

**Minutes ESCOP Social Sciences Subcommittee Meeting
February 2-3, 2010
Washington, DC**

Location

APLU Building (Multipurpose Room, Level 1)
1307 New York Avenue, NW
Phone: 202.478.6040
<http://www.aplu.org>

Tuesday, February 2

Members in Attendance:

Bo Beaulieu, SRDC, Mississippi State University, Rural Sociology
Bob Birkenholz, The Ohio State University, Agricultural Education
Jack Elliot, Texas A&M University, Agricultural Communications – SSSC Secretary & Chair
Elect
Beth Forbes, Purdue University, Agricultural Communications
Jim Knight, University of Arizona, Agricultural Education
Larry Leistritz, North Dakota State University, Agricultural Economics
Ed Osborne, University of Florida, Agricultural Education – SSSC Chair
Travis Park, Cornell University, Agricultural Education – Liaison to the ESCOP Science and
Technology Committee
Brenda Seevers, New Mexico State University, Agricultural Education
Bruce Weber, Oregon State University, Agricultural Economics
Dreamal Worthen, Florida A&M, Rural Sociology

Susanne Thornsby, Michigan State University, USDA
Pat Hipple, NIFA, USDA
Fen Hunt, NIFA, USDA
Sally Maggard, NIFA, USDA
Dan Rossi, Rutgers University, NE Regional Association of Experiment Station Directors ESCOP
S&T Chair

Ex-Officio Members:

Howard Silver, Consortium of Social Science Associations
Tamara Wagester, Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (C-FARE)

Guests:

Susan Capalbo, Agricultural Economics Department Head, Oregon State University
Ian Maw, Vice President, Food, Agriculture & Natural Resources

Ed Osborne, SSSC Chair, presided over the meeting that began at noon with introductions and then the following agenda was followed.

12:00 PM Introductions, Review of Agenda, Working Lunch
Overview of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
Pat Hipple, *National Program Leader*

Economic and Community Systems

Distributed and discussed the USDA organization chart, the CSREES organization chart, and the emerging plan for the NIFA reorganization. She explained that NIFA is one of four agencies within the Research, Education, and Economics mission area of USDA. Dr. Roger Beachy is the new Director of NIFA.

The organization chart for NIFA is in flux as the reorganization progresses; the USDA/NIFA website as distributed is already out-of-date, but serves as a tool for comparison.

The new 2010 NIFA Fact Sheet highlights four institutes: Institute of Food Production and Sustainability; Institute of Bioenergy, Climate, and Environment; Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition; and Institute of Youth, Family, and Community, plus a Center for International Programs. Major restructuring within NIFA will integrate the social sciences into each Institute.

NIFA will focus its efforts on five science priorities: Global Food Security and Hunger; Climate Change; Sustainable Energy; Childhood Obesity; and Food Safety. These priorities are expected to cross-cut the four institutes and international center, but do not align directly with the Institutes, meaning that each Institute will have some responsibility for each Priority. Upcoming RFAs for competitive programs will be Priority-based and will likely involve more than one NIFA Institute.

1:00 PM Dr. Roger Beachy, *Director*
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

To frame his vision for the role of the social sciences within NIFA, Dr. Beachy presented the Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack's PowerPoint presentation on Rural Prosperity given to senior executive staff by Mr. Vilsack a few days before the ESCOP SSSC meeting. Dr. Beachy then explained that the 2009 report from the National Academies of Science titled *A New Biology for the 21st Century* is guiding much of the new direction at NIFA, especially competitive programs in the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). The report recommends that the basic sciences need to help solve practical agricultural problems. AFRI RFAs are expected to be announced in March, 2010. Funds are devoted to national and regional concerns, rather than local, and projects will require multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary efforts. Dr. Beachy answered questions from the group. Communication to tell who we (USDA) are is a priority within NIFA. Discussion concluded with some thoughts on education. He was on a panel at the National FFA Foundation Board Meeting and was impressed with the CASE program. Education seems to be a high priority at the current time. It is imperative that the social scientists be proactive in seeking collaboration with the physical sciences when the new RFAs come out.

