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The year of 'Maths of Planet Earth'

Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Chubb, has just launched the 2013 International Year of Mathematics of Planet Earth in Australia. Organisers say the year will highlight the importance of mathematics and statistics in addressing a wide range of global challenges and encourage public engagement with mathematics.



Credit: CSIRO

'Whether it is addressing changes in our environment, minimising health risks for our population, securing adequate, nutritious food supplies, or building and powering infrastructure for this generation and the next, you will always find science and mathematics at the core of the solution,' Professor Chubb said.

'Sustainability is arguably the greatest challenge for our generation,' said Professor Simon Levin from Princeton University, who is in Australia to deliver a lecture on this topic. 'Mathematics has much to offer in finding solutions, and mathematicians are eager to find out how they can get involved.'

Mathematical skills are in high demand in the Australian workforce, yet the number of high school students taking up intermediate and advanced level mathematics subjects at Year 12 is declining.

'There is a significant number of students at school for whom maths is their favourite subject, but they are not exposed to the career options that are there,' said Professor Geoff Prince, Director of the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute.

'We hope that Maths of Planet Earth will help students discover the exciting career opportunities awaiting them when they study mathematics or statistics,' Professor Prince said.

Maths of Planet Earth themed events will be held throughout the year, targeting both public and specialist audiences.

A major international conference, hosted by AMSI in July, will showcase Australia's mathematical sciences research capacity and create a platform on which to launch new scientific collaborations.

And students, academics, professionals and the public will be contributing to the Maths of Planet Earth blog at www.mope.org.au, and participate in competitions throughout the year.

Source: Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute

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