



Urbanization and Global Environmental Change

AN IHDP CORE PROJECT

The UGEC e-Newsletter
Issue 5 – September/October 2007

WELCOME NOTE

Dear recipients of the UGEC e-Newsletter,

This has been a very exciting two month period for the UGEC project. The first official UGEC workshop was a great success; the workshop was titled "Urban responses to climate change" The event that took place in September in New York City with the support of our co-sponsors, the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP) and the Global Institute of Sustainability (GIOS) at Arizona State University. You can read a short summary of this workshop in the subsequent pages; we are preparing the workshop report which we will circulate promptly after it is finalized.

The new issue of the IHDP UPDATE titled "Implications of Global Environmental Change for Human Security in Urban Areas" is now available online on the IHDP website (link can be found below). This UPDATE has been a joint effort of our project together with the IHDP Global Environmental Change and Human Security (GECHS) and IGBP/IHDP Land-Ocean Interactions in the Coastal Zone (LOICZ) projects; we hope that such collaborations and products will catalyze an increased interaction among the various Global Environmental Change research communities.

Furthermore, among preparations for participation in meetings and conferences, we are presently in the process of planning our next SSC meeting in Dakar, Senegal for February of 2008 which will be preceded by a workshop focusing on "Climate change resilience in an urbanizing Western Africa". More information on this event is forthcoming but we are looking for-

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ward to a very exciting and productive event in Dakar.

Best regards,
Michail Fragkias
Danielle Tomerlin

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Urbanization and Global Environmental Change project (an International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change – IHDP - Core project) initiated its e-Newsletter this year as an electronic avenue for important announcements regarding international meetings, workshops, conferences, colloquia, lectures, seminars, calls for papers and grant proposals, and job opportunities. If you wish to contribute content of that scope to the next issue of e-Newsletter please submit the information you wish to see distributed to the UGEC network of scholars and practitioners to fragkias@asu.edu. At this stage we plan to send out a digest every couple of months (with the possibility of establishing it as a monthly circulation as the project expands). Directions on how you may subscribe or unsubscribe are included at the end of this message. An archive of messages sent to the list is available at <http://lists.asu.edu/archives/ugec-l.html>. Our website (www.ugec.org) will always carry the most up to date so do not forget to visit it from time to time.

UGEC EVENTS



*UGEC Workshop Summary
Urban Responses to Climate Change
Sept. 26th and 27th, 2007*

I'm very happy to inform everyone that the first UGEC workshop themed "Urban responses to climate change" was completed this past month and received a very positive response by the participants.

For those of you who have not followed the workshop webpage, here's a quick summary:

The workshop was divided in several sessions with different discussion themes. First, the participants discussed ways through which cities are currently responding to climate change. An increasing number of cities mentioned by the participants – with cities identified as prime spaces for response to the challenges of climate change - are deemed as responsive to the issue of climate change; response actions though are drawn from a limited set of possible actions and are evident in a limited number of cities. Some preliminary discussion on factors of why took place; the consensus was that can we expect further response of cities to climate change in the near future in the Americas. Benefits for local communities of those responses and the costs of a lack of response were discussed in the context of specific examples brought to the table by the participants which included Toronto, Canada; Boston, USA, Manizales, Mexico; Ilo, Peru; Sao Paulo, Brazil, Bogota, Colombia and others.



A second discussion theme focused on what is driving responses to climate change. Increasing more cities in the Americas have established mitigation actions to reduce their impact on climate change; but fewer cities have created comprehensive responses to climate change adaptation issues and combined (mitigation and adaptation) issues. The discussion on what is driving current responses to climate change was reformulated as an analysis of drivers and

mechanisms of responses (the latter being the ways through which drivers of response are translated into action); apart from identifying the above, the discussion included elements such as the direct or indirect nature of the drivers of responses, as well as the creation of metrics regarding the feasibility or effectiveness of the mechanisms through which responses are put into actions. Actors and some institutional dimensions (private/public/social sectors) in those responses were identified but further discussion followed later on during the workshop.