2:30 PM Dr. Diana Jerkins, *Acting Director*
Integrated Programs, AFRI

The AFRI RFA pre-announcement is now available on the website that correlates directly with the five NIFA science priorities. Multi-state, multi-disciplinary, multi-institution collaboration, etc. will be the way of the future. A regional and systematic approach will involve universities and non-university personnel, with PIs from Extension, Academics, and/or Research all expected to participate and compete. Longer term, larger grants, and outcome-focused is NIFA's RFA

direction. Use of the social sciences (one of the Es is critical: education; extension; evaluation; etc.) is integral within future AFRI RFAs. The social sciences will be involved. Grant management and post-award management will be more involved as project extensions will be administered as continuation grants. The difference is, in the past PDs received their entire grant/award with three years to meet project goals. In the future, each award will be re-evaluated annually before a continuation will be approved. Projects will likely require a project manager because grants will be much larger and the timeline extended, so accurate record keeping and progress reporting will become even more important. Matching funds don't appear to be a requirement in the AFRI program.

Dr. Jerkins also distributed the NIFA FY2011 President's Budget Proposal. She mentioned that agricultural literacy is being discussed within the agency. Dr. Jerkins is requesting that social scientists send in their names if they are interested in being a reviewer. Dr. Hipple volunteered to send out notices when review panels will be formed, so we can encourage faculty to apply to serve on review panels.

3:30 PM Dr. Molly Jahn, REE *Acting Under Secretary* was unable to attend. Therefore, Ed distributed a NIFA web page and proposed the following two questions to help lead discussion: What did you hear from Drs. Beachy and Jerkins presentations? And What are the implications for the Social Sciences and the ESCOP Social Science Subcommittee?

What did you hear from Drs. Beachy's and Jerkins' presentation?

- There is an increased expectation of collaboration and integration.
- Including 1890 participation will be a priority as is social science involvement.
- Higher accountability within evaluation is a strength the SSSC can bring to the table.
- We will be compelled to look bigger picture at issues/problems.
- The verbiage within the Priority Science Areas doesn't really include social science disciplines.
- The flip side is to see how we fit within the five priorities.
- Will rural development be a part of NIFA's RFAs.
- Again, we are a part of the larger environmental system which includes rural development.
- Pat reminded us that a sixth priority area is the "Fundamental" Area which includes traditional plant and animal sciences.
- Is there alignment between the five NIFA priorities and the five USDA pillars?
- Capacity funds normally mean formula funds (Smith/Lever; Hatch; etc.).
- Dr. Beachy is quite open to listening to strong, logical discussions.

What are the ramifications for the SSSC?

- Are the agricultural social scientists able to deliver – do we have enough capacity?
- Does future reporting have to fit the five national priorities? Should reporting fit?
- Impacts in the social sciences sometimes aren't measurable in the short term.
- Perhaps benchmarks along a continuum will be a model to report impacts rather than outcomes.
- We need good managers to keep all the pieces moving and keeping the human dimension within the project – we need social scientists to do this.

Following this discussion, the 2009 minutes were introduced. **Dreamal Worthen moved to approve the 2009 minutes. Bob Birkenholz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Wednesday, February 3

Ed Osborne opened the session at 8:30 a.m. with an introduction of Dr. Kugler, followed by introductions of the ESCOP SSSC members and guests.

8:30 AM Dr. Dan Kugler, *Transitional Leader*
Institute of Youth, Family, and Community (IYFC)

Dr. Kugler's presentation and Q&A was designed to help answer the questions, "Why four Institutes?" (Institute of Food Production and Sustainability; Institute of Bioenergy, Climate, and Environment; Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition; and Institute of Youth, Family, and Community) Past CSREES activities were re-focused in a logical process into these four NIFA Institutes. Environmental Sciences encompasses Natural Resources within its operations. Priority alignment from the White House down through the agency to NIFA is as close as it has ever been.

What is the Extension emphasis within IYFC? The signals from the top and throughout the agency indicate that community and rural development is an important topic and is embedded within each of the NIFA Institutes. NIFA recognized that human and social dimensions are a significant component of the challenges that face our society, and agriculture in particular, and that is why the social sciences are such a high emphasis within this new paradigm.

Additionally, NIFA is initiating a new fellowship program, the RFA will be modeled, somewhat after NSF and NIH and have a more prestigious focus. The details are still being determined.

What message should we take back to our institutions? Review the five priorities (Global Food Security and Hunger; Climate Change; Sustainable Energy; Childhood Obesity; and Food Safety) and enhance partnerships throughout the system so that strong comprehensive proposals can be submitted when the RFAs are ready. His recommendation is for social scientists to be PDs and that planning grants may be a precursor to larger applications in response to AFRI RFAs. Having a high science focus within NIFA is also a focus.

10:00 AM Dr. Dan Rossi, *Executive Director*
Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station
Directors
Topic: The New ESCOP Science Roadmap

Dr. Rossi was representing The Science and Technology Committee and its Chair, Bill Ravlin, to communicate with ESCOP SSSC Chair, Ed Osborne, in a continuing effort to enhance the relationship with the SSSC.

