

REPORT ON CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE IYPE ACTIVITIES 2006-2008

February 12, 2008

Since 2006, just after the celebration of the International Geological Congress in Florence -Italy, the Cuban Geological Society (SCG) started a program of activities in order to create the proper environment around the IUGS/UNESCO initiative concerning the proclamation of the year of Planet Earth. This was accomplished during 2006 by means of brief explanations of the idea to members of the SGC and the local media. Also was launched a national kids' drawing contest named La Tierra está viva - "The Earth is alive" and the best drawings were awarded, published in the Bulletin of the Cuban Geological Society, and presented as posters during the celebration of the II Cuban Earth Science Convention in March 2007.

Year 2007 was also very active, with the same kids' contest --visit www.scg.cu --- but specially was broadcasted a 25 hours course, by the National TV Educational Channel, dedicated to popularize the Cuban Geological Nature, Resources and Hazards. Each class was repeated 3 times in different days of the week. As part of these lectures the logo and aims of the initiative of Planet Earth was explained. A web site was created to make available the presentations of each class, recommended lectures, and a text-book as a pdf file www.medioambiente.cu/upnatgeo/index1.htm. Also 60 000 text books were printed in colours in newspaper format, which were available all along the country.

Furthermore, many talks and presentations were given in the media and to different scientific societies, groups of interested persons, and NGOs in Cuba.

By the end of 2007 a strong movement started in order to declare the Year of Planet Earth in Cuba and to create the Cuban Commission of Planet Earth. With the support of major ministries, NGOs, Societies, the Academy of Sciences; and specially, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, the Year was launched last January 10, 2008, as part of the activities celebrating the 15 of January, day of Science in Cuba. In this event the IGME spot of Planet Earth produced by the Spaniard Geology and Mining Institute was presented, as well as several conferences explaining the imbrications between development and geosciences. There was wide press exposure of this event. Visit "noticias" at (www.medioambiente.cu/planeta_Tierra/inicio.asp)

January 15 a web site was established in order to popularize the goals of the IYPE, to report on the Cuban activities, announce further events, and provide useful information and links to sites where documentation about the Year of Planet Earth is available (www.medioambiente.cu/planeta_Tierra/inicio.asp)

Since January, the main activities have been the following:

1. The TV Course dedicated to Cuban Geological Nature, Resources and Hazards is broadcasting again since January 8, with a single presentation each Tuesday 9 pm on National Educational TV. It will be in the air for 25 weeks.

2. Prepare meetings --inviting different group-members of the Cuban society--where is presented and debated the Documentary Film "Calentamiento Global, el reto continúa". This 55 minutes film --a copy was given to IYPE secretariat--, document the modifications that are taking place in the Cuban natural environment and landscape, due to ongoing sea level changes, warming of the climate including sea water and atmosphere, and some related events. This Documentary film is presented along with the IGME spot of Planet Earth. This presentation have been done in different institutions, meetings and broadcasted three times by National TV with a great audience. It is planed to continue this activity all along the year, not only by members of the CN-Cuba, but also by geoscientist all over the country.

3. A brief explanation of the Year of Planet Earth initiative and presentation of the IGME spot of Planet Earth have been taking place in meetings and events of different organizations in Cuba, but specially to nature scientific and decision-maker groups. This presentation will continue all over the year.

4. Some books have been prepared to popularize Earth Sciences and its impact on Society. One entitled "Sal Si Puedes", which are a series of short histories about the daily work of a field geologist, with comments on environmental issues --a copy was given to IYPE secretariat. This book will be presented during the "International Book Fair of Cuba", where the author will talk about the Year of Planet Earth. Another popular book entitled "Geology of Cuba for everyone" to be printed in full colours, contains a comprehensive view of Cuban Geology, Resources and Hazards. It is in advanced editorial process and we are requesting IYPE support to print it. A third book entitled "The inhabitants of the primitive Caribbean: dinosaurs, pterosaurs and marine reptiles, is beginning its editorial process. This one is dedicated to kids and teenagers, and is going to be the first popular text in Spanish to present to the public, the animals which populated the early Caribbean during the Mesozoic, and explain how geologists and paleontologists work in order top bring back to live this extinct fauna. Fossil localities and specimens incluye data Prom. México, Cuba, Honduras, Colombia, and Venezuela. We are searching for financial support to cover printing.

5. We are reproducing in DVD the 25 hours TV lectures, to be freely distributed to High schools, libraries and other educational institutions, so they can use it for educational purposes. Some sets have been already reproduced with funding from the Cuban Geological Society and distributed among the Regional Delegations, free. For further DVD reproduction we are requesting support from IYPE.

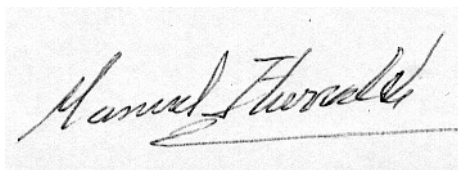
6. During the year 2008 there will be prepared several TV spots to educate the general public about good behaviours related to the eighth thematic raised by the IYPE initiative. Also a 55 minutes documentary film will be produced to be

presented in November of this year, dedicated to evaluate the actual situation and possible solutions in Cuba of the IYPE's thematic proposal (ground water, large cities, hazards, etc.). To produce this documentary film we are seeking some financial support.

7. Several scientific and educational events will be dedicated to the Year of Planet Earth, not only in Havana, but also in all regions organized by members of the Cuban National Committee. Especially the "III Cuban Convention on Science, Technology and Development", to be celebrated next November 3-7 in Havana, will be dedicated to Planet Earth, and a symposium will evaluate the Experiences and Challenges of Communicating Earth Science to Society. For further information contact Rodolfo Arencibia (arencibia@palco.cu).

8. In 2009 the "III Cuban International Earth Science Convention" will be dedicated to the Planet Earth. For more information visit www.scg.cu.

9. The Cuban delegation to the IYPE national representatives meeting in Paris, February 13 afternoon, proposed to produce, as a join effort, a series of pamphlets and posters with the title "*Protect your family from...*" These brochures will cover subjects as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, flash flows, tsunamis, cave collapse, water contamination, etc. The general part of each pamphlet most follows a general model, but a section has to be added in each country or region, to represent local maps, phenomena and examples. The idea is to prepare them as pdf files, but also each country would produce some inexpensive printed versions, in order to reach those populations which occupy the farmlands and low-income areas, which are more exposed to hazards. In the near future this idea will be further developed by email.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Manuel A. Iturralde-Vinent". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

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President of the Cuban National Commission of Planet Earth
http://www.medioambiente.cu/planeta_Tierra/inicio.asp