A following discussion focused on the topic of building better responses to climate change. The theme asked the question of whether mitigation and adaptation can be part of local strategies to climate change and how local decisions are made in the selection of mitigation or adaptation actions. While the responses were positive, discussions centered on the difficulties posed by the time horizon of each strategy and action and the importance of the roles of private and public sectors (among other parameters). The participants also discussed critical or instrumental elements for the compatibility and coherence of mitigation and adaptation actions with the local urban development agenda – but elements also crucial beyond the platform of agendas. Discussion on steps that need to be taken to foster urban sustainability through responses to climate change included an emphasis on the monitoring of vulnerabilities and impacts and several specific entry points on knowledge provision, action plans, and environmental impact assessments.



The discussion then moved on the major theme of this workshop, the role of institutions in responses to climate change. This theme was broken down into two sessions: the first covered the major deficiencies and resistance of

institutions to respond to climate change as well as the windows of opportunity to modify those obstacles. The second session focused on the strengths of current institutions to respond to climate change. Discussions revolved around institutions that can take a leading role in those responses and emphasis was placed on the high degree of cooperation that should exist among institutions operating at different administrative and political levels (local, state, national, international). This session also provided a segway to the “forward looking” discussion on doable actions – supplementing the recommendations on how to fight obstacles and promoting institutions with a better fit.

Eventually we arrived at our synthesis sessions on building better local responses to climate change in cities which provided a more solid perspective on the Americas. In these sessions we discussed potential actions and products on which to focus in more detail: those included reviews of sector policies, aimed at mainstreaming climate change considerations in various related sectors beyond the environment, such as housing, transport, energy, land-use planning and so on; city assessments of urban vulnerability to climate change impacts, resilience, and opportunities for GHG abatement in the various above mentioned sectors; pilot projects to be conducted in partnership between cities of North and South America on updating codes, bylaws and regulations to incorporate climate change and several others. A common realization was that several desired products approximate concrete research projects that need to be undertaken by research groups – a discussion that we will revisit in the workshop report but also among the members of the UGEC SSC and the participants of the workshop. We also created the outline for the workshop report which the group would like to see published in a different form in an academic journal. In the next few weeks, we will be circulating a draft of the report first to the workshop participants for editing and then to the community. We are also planning to circulate an executive summary of the event along with the workshop report.

Several pre-workshop contributions are uploaded on the web so feel free to browse through them. We ask you to anticipate the detailed report of the workshop, which we will work hard in order to circulate as soon as possible.



Participants enjoying the Boathouse Restaurant together
Clockwise (from left): Michail, Chris, Ricardo Silva, Patricia, George Martin, Ricardo Jordan, Peter (hidden), Roberto, George Martine, and Paul.



Left: Michail and Roberto walking in Central Park with several other workshop participants Right: Roberto, Paty, and Andrea.



Many thanks to the participants of the workshop for their involvement and hard work:

Andrea Lampis, Assistant Professor at the University of Los Andes. His most recent research and teaching activities articulate around a central interest for vulnerability and livelihoods. He is exploring the social protection implications of a capability and asset-based approach for people and households' well-being, while looking at the impact of environmental and natural disasters on urban livelihoods.

Anthony Bigio, is a Senior Urban Specialist with the Sustainable Development Department in the Middle East and North Africa region of the World Bank. He is in charge of numerous operations in the fields of housing, slum upgrading, emergency reconstruction, urban poverty reduction, and cultural heritage.

Bill Solecki, Professor and Chairperson, Hunter College. His research focuses on the human dimensions of global environmental

change, land use and land cover change, and environmental risks and hazards. Dr. Solecki led the Metropolitan East Coast Region Assessment for the U.S. National Assessment of Climate Variability and Change. **Chris Boone**, Associate Professor and Graduate Dean, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University, and holds a joint appointment with the School of Human Evolution & Social Change. He has devoted a considerable amount of his time on research with the Baltimore Ecosystem Study (<http://beslter.org>), an Urban Long Term Ecological Research site.

