

## IPY educational posters

### Background

UNEP/GRID-Arendal has been active in the field of environmental communication and information for more than fifteen years. A strong focus has always been the Polar Regions, in close collaboration with Arctic Council working groups, University of the Arctic, Gateway Antarctica and the UN family. Production of maps and graphics has always been one of the key means of communicating information at UNEP/GRID-Arendal. Our illustrations are featured in major products by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), Conservation of Arctic Flora & Fauna working group of the Arctic Council (CAFF) and many others.

### Objective

This project has been designed to support the education, outreach, and communication efforts of the International Polar Year (IPY). The posters will primarily present polar science and issues and secondarily create awareness of IPY and its research activities. The main objective is to try to answer the question: *Why, and how, are the Polar Regions and polar research important to all people on Earth?*

To support this objective, the goal has been to design five posters on broad and general subjects related to IPY – along five themes: *The Polar Regions, Climate Change, Flora & Fauna, Research, and People*. The design goal has been to create these posters with enough context and text to enable it to serve as a “text-book on the wall” while still being accessible. The posters are not intended to be marketing or propaganda pieces, but rather to act as information resources.

To accompany the posters, a companion website has been created, with downloads of the graphics as well as source references and links to more information.

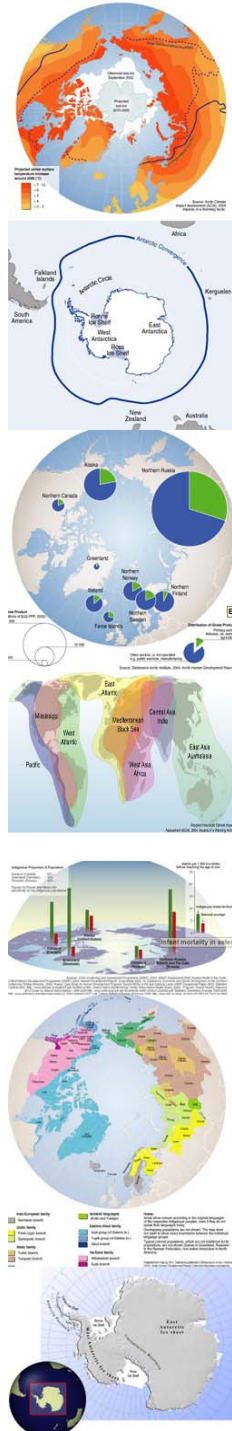
### Implementation

The project was implemented over 2007-2008 through support from the Norwegian Research Council, with contributions from UNEP/GRID-Arendal core funds. Due to conflicting arrangements and problems in personnel, planning (partly due to parental leave) the project completion was delayed and pushed into 2008.

The main layout and display elements for the posters were selected by UNEP/GRID-Arendal staff, drawing in experiences in Arctic and Antarctic projects – such as the UNEP Global Outlook for Snow and Ice. Many of the illustrations were based on previous work in projects, and updated and revised to fit with this format.

Extensive research took place to make sure that the most accurate and up-to-date data was used in the graphics, and to make sure that the accompanying texts were accurate and correct.

All posters have been translated to Norwegian (bokmål).



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**Educational review**

The draft posters layouts, with an extensive description of the material, were sent to selected teachers and educators in the IPY community (from the IPY teacher’s mailing list, among other sources). Useful comments and feedback were received and incorporated into the posters.

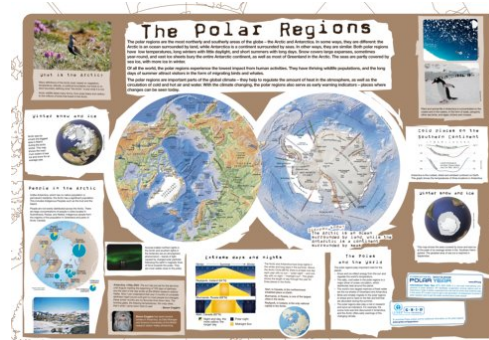
**Scientific review**

The final posters were circulated among a review team for any adjustments.

