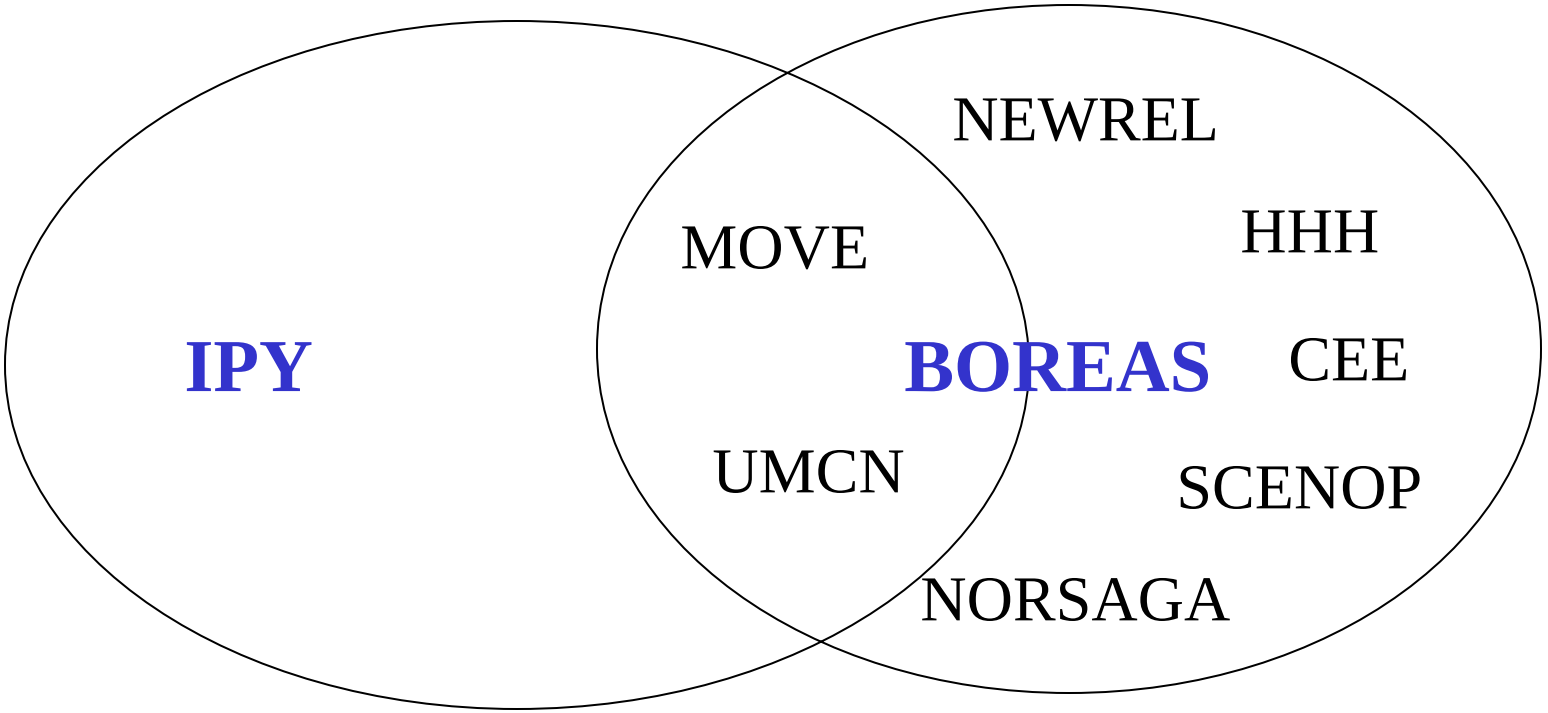
President, International Arctic Social Sciences Association

Two out of seven BOREAS CRP

are IPY-endorsed projects (= 29 %)

International Polar Year, starting March 1, 2007



IPY projects have pledged to follow the IPY data policy set by the IPY JC and IPY Data Policy and Management Subcommittee.

Do they have to serve two masters?