Cynthia Rosenzweig, Research Scientist at NASA. Her primary research involves the development of interdisciplinary methodologies by which to assess the potential impacts of and adaptations to global environmental change. She has joined impact models with global climate models (GCMs) to predict future outcomes of both land-based and urban systems under altered climate conditions.

George Martin, Professor, Department of Sociology, Montclair St. University. He is specialized in Urban Social Ecology and is a visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Political Ecology and Department of Sociology at University of California, Santa Cruz.

Monirul Mirza, Adaptation and Impacts Research Group (AIRG), The Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Toronto. His major research focuses are: climate change, extreme weather events, vulnerability and adaptation, water and energy.

Patricia Romero, Professor, Environmental and development issues, Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM). She teaches graduate and postgraduate students and disseminates environmental issues through different outreach activities (e.g. inter-faculty and inter-university compact courses on environment and development for medium and senior level public servants and managers in private enterprises).

George Martine a Consultant at UNFPA (The United Nations Population Fund), in charge of its 2007 State of the World Population Report. He is also currently serving as President of the Brazilian Association for Population Studies (ABEP), as well as Scientific Director of the

“Population, Development and Environment Research Project” (PRIPODE).

Peter Marcotullio, Research Fellow managing the Urban Programme, United Nations University. He has published on globalization and urban development in Pacific Asia. His research interest focus is regional planning as a response to globalization and environmental pressures, and the relationship between development and urban environmental conditions.

Ricardo Jordan, UN-ECLAC, División de Desarrollo Sostenible y Asentamientos Humanos/ Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division. He is a coordinator for projects on urban local management and assistance to municipalities in cities in Latin America and the Caribbean, projects on “Urban Management in Intermediate Cities” and “Urban Management and Sustainable Development”.

Paul Kirshen, Research Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering Department, Tufts University and has 30 years of experience serving as Principal Investigator/ Project Manager of interdisciplinary, participatory research related to water resources and coastal zone management and climate variability and change –both in the USA and in developing countries, particularly West Africa.

Ricardo Silva Toledo is the Undersecretary for urban issues for the State Government of Sao Paulo in Brazil and author of about 90 published titles about urban and regional infrastructure, public regulation and building technology.

Roberto Sanchez, Director of UC Mexus, University of California, Riverside. His research addresses the linkages between the human dimensions of global environmental change, where he focuses on the vulnerability of urban areas to climate variability and climate change.

Many thanks to **Lesley Patrick** and **Carina Molnar** for coordinating the event at Hunter College.

2008 IHDP Open Meeting - UGEC Call for contributions

UGEC is proposing two sessions for the 2008 IHDP OM. We would very much like to gauge interest so please let us know if you would like to participate in any of the two sessions as a speaker.

Proposed Session 1: Urban Responses to Climate Change

This session attempts to advance the understanding on how cities respond, fail to respond, or could better respond to climate change, including the relationships needed to effectively change institutions to address rapid urbanization and climate change. Attention to the responses of urban areas and institutions about climate change will explore the compatibility and coherence between mitigation, adaptation, .

The session will focus particularly on three aspects: What do we know about the role of different actors (public sector, private sector, social sector, informal sector, and international organizations), their actions and their involvement in the responses to climate change in urban areas; the deficiencies and resistance of institutions to respond to climate change and what are the windows of opportunities to overcome them and; how collaboration between sectors could effectively establish better measures, solutions, and responses to climate change.

Co-Organizers: Roberto Sanchez-Rodriguez, Environmental Studies, University of California - Riverside; Bill Solecki, Department of Geography and CUNY Institute of Sustainable Cities, Hunter College; and Michail Fragkias, Urbanization and Global Environmental Change project, Arizona State University

Proposed Session 2: Forecasting the Magnitude, Location, and Form of Urban Growth

The purpose of the session is to discuss the state of the art systems in urban growth forecasting and their utility for practitioners, planners, policymakers, conservation agencies and other stakeholders who have an interest in

identifying the likely location, size and shape of future urban growth; also, to facilitate a discussion among users and developers of models (and parties responsible for the generation of required data) to assess the gap in needs.