**Posters**

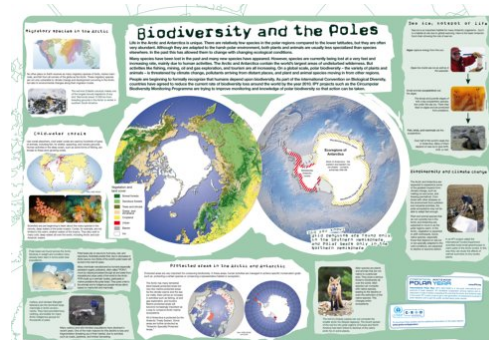
**The Polar Regions**

This poster presents a background and overview of the environment, characteristics and human activity in the Arctic – serving as an introduction to the IPY and the two regions. The “flagship maps” in this poster presents the political and physical environment. Accompanying the maps are supporting texts and graphics related to the theme.



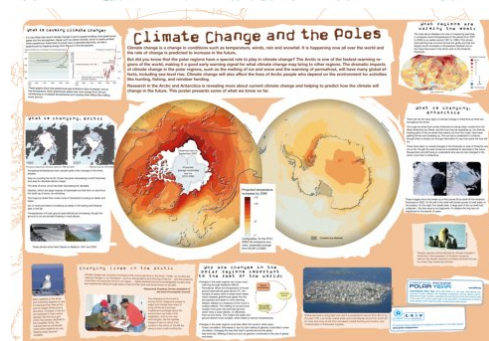
**Biodiversity and the Poles**

As an introduction to the Flora & Fauna of the polar regions, this maps presents certain traits and overview, including conservation and trophic chains. Maps include migrating birds, cold water coral reefs, protected areas and specific case studies. The flagship maps present a land cover/vegetation map over the Arctic, and biomes of the Antarctic. The latter flagship map may look sparse, but also reflects the lack of life in the Antarctic.



**Climate Change and the Poles**

Changes in the global climate have been very visible in the Arctic, and it’s position as a first indicator for global change is presented in this poster. The flagship maps present here one model of climate projections, including changes in sea ice, permafrost and treeline (for the Arctic). Supporting material illustrate existing indicators and signs of change, as well as possible impacts. Extra care has been taken to explain the complexities of climate change, including feedback effects.



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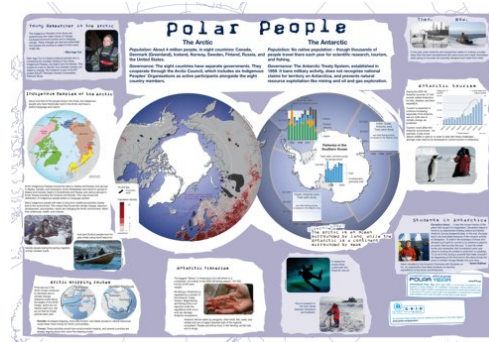
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**Polar People**

This poster introduces the reader/viewer to the distinctiveness of the Arctic and Antarctic related to human activities. The Arctic presentation focuses on Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic and economic activities, while the Antarctic material focuses on fisheries, tourism and research activities.



**Research in the Polar Regions**

Serving as an introduction to the research activities in the Polar Regions, with a special focus on current and previous IPY, this poster presents various aspects around this subject. The flagship maps presents selected research stations in the polar regions, while supporting material presents examples of research.



**Website**



As a companion to the posters, a web-site has been prepared. These pages present the posters in various formats for download, together with extensive descriptions, links for download of graphic material (including full sources, and related links) as well as photos and links for further reading.

The web-site can be accessed at:

<http://www.grida.no/polar/ipy/2839.aspx>

In addition, to posters are presented on web-sites for viewing e.g. Scribd.com

**Outputs**

- Five thematic posters as digital files, for printing by national offices and institutions. The posters are available in various digital formats, including flash (scribd) and pdf (Adobe Acrobat), as well as as digital images (jpg, png). All posters are available in both English and Norwegian (Bokmål).
- A web-site presenting the posters, and with additional material and links – including full source references for all material

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## Project outcomes

The project has prepared tools for increased awareness of polar issues, International Polar Year and polar science among school children and educators, that will last past 2009. The posters and the graphics are good tools available to all communicators related to the IPY.

## Future

UNEP/GRID-Arendal have been communicating with interesting parties for possible translation of the posters to other languages, including Chinese. There is a standing invitation on the website for new partners for translation.

The visitor statistics on the IPY website, and the UNEP/GRID-Arendal maps and graphics library (where all the graphics are presented) are carefully monitored to access the impact and use of the posters and their material.

In addition, UNEP/GRID-Arendal are investigating possible partnerships with existing service providers for possible on-demand printing of the posters, for online/Internet orders.



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