

**WASHINGTON MINISTERIAL DECLARATIONS ON  
THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANTARCTIC TREATY  
AND THE INTERNATIONAL POLAR YEAR AND POLAR SCIENCE**

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**1. WASHINGTON MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANTARCTIC TREATY**

In the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty (the “Treaty”) in Washington on December 1, 1959, the Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty,

**Recognizing** the historic achievements of the Treaty in promoting peace and international cooperation in the Antarctic region over the past half century,

**Recognizing** that it is in the interest of all humankind that Antarctica continue to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord,

**Recognizing** the integrated and mutually supportive nature of the Antarctic Treaty system, encompassing, inter alia, the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals, and the central role of the Treaty within that system,

**Recalling** their commitment to the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems, and the designation of Antarctica as a natural reserve, devoted to peace and science,

**Mindful** that freedom of scientific investigation is and continues to be a cornerstone of the Treaty,

**Recalling** that this anniversary takes place following the latest International Polar Year, a multidisciplinary scientific endeavor that was supported by all Parties and endorsed in the 2006 Edinburgh Antarctic Declaration on the International Polar Year,

**Acknowledging** the key role that Antarctic science plays in understanding the world’s climate system,

**Concerned** about the implications of global environmental change, in particular climate change, for the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems,

**Mindful** to ensure that human activity in Antarctica, including tourism, is conducted in a manner that effectively promotes the continued protection of the Antarctic environment and minimizes cumulative impacts,

Hereby:

1. Reaffirm their continued commitment to the objectives and purposes of the Antarctic Treaty and the other elements of the Antarctic Treaty system;

2. Reaffirm the importance of the Treaty's provisions guaranteeing freedom of scientific investigation and reserving Antarctica exclusively for peaceful purposes, free from measures of a military nature;
3. Reaffirm the importance they attach to the contribution made by the Treaty, and by Article IV in particular, to ensuring the continuance of international harmony in Antarctica;
4. Underscore the importance of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty;
5. Reaffirm their commitment to Article 7 of the Environmental Protocol, which prohibits any activity relating to mineral resources, other than scientific research;
6. Underline the importance of cooperation related to the conservation of living marine resources and strengthened implementation under the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources;
7. Pledge to strengthen their efforts to preserve and protect the Antarctic terrestrial and marine environments;
8. Welcome the increase in Parties to the Antarctic Treaty, from the original twelve signatories in 1959 to forty-seven Parties at the time of this anniversary, and encourage other States that are committed to the objectives of the Antarctic Treaty to accede in accordance with its terms;
9. Encourage Parties to work through other appropriate international organizations that have expertise in respect of certain activities that may also take place in the Antarctic Treaty area, in particular those relating to maritime and aviation activities, to give special consideration to the development, adoption and effective implementation of measures to promote safety and environmental protection in Antarctica;
10. Confirm their intention to work together to better understand changes to the Earth's climate and to actively seek ways to address the effects of climate and environmental change on the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems;
11. Commit to support and build upon the innovative scientific programs relating to Antarctica initiated as part of the International Polar Year 2007-08, and promote education and outreach programs to enhance global understanding and commitment to protecting the Antarctic environment; and
12. Decide to continue and extend for the benefit of all humankind their cooperation established in the Treaty and in the Treaty system over the last fifty years.

Adopted at Washington, April 6, 2009.

## 2. WASHINGTON MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL POLAR YEAR AND POLAR SCIENCE

On the occasion of the conclusion of the fourth International Polar Year (IPY), the Member States of the Arctic Council and the Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty,

**Observing** that the IPY occurred against a backdrop of rapid and significant climate and environmental change in the Polar Regions,

**Acknowledging** the unique scientific importance of the polar regions, both as actors and barometers of these changes, which are vital to the functioning of the earth's terrestrial, biological, climate, ocean and atmospheric systems,

**Recognizing** the need to improve the modeling and prediction of change on a regional basis,

**Recognizing** the significant work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in assessing documented and predicted changes in Polar Regions and in relating them to larger global systems,

**Affirming** the importance of the IPY's findings to the scientific community, Arctic residents, including indigenous peoples, and to humanity as a whole,

**Observing** the success of participants in forming IPY collaborations that integrate the human, physical, and biological aspects of their research to achieve system-scale knowledge,

**Recognizing** the vital contributions toward understanding the characteristics and dynamics of polar regions and their roles for the world's ecosystems made by scientists and other participants from over sixty countries,

**Noting** the extensive efforts of the International Council for Science (ICSU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the many IPY National Committees, and the scientists and other participants around the globe whose research made IPY a great success,

**Recalling** the goals for the IPY set forth in the 2006 Edinburgh Antarctic Declaration on the International Polar Year 2007-2008, and the strong support for IPY expressed by the Arctic Council in the 2006 Salekhard Declaration,

**Expecting** that the legacy of the IPY will continue well beyond its formal conclusion,

Hereby:

1. Urge states, national and international scientific bodies, and other interested parties to cooperate to deliver a lasting legacy from the IPY, and to support appropriate infrastructures to achieve this;
2. Commit themselves to reviewing key issues related to scientific cooperation and recent scientific findings at the biennial Ministerial Meetings of the Arctic Council and annual Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings, and further commit to using science to help inform the cooperative development of measures to address the threats to the polar regions;

3. Call upon IPY participants to continue to make data collected under IPY 2007–2008 and its legacy programs available in an open and timely manner, recall the obligations related to exchange of scientific information to this effect in the Antarctic Treaty, and encourage the same spirit of scientific openness among Arctic researchers;
4. Endorse the goal of strengthening international cooperation at all levels in polar regions among States, scientists, Arctic residents, including indigenous peoples, and their institutions in areas such as educational outreach, human and ecosystem health, environmental protection, and scholarships for young scientists;
5. Encourage the development of coordinated research and scientific observations at both poles to compare the current dynamics of polar areas and their contributions to the Earth's processes and changes;
6. Recommend that governments continue their support for efforts initiated during IPY to create and link observational systems in order to improve the modeling and prediction of climate change on both regional and temporal scales;
7. Encourage states and international bodies to use the scientific understandings derived from IPY research to support the development of concrete steps to protect the environment in the Polar Regions;
8. Support the analysis and use of scientific data and information collected from the polar regions as a result of IPY to contribute to future assessments by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, as well as other efforts to address climate change, and future Arctic Council assessments;
9. Call upon states, organizations, scientists, and other stakeholders to continue to engage with young people to cultivate the next generation of polar scientists, and to communicate with the general public to develop an awareness of the importance of polar research for life in all regions of the world; and
10. Affirm the value of collaboration and coordination between states and Arctic residents, including indigenous peoples, for the benefit of polar research.

Adopted at Washington, April 6, 2009.