The organizers are seeking abstracts that present aspects of modeling and forecasting urban growth across the globe. Questions to be discussed in the contributions and during the session include: what do we know about the future urban landscape and how it relates to other land uses? How will the magnitude and shape of urban areas affect and be affected by global environmental change? What is the policy relevance of urban growth models; do they provide solutions to problems associated with rapid urbanization in the face of global environmental change? Are there steps to be taken that make urban growth forecasting more policy relevant?

Co-Organizers: Karen C. Seto, Dept. of Geological Sciences, Stanford University; Peter J. Marcotullio, United Nations University and Hunter College and Michail Fragkias, Urbanization and Global Environmental Change project, Arizona State University (list of co-organizers not final)

More information regarding the sessions will be circulated shortly. If you would like to participate in any of the two sessions, please contact Michail Fragkias (fragkias@asu.edu). Although the sessions have not been officially approved by IHDP, we will be accepting abstracts for papers and poster presentations as an indication of interest for participation to the event. We would appreciate having your abstracts by November 30th and should be 250 words or less. Please send queries at the same address.

UGEC Workshop “Climate Change Resilience in an Urbanizing Western Africa” February 2008, Dakar, West Africa

The ‘Climate Change Resilience in an Urbanizing Western Africa’ workshop will be the platform for discussion on a wide range of drivers

of current responses to climate change (with a special attention on the Western Africa experience). The workshop will focus particularly on several aspects of responses to climate change in cities that have emerged from discussions in past workshops from the UGEC project members: who are the main actors in those responses; the role of different actors, their actions and involvement in the urban responses to climate change and their effectiveness; deficiencies and resistance of institutions to respond to climate change; and windows of opportunities to overcome them.

The workshop will explore mitigation and adaptation efforts that arise as local strategies to response to climate change in the region, their compatibility to local urban development agendas, their success/potential relative to the international experience, and the steps needed to foster urban sustainability through responses to climate change.

Main Workshop Questions

What has the impact of climate change been on Dakar (or how will it likely affect Dakar)? How do the institutions in Dakar adapt to it (Do for example specific institutions or social networks help the city to adapt?) What does climate change mean for Western Africa cities (and what does it mean for a city like Dakar in particular)? Is Dakar typical of the types of growing cities in Western Africa? More generally, how do cities of different scale in Western Africa adapt to climate change? Are current institutions in the region strong enough or robust enough to respond to climate change challenge; which institutions can take a leading role in these responses; what levels of cooperation can be expected and recommended among institutions operating at different administrative and political levels? Can a partnership of scholars and practitioners help in the formulation of robust action models of climate change resilience for poor and vulnerable people? How can we help vulnerable urban populations assess threats and devise tools to respond to increased risks (tools such as land-use and zoning

plans, building codes and enhanced plans in insurance financing for disasters)?

Primary objectives

- Strengthening the understanding of responses to climate change from the perspective of social science (covering theoretical and applied perspectives). The activity will (re)introduce invited researchers and practitioners from the region to social science methodologies related to the topic at hand.
- The sharing of the international experiences and lessons in past and present responses to climate change in urban areas;
- Strengthening of the science-policy interactions with the target of building better local responses to climate change in the region. The organizers will devise activities that will promote dialogue and the creation or partnerships between scientists and practitioners

Goals

We are targeting the first formal contribution from the UGEC project to the topic of the response capacity of cities in Western Africa to climate change. The target is to highlight research already in progress in the region and to bring together practitioners and researchers in Dakar to exchange information and experiences and engage in knowledge building. The presence of the UGEC project will provide benefits to the local researchers since response to climate change can be assisted by international collaborations.

Outcomes

- A background white paper on Dakar and other Western Africa cities.
- The creation of a Western Africa network of researchers and practitioners on the interface of urbanization and global environmental change; the target of the network will be the sharing of information and the development of long-term collaborative activities (in conjunction with UGEC or independently).