Dr. Rossi introduced the new ESCOP Science Roadmap and complimented Travis Park and his leadership with the Delphi process last year which was used as a key strategy in developing the

Science Roadmap. The Delphi process initially engaged 457 nominated individuals from a wide variety of disciplines who responded in several rounds of issue identification. First round responses were received from 263 individuals, and 247 stayed with the process that ultimately surfaced 13 challenge areas. Some duplication still existed at this stage, but further analysis distilled these down to seven grand challenges, including:

1. Enhance the sustainability, competitiveness, and profitability of U.S. food and agricultural systems;
2. Adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change on food, feed, fiber, and fuel systems in the U.S.;
3. Support energy security and the development of the bio-economy from renewable natural resources in the U.S.;
4. Assume global leadership role to ensure a safe, secure, and abundant food supply for the U.S. and the world;
5. Improve human health, nutrition, and wellness of the U.S. population;
6. Heighten environmental stewardship through the development of sustainable management practices; and,
7. Strengthen individual, family, and community development and resilience.

More detail on strategies to address these challenges is provided in item 4 below. A confidential draft of the Assignments for the Science Roadmap for Food and Agriculture was distributed.

Discussion followed that focused around the Science and Technology Road Map and how it will be implemented given the five NIFA Priority Areas. In agriculture we solve problems and we are uniquely set up because of our Research, Extension, and Academics heritage. We need to capitalize on our strengths.

12:00 PM Working Lunch

1:00 PM Dr. Howard Silver, *Executive Director*
Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)

President Obama believes in science, technology, and innovation, and this is reflected in the new Presidential budget recommendations. The new budget seems to be quite good for science. NSF is up 8% and NIH is up 3.2%. A significant bump in HUD agency funds is expected. Other agencies are experiencing an upward budget trend. We are in the middle of a census year. The administration is interested in STEM education. America Competes is a project that evolved from STEM. Agricultural Education is tied into STEM. NIFA has a \$59 million related budget, but it is mostly re-packaged projects that aren't really tied to "K-12" school programs. Emphasis on evaluation and accountability is important throughout most agencies.

2:00 PM Dr. Sally Maggard, *National Program Leader*
Rural Sociology

The Regional Rural Development Centers help the Land-Grant System reach the communities more effectively. This is a watershed moment for scientists, extension, and the entire research community because of the larger amounts of funds, larger grants, longer timeframe in which to conduct projects, and the collaborative, multi-disciplinary nature of the projects. NIFA can

stimulate the entire research feedback system by involving Extension as a key part of the science process. The focus will not be local anymore. A regional, national, or international focus is expected with clear metrics for future outcomes. Logic models and impact statements we will need to embrace.

Sustainability permeates all science priorities. How do you measure social sustainability? Dr. Jill Auburn of NIFA is detailed to the Secretary's office as a sustainability advisor to USDA, REE, NIFA, and Dr. Beachy. Dr. Auburn is an ally of the social sciences who appreciates their perspectives and contributions.

Multi-state projects that are already multi-discipline should have a strategic advantage in the NIFA RFA process. A rapid advance multi-state project is a good example of a multi-discipline team. The demography multi-state project is another good example. Trans-disciplinary was introduced and distinguished as a different term than multi-disciplinary. Is there an opportunity to initiate a longitudinal community driven study? There were some past longitudinal efforts, but nothing as comprehensive as was discussed during the SSSC. It was suggested that a SSSC idea/white paper be created to help NIFA embrace the idea.

Other items of business addressed during this meeting:

1. Review of subcommittee charge, current and continuing members, and officers
Ed distributed a membership list and a page that explained ESCOP and the SSSC.
2. Identification of potential new committee members (or mechanisms for identifying them) to achieve full subcommittee representation. Current vacant positions by discipline and region include: Ag Econ – 1890; Rural Soc – Northeast (?), 1890; Human Sciences – Northeast, North Central, South, 1890; Ag Com – West, 1890.
Suggestions for membership were sought.

Term of membership is three years and each term can be renewed. However, those terms need to be clarified and a list was sent around to help us understand our current situation.

Current members intend to provide nominations for membership.
A column to add 1994 and HSI was discussed.

Bob Birkenholz moved, Travis Park seconded to seek nominees from 1994 and HSI institutions. Discussion followed. Funding to get them here was a concern. The motion passed.

