

DEAR FRIENDS!

This issue is to appear just after the Siberian Branch of RAS will officially celebrate its famous 50-year anniversary. A sizable fraction of success, SB RAS can be proud of, is associated with the work of our informal scientific team, united for already 13 years by the “Siberian Aerosols” Workgroup.

For scientists engaged in environmental research, year of 2007 is a special one. On March 1 of 2007 the International Polar Year started!



Officially, the decision to hold the next International Polar Year (IPY) was taken by the International Council for Science (ICSU), founded in 1931 and being one of the world oldest nongovernmental organizations. IPY is timed to coincide with the 125-year anniversary of the First International Polar Year and 50-year anniversary of the International Geophysical Year (IGY).

In 1882–1883, only 12 countries participated in implementation of the International Polar Year. However, precisely in those years first scientific polar stations (13 in the Arctic and 2 in the Antarctic) were created. The Second IPY was held 50 years later, in 1932–1933. It involved already 40 countries. IPYs were first precedents of the worldwide international cooperation in scientific research.

The Third IPY (1957–1958) was named the International Geophysical Year. It was held in period of the maximum solar activity and was **one of the greatest scientific events** in the period after the World War II. That time over sixty thousands of scientists from 66 countries participated in the scientific research. The basic network of polar stations in Antarctica was created, and many of these stations continued to operate in succeeding years.

This year the plans are even larger in scale. Already over 50 countries assumed obligations to contribute to the scientific programs of this International Polar Year. Presumably, this number will exceed 100 by the end of 2007. The supervision of participation of Russia in the International Polar Year Program was entrusted to Aleksandr Berditskii, Head of the RosGidroMet (Russian Federal Service for Hydrometeorology and Environmental Monitoring), and Artur Chilingarov, Vice-Speaker of Russian State Duma and President of Association of Polar Explorers.

The International Polar Year will take place March 2007 through February 2009. This is necessary for scientists could carry out two annual cycles of observations in the both polar regions. The main tasks are:

- to develop the polar research due to implementation of new initiatives;
- to coordinate the Arctic and Antarctic researches;
- to create the infrastructure for future research;
- to extend the international cooperation;
- to attract the public interest to polar research;
- to ensure recruitment of young people to science.

The International Polar Year is an especially important event for scientists working in our region, because we practically live in the atmosphere determined by the Arctic in many respects.

Most of participants the “Siberian Aerosols” Workgroup indeed live and work near polar regions. Practically all our observation results are influenced to some or another degree by the Arctic (e.g., in all seasons up to 30% of air masses arriving in the territory of Siberia have the Arctic origin). Conversely, all processes occurring in Siberia somehow influence the

quality of the atmospheric air arriving in the polar region. Materials presented at meetings of the “Siberian Aerosols” Workgroup demonstrate that we have a good deal of results for effective participation in practically all fields of the International Polar Year. The rather fine AeroSibNet Network has been already deployed and operates on the territory of Siberia. The range of problems to be solved has now been understood; and the process of data generalization has already begun. Several serious expeditions in the White Sea and Antarctic regions of Atlantic have been carried out. Some new models of pollutant transport and transformation have been developed. Models of climate and climate forcing factors have gained the further development. Long observation series of aerosol, cloud, and meteorological characteristics at the territory of Siberia have been processed and analyzed.

Moreover, certain experimental results discussed at the 13th Workgroup were obtained immediately in polar regions, and they attracted the active interest. That is why this specialized issue begins with two papers summarizing unique data obtained in the Arctic and Antarctic.

I am sure that “Siberian Aerosols” Workgroup will make its appreciable contribution to implementation of the global international project, impart a new impetus to our research, and recruit many young talented scientists to our community.

Hopefully, the calculation of individual efficiency characteristics of the scientific activity, now underway in all RAS institutes, will not lead to breakup of the formed informal cooperation and will not force scientists to work only for these characteristics, forgetting their main mission.

To mitigate possible negative tendencies of separatism between specialists in case of this characteristic, I propose for combined works with participation of scientists from different institutes to be preferably accepted for publication in future topical issues of this journal.

I believe that our informal research team united by the “Siberian Aerosols” Workgroup will keep its creative working atmosphere in the future.

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