- The development of several joint publications (articles in leading journals, UGEC working papers) on the prospects and challenges in the urban responses to climate change.
- The enhancement of media attention to urbanization and global environmental change issues in the region; we need better use of the media and to distill the products of the workshop to the media
- The exploration of the possibility of development of new research proposals covering key or new areas springing from the discussions.

OTHER EVENTS

IHDP Open Meeting 2008 - Social Challenges of Global Change

From the Open Meeting website:

“While still reaching out to the large and diverse international human dimensions community, it is expected that this Open Meeting will be highly applicable to the South Asian region generally and India in particular. Together with the local host and co-organizer, a unique developing-country institution with a main focus on energy, environment and sustainable development on a global perception and a local focus, the IHDP will follow up on outcomes from the last Open Meeting in Bonn in 2005, which tried to outline the need for a more specific and selective scientific approach.

With the theme of the 7th Open Meeting, “Social Challenges of Global Change,” IHDP wants to indicate the need to incorporate not only the general discussion about climate change, but also many other environmental changes which happen in our society: resource shortages, the destruction of ecosystem services, new threats to human health. At the first planning meeting of the ISPC, which took place in Bonn at the end of June this year, the planning committee agreed on four core questions, which should

cover the widespread aspects of Social Challenges of Global Change:

- How do we deal with demographic challenges?
- How do we deal with limitations of resources and ecosystem services?
- How do we maintain social cohesion while increasing (global) equity?
- How do we adapt institutions to address global change?"

Note the need to relate your abstracts to one or more of the questions mentioned above as well as the cross-cutting issues and topics that intersect them. All the above are elaborated upon in the Open Meeting conceptual note: http://www.openmeeting2008.org/doc/concept_note.pdf

For more information contact Lis Mullin at: openmeeting@ihdp.unu.edu

IHDP 2008 International Human Dimensions Workshop

Applications are now being accepted for the IHDP 2008 International Human Dimensions Workshop:

The 6th International Human Dimensions Workshop (IHDW) will take place October 12th - 15th 2008 in India, immediately before the 7th Open Meeting.

This IHDW will be a shortened series of parallel workshops, offering an intense training on subjects such as Industrial Transformation, Health, Vulnerability, Resilience, and Adaptation.

IHDP will once again invite qualified young researchers from around the world to hone their skills and learn about new research areas, and finally to take active part immediately after the workshop at the 7th Open Meeting, which is the world's largest international science conference

dealing with social aspects of global environmental change. The topic of the 2008 Open Meeting is "Social Challenges to Global Change."

Participants to the IHDW will be requested to also present papers or posters at the Open Meeting itself, and must submit abstracts to the Open Meeting call.

If you are interested in being a trainer or offered a workshop to the 2008 IHDW, please contact Douglas F. Williamson at the IHDP Secretariat, williason@ihdp.unu.edu.

Applications for the IHDW are open. For more information check the IHDP website, www.ihdp.org, for more details.

RESILIENCE 2008 - Resilience, Adaptation and Transformation in Turbulent Times

(Monday-Thursday, April 14-17, 2008) This international science and policy conference will be held in Stockholm, Sweden between April 14-17. For more information and abstract submission (by November 16, 2007) go to <http://www.resilience2008.org/>.

From the Resilience 2008 website:

"The aim of "Resilience, adaptation and transformation in turbulent times - preparing for change in social-ecological systems" is to bring together scientists working with the complex dynamics of interconnected social-ecological systems and to present, discuss, and if possible, summarise the current understanding of resilience, adaptability and pathways of transformation in such systems. Representatives from government, business and other major actors will be invited to discuss the challenges facing societal development, and together with scientists propose directions to go and pathways to avoid. To explore this further and to complement and enhance the scientific symposium, discussions have been initiated with the Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts on a resilience exhibition and possibly dialogue workshops with artists performing top quality work. We envision the involvement of performing arts as well."

