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To: The Association of Polar Early Career Scientists,  
- associated national and disciplinary organizations,  
& individual members

Dear Young/ Early Career Polar Scientists – wherever you are in the world!

In March, 2009, the International Polar Year (IPY) will be holding their eighth quarterly International Polar Day - this time focussing on the research in the Polar Oceans. These Days are organised following a request from educators around the world to learn more about Polar Research that is occurring now. Previous Polar Days have highlighted Sea Ice, Ice Sheets, Changing Earth, Land and Life, and People in the Polar Regions. We now have a strong following around the world and a regular schedule of education and outreach activities including live interactive global events, educational activity sheets, press releases, images and resources and a global virtual balloon launch.

This is the last IPY Polar Day of this series and we would therefore like it to be the biggest and the most fun! We hear continually that the most enjoyable and effective outreach experiences for the public involve direct, live, interaction between young scientists and students. These experiences can be life-changing for young people, not only in their perception of science, but also of scientists... they never expect a scientist to be someone who is young, speaks their language, and is fun to talk with. With this letter, we would therefore like to encourage you to organise and/or take part in an outreach event in your area(s) around this time. (Even if your field is not Oceans, this is also an all-round IPY day and you can market it as such!)

The IPY International Programme Office will be developing webpages, resource material, handouts in many languages, a virtual balloon launch, and live events connecting to researchers in the field in the polar regions. To get an idea of the type of events that take place on IPY days, you can have a look at this page on the IPY website: [http://www.ipy.org/index.php?ipy/detail/international\\_polar\\_days/](http://www.ipy.org/index.php?ipy/detail/international_polar_days/).

Several national and disciplinary APECS groups are committed to Education and Outreach but do not always find it easy to initiate events and activities that engage the public. This is therefore also a great opportunity for your group/organisation to hold an event, and to encourage your members to have a taste of education and outreach in a situation that has been pre-arranged (ie. they just need to turn up!). If you would rather get involved on an individual level, we would also like to hear from you. If your research involves Oceans we would love your help developing content, being available for interview, or joining a live event. We also need help from individuals in promoting live events to schools in your area etc.

We are happy to work with you in the development of your event, and will advertise this on the IPY and APECS websites, and in the associated press release. We may also be able to

help facilitate a live connection between your event and researchers in the field, if this is appropriate.

A few suggestions of things you could do in conjunction with this Polar Day:

- Contact local schools, teachers, science centres or other educational institutions. Ask them if they would be interested in you visiting their classes to talk about what life is like for a scientist in the Arctic or Antarctic in conjunction with Polar Oceans Day.
- Contact your community or university newspaper, or your local television and radio stations and ask them if they would like to do a story about your work in the Polar Regions.
- Find a science or nature centre in your area and ask if you can give a short presentation about your work, or maybe even arrange a link up to a colleague in the field...

In all cases, feel free to use the Polar Day as the ‘hook’ or catalyst for interaction, and mention that we can also promote this internationally or locally if appropriate. Activities will kick off on March 18<sup>th</sup> and continue throughout the following week, so there is plenty of flexibility in choosing a date, location, and activity type that suits you and/or your group.

We hope to hear from you soon!



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