

## Abstract

Geoscience outreach is an important communication tool for geoscientists to approach politicians, decision makers, and the general public. This tool is used to inform them about the added values of the geosciences for the national economy and to cope with environmental challenges. Moreover, geoscience outreach aims to excite (in particular young) people to be interested in the Earth sciences. There is a growing gap between demand for and supply of geo-experts. Main target of the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE 2007–2009) was to help close this gap by informing students to follow a professional career in the geosciences. The successful IYPE outreach programme was predominantly implemented at a grass root level through the 80 national and regional IYPE Committees, 14 of which in Africa. Reports are given on the geoscience outreach activities conducted under the IYPE, in these African nations during the period 2007–2009. Upon closure of the IYPE, the Earth Science Matters Foundation was established to continue implementing the outreach objectives of the IYPE. Reports from five African nations show that geoscience outreach activities have continued after 2009. Main challenges reported are lack of funding, lack of priority, and lack of qualified personnel. Finally, some possible recommendations to cope with such challenges are suggested.