Climate Change: Science and Solutions Conference

(Wednesday-Friday, January 16-18, 2008) the National Council for Science and the Environment invites you to participate in the 8th National Conference on Science, Policy, and the Environment to develop and advance science-based solutions to climate change. Join in the dialogue with leading scientists, policy makers, industry leaders, educators, and other solutions-oriented innovators to develop comprehensive strategies for protecting people and the planet against the threat of climate change. The three-day conference will be held at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, DC.

<http://www.ncseonline.org/2008conference/>

Urban Ecology and Conservation Symposium

(Monday, February 8, 2008) The sixth annual symposium hosted by the Urban Ecosystem Research Consortium (UERC) is taking place next February. During the symposium, you will have opportunities to network, build partnerships, and exchange information about urban environmental issues and the practical application of related ecological and social sciences in the Portland, OR/Vancouver, WA metropolitan region. The day will be packed with a series of presentations, a poster session, keynote speakers, raffles, and plenty of time to network. Join us to learn, share and be inspired. Abstracts for presentations, posters, or simply for publication in the proceedings will be accepted through November 5, 2007. Please see the UERC web site at www.uercportland.org for details.

Ecocity World Summit (7th International Ecocity Conference)

(Tuesday-Saturday, April 22-26, 2008) Throughout Earth Day Week, in San Francisco, California, the Ecocity World Summit (7th International Ecocity Conference) will be convening an international community of inspired change-makers; courageous individuals who are addressing problems of the world's environ-

ment with thoughtful long-range solutions that are truly sustainable, ecologically healthy and socially just. For more information go to:

<http://www.ecocityworldsummit.org/index.htm>.

UGEC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Expression of Project Support

Exploring the Inclusion of Satellite Derived Constructed Area Densities in the Calculation of National and Sub-national Ecological Footprints

Proponent: Christopher D. Elvidge, Earth Observation Group, NOAA-NESDIS National Geophysical Data Center, U.S. Department of Commerce.

“The objective of this project is to evaluate the utility of including satellite based density grids of constructed area in the calculation of national and sub-national *ecological footprints*. Human beings around the world build, use and maintain constructed surfaces for shelter, transportation and commerce. It is a universal phenomenon – akin to clothing – and represents one of the primary anthropogenic modifications of the environment. Expansion in population numbers and economies combined with the popular use of automobiles has lead to the sprawl of development and a wide proliferation of constructed surfaces. We have preliminary evidence that geographical variations in the density of constructed area are correlated with the *ecological footprint*.”

Selected Recent Publications

The new IHDP UPDATE co-organized by the UGEC project and titled “Implications of Global Environmental Change for Human Security in Urban Areas” is now available online:

http://www.ihdp.uni-bonn.de/Pdf_files/Updates/IHDPUpdate2_2007.pdf

The 2007 edition of the UNDP’s Human Development Report is entitled ‘Human Develop-

ment and Climate Change' will be published in November.

The 2007 State of the World Population Report from the UNFPA is titled 'Unleashing the potential of urban growth' (downloadable from <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/detail.cfm?ID=334&filterListType>)

Climate Change and Fisheries

With IDRC, Cheikh Gueye is developing a program on Climate Change and fisheries sectors in six west African countries (Senegal, Gambia, Bissau Guinea, Guinea, Mauritania, Cabo Verde). The program seeks financing for 3 years of research and action to develop the capacity of this sector to measure and anticipate their vulnerability.

UGEC International Working Paper Series - Recent Addition

The newest working paper in the UGEC International Working Paper Series is titled "Institutional responses of cities to global environmental change" and was authored by Michail Fragkias, Executive Officer, Urbanization and Global Environmental Change.

Abstract: This paper reviews interdisciplinary work on institutions and contemporary political economy that has considerable implications for the understanding of bidirectional interactions and feedback loops between urban systems and global environmental change. Five topics of particular importance for the study of urban institutional responses to global environmental change are explored: i) The choice of institutions and institutional change – elaborating on the differences of concepts such as the normative Rawlsian and the positive non-Rawlsian veils of ignorance; ii) The maintenance of institutions and institutional robustness; iii) effective urban governance and government failures (what are the lessons from urban political economy); iv) effects and cross-scale effects of

national political institutions; and v) institutions and belief systems as a research frontier.

