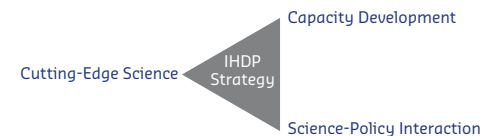




IHDP New Initiatives



Pursuant to the adoption of the IHDP Strategic Plan 2007-2015, the Scientific Committee has identified new initiatives dealing with cutting-edge science, capacity development, and science-policy interactions.

Scientific Initiatives

Earth System Governance (ESG)

The development of a new core project on Earth System Governance (ESG) is underway. This project will build on the legacy of Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (IDGEC) but will expand its coverage to include three new dimensions. ESG will shift the focus from institutions to governance; governance will become a cross-cutting theme of interest to both IHDP core and ESSP joint projects, and the new project will direct attention to the themes of Architecture, Agency, Adaptiveness, Accountability, and Allocation.

The IHDP Scientific Committee has authorized the establishment of a Scientific Planning Committee to carry this initiative forward under the chairmanship of Professor Frank Biermann of the Free University of Amsterdam. This committee met for the first time in conjunction with the May 2007 European Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change. The commit-

tee has a mandate to produce a draft ESG Science Plan in time for external review, revision, and adoption by the IHDP Scientific Committee at its October 2008 meeting in New Delhi.

Vulnerability, Resilience, and Adaptation (VRA)

Following a successful workshop held at Arizona State University (ASU) in February 2005, the IHDP Scientific Committee has decided to create an ongoing cross-project activity dealing with vulnerability, resilience, and adaptation. Consultation with the Resilience Alliance (www.resalliance.org), led to a decision to build this networked activity from three institutions: the Resilience Centre Stockholm, the Tyndall Centre in the UK, and ASU in the US. Other centers of excellence, especially in developing countries, will join this IHDP led consortium. The aim of this activity is to develop links with IHDP's core and joint projects interested in VRA, to bring these networks together, and to use the VRA framework to look at issues engaging each of the core projects. IHDP will issue a call for participation in this activity in the near future. The call will contain more information both about the conceptual framework and the proposed activities.

Integrated Risk Governance (IRG)

Recent and ongoing research on hazards and extreme events focuses predominantly on understanding the causes of these events and assessing the adequacy of the engineering, medical, and financial arrangements needed to cope with the resultant emergencies. The stress on governance in IHDP's Integrated Risk Governance initiative is meant to direct attention to a number of additional concerns, including policies designed to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and communities to the impacts of extreme events, decision-making processes relating to the establishment and deployment of response capabilities, and institutional arrangements (e.g. insurance schemes) capable of protecting individuals from the worst impacts of extreme events, while avoiding the problem of moral hazard.

IHDP has created a Scientific Planning Committee to assess options for developing Integrated Risk Governance into a new IHDP core science project. The planning process will make a concerted effort to identify and take advantage of links both to other IHDP activities (e.g. the GECHS project, the VRA crosscutting theme, the ESG initiative) and to other groups working in this field (e.g. the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security, the ICSU initiative on Natural and Human-induced

Environmental Hazards and Disasters). This effort is led by Professor Peijun Shi of Beijing Normal University and Professor Carlo Jaeger of PIK Potsdam, in collaboration with the IHDP Chinese National Committee.

Joint Activities

IHDP is taking several initiatives to strengthen and supplement existing collaborative efforts with the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP). The Scientific Committee has decided to join IGBP as an official sponsor of the project on Integrated History and Future of People on Earth (IHOPE). The two Programmes will also launch a collaboration effort to explore the modeling traditions of the natural sciences and the social sciences in order to adapt existing models or construct new models as tools for understanding coupled human-natural or socio-ecological systems.

IHDP has established a task force on Human Health that will continue to work to develop a basis for IHDP to become a co-sponsor of the ESSP joint project on Global Environmental Change and Human Health (GECHH).

Capacity-Development Initiatives

International Human Dimensions Workshop

The next International Human Dimensions Workshop (IHDW) will precede the 2008 IHDP Open Meeting in New Delhi. Energy, vulnerability and adaptation, health and other will be central themes of the workshop

which will also focus on Asian development, particularly in India and China.

Regional and National Networks

IHDP will also work to reinforce regional and national networks. In 2007-08, IHDP will focus its regional and national network building activities in Africa and especially in Latin America and the Caribbean. Several workshops and networking activities are planned in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Central America, and several African countries.

Visiting Scholars

IHDP is setting up a visiting scholars programme in collaboration with the Universities of Bonn and Cologne and the United Nations University. Several member countries will send post-doctoral researchers to IHDP with the goal of training emerging scientists and bridging the science-policy gap.

Science-Policy Interaction Initiatives

Science-policy Symposia

Following the example set in Berne in 2006, IHDP is organizing a Science-Policy Symposium at the University of California in Santa Barbara on the theme of energy and climate change to be discussed through the lens of case studies from California, China, India and Germany. The

meeting will take place from November 16 to 19, 2008 and will involve key scientists and policy makers from both industry and government.

Bonn Dialogues

Following the success of the first Bonn Dialogue, IHDP will organize the next in this series of dialogues in November, 2007. The theme will be "Melting Ice, Vanishing Life: the impacts of environmental change on human society and biodiversity".

Strengthening connections to Policy Bodies

IHDP will proceed as a matter of priority to forge links with policy bodies, such as the UNFCCC and the IPCC. IHDP scientists are regular contributors to the work of these bodies already. IHDP will reinforce the participation of members of the IHDP network in drafting the publications of these policy bodies. In August 2007, IHDP and Global Water System Project (GWSP) co-hosted a science-policy seminar at the Stockholm World Water Week. Several activities of the kind are planned for 2008.