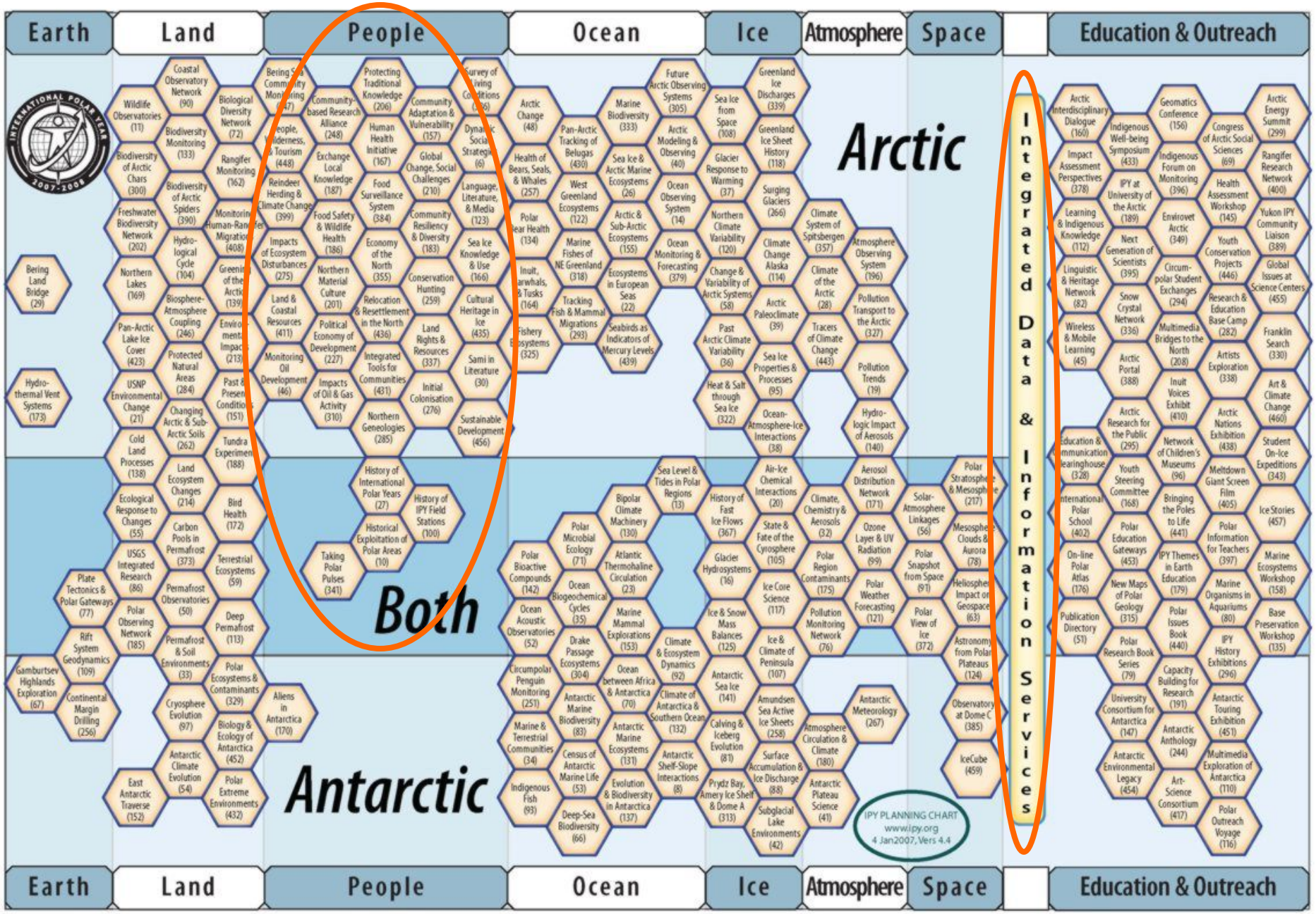
Main aspects of IPY data policy:

• Make data available and usable (standard formats; metadata description);

• Provide a timetable for access to data; (… ASI, SAON)

• Plan the long term preservation and sustained access to IPY data: identify the archive that will keep the data;

• Users of IPY data must acknowledge data authors and sources.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IPY PLANNING CHART
www.ipy.org
4 Jan2007, Vers 4.4

The IPY policy is based on ICSU and WMO policy of « full, free, and open access to data ».