The working paper can be found at: http://www.ugec.org/docs/UGEC_WP07-04.pdf

UGEC International Working Paper Series - Call for contributions

The UGEC International Working Paper Series aims to circulate and promote original and innovative work on Urbanization and Global Environmental Change issues. This Series targets work done by the academic and practitioner communities of the UGEC project.

Work in progress that addresses one or more themes of the Science Plan is especially welcome. Working papers on the need and practical use of scientific knowledge on global environmental change in managing, planning, and development of urban growth are also welcome.

This series provides the opportunity to scholars and practitioners to present the results of their research available in a timely fashion and receive feedback from a broader community of scientists and practitioners. The UGEC working paper series is maintained by the UGEC International Project Office. Many of the working papers will be in draft stages of articles that eventually target publication in scholarly or professional journals. More information on Policies and Procedures, the Review Process, copyright issues and submission instructions can be found on our website (under Activities – Int. Working Paper Series).

On our website you can find the existing list of papers in the Series. <http://www.ugec.org/tiki-index.php?page=WPSeries>

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Job Opportunities

Faculty of Global and Environmental Sustainability, Bentley College

Bentley's Natural and Applied Sciences Department invites applications for a tenure-track faculty position in Earth, Environment, and Global Sustainability. The successful candidate must have a Ph.D. in a relevant field of science and must be an outstanding teacher who can engage undergraduate students with business interests and perform innovative research in his/her fields of expertise. Areas of interest may range broadly from Earth systems and environmental science to Earth resources and management, alternative energy strategies, and environmental remediation, as well as sustainable technologies, practices, and policies. For best consideration, all application materials should be received by November 15, 2007. For more information go to

<http://www.higheredjobs.com/search/details.cfm?jobCode=175253605>.

Endowed Chairs and Faculty Positions in Sustainability, Michigan Tech

Michigan Technological University has announced a Sustainability faculty hiring initiative that will add ten tenure-track positions, open in rank, during the next year. These include three endowed chairs: the Robbins Chair in Sustainable Management of the Environment; the Robbins Chair in Sustainable Manufacturing and Design; and the Robbins Chair in Sustainable Use of Materials. Faculty selected for the Robbins chairs will be leaders in their fields and have strong research experience. Successful candidates for the remaining positions will have outstanding records in their field for respective stages in their careers. They will be expected to develop active research programs and to collaborate in multi-disciplinary research, education, and outreach efforts. Applications received by December 15, 2007 will receive first consideration, but applications will be considered until all positions are filled. [For more information.](#)

Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting, April 2008, Boston, MA – Two Calls for Papers

Here are two calls for paper with special interest for UGEC.

Challenges of Sustainability Transitions

Co-Organizers: Stephen McCauley, Graduate School of Geography, Clark University and Jennie Stephens, Environmental Science and Policy, Clark University

Session Description:

Facilitating societal transitions toward sustainability is a basic premise of sustainability science, yet perspectives on transitions in different sub-systems are not often integrated. This session will explore the challenges associated with transitions in several critical human-environment systems, such as energy, land use, agriculture, and transportation. Each of these systems are characterized by distinctive institutions, infrastructures, technologies, rules, practices, networks, and convictions and interests, embedded within complex multi-scalar socio-political contexts. The juxtaposition of sustainability challenges for multiple systems highlights important similarities and differences in the roles that policy initiatives play in guiding complex human-environment systems toward more sustainable configurations.

The broader goals of the session are to develop the concept of sustainability transitions as an analytical lens and to evaluate its utility for engaging analytically and normatively in the complex problem of transitioning toward more sustainable systems. We welcome papers on a variety of systems, including energy, land use, transportation, housing, agriculture, and water, and we welcome papers from different epistemological positions. Possible areas of research that could be explored in the session include:

- The challenges of win-win strategies across scales

- Lock-in dynamics and other structural barriers to transition
- The role of perceptions in adaptation and change
- Challenges related to regulatory structures
- Adaptive capacity as a system characteristic
- Unintended interactions with other functional sub-systems
- Contestation over the definition of sustainability
- Emergent properties in socio-environmental interactions
- The role of agency in systemic change

If you would like to participate in the session, please contact Stephen McCauley at (smccauley@clarku.edu) regarding the deadline for abstract submission (abstracts should be of 250 words or less). Please send queries to Stephen at the same address.