3. Review of NIFA organizational structure, programs, and leadership
Ex-Officio members should include all Regional Rural Development Center Directors?
Reviewing the ESCOP bylaws will be reviewed by Pat and Ed to help us clarify the committee's membership (and accurate location on the chart and its operations).
4. Identification of social science perspectives that inform the seven Grand Challenges of the new ESCOP Science Roadmap for Food and Agriculture (and the potential value of their inclusion) – some of the comments are included below.

- a. We must enhance the sustainability, competitiveness, and profitability of U.S. food and agricultural systems.
 - i. Local, state, regional, and national policies are being made with inaccurate information.
 - ii. Much of the focus has been for the producer with little focus on impact to society.
 - b. We must adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change on food, feed, fiber, and fuel systems in the U.S.
 - i. Who do you believe?
 - ii. Local, state, regional, and national policies are being made with inaccurate information.
 - c. We must support energy security and the development of the bio-economy from renewable natural resources in the U.S.
 - i. Can we learn from past mistakes?
 - ii. There are tradeoffs.
 - iii. Sustainable seems to be important here.
 - iv. Comprehensive thinking about this is encouraged.
 - d. We must play a global leadership role to ensure a safe, secure, and abundant food supply for the U.S. and the world.
 - i. Food deserts exist and are not well understood.
 - ii. A systems approach to ensure safe, secure, and abundant food.
 - e. We must improve human health, nutrition, and wellness of the U.S. population.
 - i. Smart choices are hard if healthy food is not available.
 - f. We must heighten environmental stewardship through the development of sustainable management practices.
 - i. Same as previous comments.
 - ii. Comprehensive approach is essential.
 - iii. Complex set of human factors are involved here and in all seven of the grand challenge areas.
 - iv. Social marketing focuses on feelings.
 - g. We must strengthen individual, family, and community development and resilience.
 - i. Build community based capable leaders.
 - ii. Youth involvement was shared as a catalyst that worked in some community restructuring examples.
5. Nomination of social science researchers to contribute to white paper development for each of the seven Grand Challenges of the Science Roadmap
- Joel Molnar, Auburn nominated for the Grand Challenge #1.
 - Gary Briers, Texas A&M, #1
 - Tracy Irani, University of Florida, #1.
 - Doug Young, Washington State University, #2.
 - Bill Freudenburg, University of California-Santa Barbara, #2.
 - Bruce Dale, Michigan State University, #2.
 - Ken Cassman, University of Nebraska, #2.
 - Lorraine Weatherspoon, Michigan State University, #2.
 - John Antle, Montana State University, #2
 - Glen Shinn, Texas A&M, #4.
 - Alusia Kaiser, University of California Davis, #5.

- Lois Wright-Morton, Iowa State University, #5.
- Linda Houtkooper, University of Arizona, #?
- Ann Tickamyer, Penn State University, #?
- Others were nominated – please add their names, university, and which challenge #

Dan will entertain other nominations, but he needs names soon.

6. Social science dimensions of the four NIFA Institutes
Social Science preamble language input is sought by the members.
7. Strategies for getting more social scientists on AFRI review panels
Dr. Hipple volunteered to send out notices when review panels will be formed, so we can encourage faculty to apply to serve on review panels.
Research Deans/Directors could advocate more directly to faculty.
Including professional organization email lists such as AAAE, AIAEE, ALE, ACE, etc. when review panels are being formed, would give a broader social science representation on the review panels.
8. Examples of highly successful, interdisciplinary research projects with significant social science dimensions and their implications for designing future projects
This item was not directly addressed.
9. Identification of social science experts in key research areas of food and agriculture
This was addressed above when faculty were nominated to be a part of the Grand Challenges Road Map committee.
10. Effectively demonstrating the value of social science contributions to research in food, agriculture, and natural resources
Not directly addressed.
11. Individual member actions as a follow-up to this subcommittee meeting
Ed will send out a reminder to send nominations to Dan.
Pat will inform the members when panel solicitations occur.
Jack will send Pat and Ed a draft version of the minutes for editing prior to sending them to the entire committee.
12. Other items... Meeting time in 2011 will be established in conjunction with the Science and Technology Committee.

Respectfully Submitted, Jack Elliot, Vice Chair and Secretary

ESCOP Social Sciences Subcommittee Officers and Liaisons:

Dr. Ed Osborne, Chair – University of Florida

Dr. Jack Elliot, Vice Chair – Texas A&M University

Dr. Travis Park, Liaison to the ESCOP Science and Technology Committee, Cornell University

Dr. Dan Rossi, ESCOP Liaison to the SS Subcommittee, Rutgers University

Pat Hipple, USDA Liaison to the SS Subcommittee, Washington, DC

Dr. Bill Ravlin, ESCOP Science & Technology Committee Chair, The Ohio State University