The only exceptions to this policy are:

• Where human subjects are involved, confidentiality must be protected;

• Where local and traditional knowledge is concerned, rights of the knowledge holders shall not be compromised;

• Where data release may cause harm, specific aspects of the data may need to be protected (e.g. location of sacred sites, of archaeological sites).

Data preservation:

« Recognizing that the true value of scientific data is often realized long after they have been collected, and to ensure the lasting legacy of IPY, it is essential to ensure long-term preservation and sustained access to IPY data. »

… facilitate knowledge repatriation

« Data preservation and access should not be afterthoughts and need to be considered while data collection plans are developed. »

Do we want to preserve the data we collect, and eventually share them? Ethical issue.

The scope of science for the

International Polar Year 2007–2008

World Meteorological Organization

Weather • Climate • Water

WMO/TD – No. 1364

ICSU

International Council for Science

The scope of science for the International Polar Year 2007–2008

IPY JC, February 2007

“IPY-DIS and the long-term IPY data legacy will involve many innovative solutions driven by the need to integrate and preserve a vast array of data combined with advances in storage and communication technologies in real-time data assimilation and in conceptual systems for integrating and exchanging information.”

Current status of data management plans for human and social sciences projects in IPY (37 projects):

All IPY-endorsed projects have been invited by the IPY-DIS (Data Information Service) to answer an online questionnaire regarding the management of their data. The deadline was October 30th, 2006.

However, few projects have filled out the questionnaire so far (ca. 20 %), and even fewer have provided a data management plan deemed satisfactory by the subcommittee (about a third of the submitted plans).

The response rate of « people » projects is a little less than average, but none is deemed to have an adequate plan for data management and preservation.

Some IPY-DIS questions:

Do you know how and where to submit your data, in order to preserve the data and make the data available for future use? If so, please describe.

Are you aware of national or international data centers or data archives for your research discipline? If so, please provide information on these data centers.

Does your research discipline have a formal organizational structure for data management and data archival (e.g. a coordinating data committee or metadata system)? If so, please describe the organizational structure.

What is currently lacking in the field of data management for your research discipline?

David Carlson, Director of IPY-International Program Office

February 19, 2007, 14:07

« Working with the Norwegian Meteorological Institute and the Norwegian Research Council, we have reached agreement on a person to assume the role of real-time data coordinator for IPY. Norway has shown commendable leadership on this task, helped by key contributions from Canada and Germany. We still need additional contributions to meet the full cost of this task. This person will focus on real-time operational data - we still need substantial coordination resources for biological and social data. And we still need strong financial support for the central elements of the IPY Data and Information Services. »

« Cyber-infrastructures and data management », the title of our workshop, is precisely what IPY « people » projects are lacking. By proposing a viable model, we may help implement not only BOREAS, but IPY as well.

The IPY Data Management and Policy Subcommittee holds its second meeting, in Paris next week, and immediately afterwards reports to the IPY Joint Committee, on February 28-March 2nd.

One of « our » humanities and social sciences representatives on the IPY JC just wrote me that:

« there is an urgent need to produce a sort of a written statement on the special character of many types of data collected in course of the social/human research. We keep saying this at every meeting focused on IPY data management and our partners from the data management community are eager to accept this. But we have to provide them with some statement and written positions - very much like it has been done regarding the ethical principles in working with communities and local informants in the North. I cannot see a better opportunity and a better-suited team than BOREAS data management group to produce such a statement (document) […] »

The humanities and social sciences have lobbied hard and successfully to be included in the IPY. The IASSA General Assembly resolution of 2004, and further work of the IASSA-IPY task group, have shown that the community can have a profound impact if it is self-confident, well-organized, articulate, and active. The BOREAS community, perhaps in association with a well-established body (i.e. IASSA), could continue to spearhead improvements to the IPY program—if it wishes to.

Main questions now:

Are we interested in creating a BOREAS data management policy that can also serve as model for the IPY data management in the human and social sciences?

And with the present workshop, aren't we in the best position to do so?

Do we want to provide an input for the implementation of the IPY data policy by drafting a statement to be delivered to the IPY data subcommittee by next week?