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The Intersection of Urban Sustainability and Climate Change: Challenges and Opportunities

Co-Organizers: Lesley Patrick (lpatrick@hunter.cuny.edu, CUNY Institute for Sustainable Cities) and Lee Hachadoorian (leehach@geo.hunter.cuny.edu, CUNY Institute for Sustainable Cities).

We invite papers addressing the intersection of urban sustainability and climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. Although still ambiguous in its definition, urban sustainability has been associated with promoting efficient and equitable resource use and addressing quality-of-life issues. Global climate change presents a dramatic challenge to the aspirations of urban sustainability, prompting urban-focused adaptation and mitigation strategies. Successful stewardship of the urban environment is dependent upon integrating these strategies into contemporary urban development.

As a home to 50% of the world's population and with an environmental and economic influ-

ence stretching far beyond their borders, cities are the "global" in global climate change. Though prolific producers of greenhouse gas emissions, cities paradoxically have the potential to effect a massive reduction in our ecological footprint. Urban planning must explicitly incorporate the reality of climate change in its traditional activities, such as zoning and transportation planning, as well as adopting specific strategies for adaptation and mitigation. We encourage approaches that address multiple dimensions of the relationship between climate change and urban sustainability, including long- and short-term strategies applicable to developed and/or developing world cities.

Specifically this session addresses the following questions: What is the intersection between urban sustainability and climate change? Where are challenges and opportunities and how do we make the best of them?

If you would like to participate in the session, please contact Lesley Patrick (lpatrick@hunter.cuny.edu) regarding the deadline for abstract submission.

In the News:

Bangkok Sinking Under Rising Seas

UGEC Project Associate Lisa Schipper was quoted in an AOL article last week on Bangkok and climate change. Here are a few excerpts from the article:

“KHUN SAMUT CHIN, Thailand (Oct. 20) - At Bangkok's watery gates, Buddhist monks cling to a shrinking spit of land around their temple as they wage war against the relentlessly rising sea. Jutting above the water line just ahead in the Gulf of Thailand are remnants of a village that has already slipped beneath the sea.

Experts say these waters, aided by sinking land, threaten to submerge Thailand's sprawling capital of more than 7 million people within this century. Bangkok is one of many of the world's largest cities at risk of being swamped as sea

levels rise in coming decades, according to warnings at the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change held here.

"This is what the future will look like in many places around the world," says Lisa Schipper, an American researcher on global warming, while visiting the temple. "Here is a living study in environmental change."

The loss of Bangkok would destroy the country's economic engine and a major hub for regional tourism."

The article can be found at:

http://news.aol.com/story/_a/bangkok-sinking-under-rising-seas/20071020153809990001?ncid=NWS0001000000001

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Urbanization and Global Environmental Change (UGEC) project is a science project that targets the generation of new knowledge on the bi-directional interactions and feedback loops between urban areas and global environmental change at local, regional and global levels. It follows a multi-disciplinary approach and utilizes an innovative framework for the comprehensive understanding of the driving and resulting economic, political, cultural, social and physical processes. An important feature of this core project is the explicit commitment to translate abstract knowledge about GEC into local decision-making contexts. The project is expected to provide a platform for close interaction between practitioners, political decision-makers and researchers and targets a stronger coordination and collaboration between academics, political decision-makers and practitioners working on urban and environmental issues. The UGEC project is currently engaged in ongoing efforts to expanding its regional and thematic networks.

Our website provides links to the UGEC Science Plan, information on how researchers can join our network as project associates, and how research projects and agencies can get their

projects endorsed by UGEC (www.ugec.org). You can assist us in achieving our goals by forwarding this e-Newsletter to any potentially interested party.

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