

THE INTERNATIONAL CONTINENTAL SCIENTIFIC DRILLING PROGRAM

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In 1996 the ICDP was established as a multinational program, designed to coordinate international drilling projects with a variety of scientific targets and a wide range of depth targets and technical challenges. The program aims at challenging themes of geoscientific and socio-economic relevance such as natural hazards, Earth's climate and environment, deep biosphere, basin evolution or mass and energy transport through Earth's crust. The principle advantages of such an international program are: focusing of scientific effort on drilling sites of global significance, concentration on topics of high international priority and benefits to participants arising from international cooperation. ICDP projects cover themes such as the climate and environmentally related investigations of the Lake Baikal to magmatic processes and assessment of volcanic risk in the Long Valley Restless Caldera, California. In 1999 the Mauna Kea volcano has been cored to a depth of 3.1 km in order to study the evolution of the Hawaiian mantle plume. Environmental effects and mass extinctions through impacts will be explored in the Chicxulub Structure in Mexico in 2000. The Unzen Volcano Drilling in Japan will reveal new insight into magma conduits through drilling. Other forthcoming projects which will be presented deal with e.g. the evolution of UHP metamorphic terranes in eastern China or the fast opening Gulf of Corinth rift in Greece. After allocation of funds the San Andreas Fault Zone Drilling and Monitoring Program will be one of the future flagships of ICDP.