

What's New?

Keep up to date with new initiatives and activities that are fostering research and practice pertinent to *EcoHealth* readers. In this issue, you can find out about:

- EcoHealth ONE: Promoting Global Health – Sustaining Natural Resources
- Workshop Links Public Health with Integrated Ocean Observing System
- DIVERSITAS Conference: Integrating Biodiversity Science for Human Well-Being
- Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Workshop to Focus on Water, Trade, and Environment

Regular updates are also available at the *EcoHealth* website: <http://www.ecohealth.net>

ECOHEALTH ONE: PROMOTING GLOBAL HEALTH – SUSTAINING NATURAL RESOURCES

EcoHealth ONE – the 1st Biennial Conference of the International EcoHealth Association will be held at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, United States of America, October 7–10, 2006. The meeting theme of “Promoting Global Health - Sustaining Natural Resources” addresses the interconnectedness of ecosystem sustainability and human health on a global scale and highlights the need for transdisciplinary approaches to sustainable human and wildlife health. The goal is to provide a unique forum for integration and interaction across a diverse audience interested in health and sustainability including researchers, policy makers, educators, nongovernmental organizations, as well as governmental and international agencies. Preliminary sessions will include Biodiversity Policy and Infectious Diseases; Bioterrorism in Ecological Perspective; Disease Emergence from

Land Use Change; Urban Ecosystems and the Built Environment; Ecology and Health in Marine Systems; Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health; Education at the Interface of Ecology and Health; Environmental Health: History and Trends; Modern Agriculture and Pandemic Diseases; One Health: Bridging Human and Wildlife Health; The MDGs – Attaining Public Health, Conservation, and Ecosystem Sustainability; and WHO Collaborating Centers on Global Change. Confirmed keynote speakers include Rita Colwell, Distinguished University Professor, University of Maryland; Leslie Dierauf, Director USGS National Wildlife Health Center; Andy Dobson, Professor, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Princeton University; Richard Levins, John Rock Professor of Population Sciences, Harvard School of Public Health; and Tony McMichael, Director and Professor, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University. For more information, visit <http://www.ecohealth.net>

WORKSHOP LINKS PUBLIC HEALTH WITH INTEGRATED OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM

A workshop, “Assessing Public Health Risks: Coastal Observations for Decision Making,” was held in St. Petersburg, Florida, January 23–25, 2006. Sponsored by the NOAA Oceans and Human Health Initiative and other US federal agencies, the workshop included more than 50 experts collaborating on the development of a blueprint for an integrated global ocean observation and disease surveillance system. Delivery of useful and timely information about ocean and coastal public health risks for managers and decision-makers is one of seven goals of the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). The goals of the workshop included identification of decision processes and

critical information gaps that could be filled by IOOS, that would, in turn, reduce risks from coastal public health threats; and identification of coastal water quality information needs for more timely public health decisions via predictive models. Enhanced monitoring methods for collecting data to improve local and regional climate models for predicting hazardous algal blooms (HAPs) and infectious disease risk in the coastal environment were discussed, as well as priority data and information parameters required to fill the identified gaps. Another important objective of the meeting was to identify a mechanism for maintaining involvement of managers and public health officials in ensuring a flow of accurate, integrated and sustained ocean and coastal data and information for public health purposes. The report of the workshop findings will be useful for beach and coastal public health managers in their planning for applications of the IOOS. More information can be gained by contacting Brian Jackson, UCAR Joint Office for Science Support, bjackson@ucar.edu

DIVERSITAS CONFERENCE: INTEGRATING BIODIVERSITY SCIENCE FOR HUMAN WELL-BEING

Further to the announcement in Volume 2, Issue 2, the first DIVERSITAS Open Science Conference on integrating biodiversity science for human well-being took place November 9–12, 2005, in Oaxaca, Mexico. Nearly 700 experts from fields such as wildlife health, public health, social science, and conservation biology took part in symposia, workshops, posters, and plenaries on the causes of biodiversity loss and consequential impacts on human health. Presentations were given on topics such as the ability of different tree species to absorb and store carbon, which may be used to slow climate change; the introduction of species to a new environment, which sometimes transplants invasive diseases and other problems; how destroying wetlands increases human vulnerability to

recent natural disasters; and drawing biodiversity-based solutions from ecological and traditional knowledge to reduce the negative impacts of intensive modern agriculture on the environment, human health, and wild species. Of potential interest to readers was the symposium “Eco-health and Conservation Medicine: A New Agenda for Public Health and Biodiversity.” For more information, see <http://www.diversitas-osc1.org/> or contact the DIVERSITAS secretariat at info@diversitas-osc1.org

INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE WORKSHOP TO FOCUS ON WATER, TRADE, AND ENVIRONMENT

The fifth International Human Dimensions Workshop, “Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change: Water, Trade, and the Environment (IHDP-APN 2006),” will be held in October 2006, in Chiang Mai, Thailand. In this workshop, participants will learn about the role of institutions in causing and mitigating global environmental problems. The substantive focus will be on water and trade. In the case of water, institutions mediate among users and determine access, availability, quantity, and quality. The commodification of water and water rights leads to issues concerning the impact of trade and globalization on environments. Therefore, the workshop will treat these issues in an integrated way and will use them to derive lessons about the way in which institutional dynamics affect resources and communities dependent on these resources. The workshop will also demonstrate, showcase, and disseminate findings of the 8-year international project “Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change” (IDGEC) and hopes to center water, trade, and the environment as the future core research activities of a possible second phase of IDGEC. More information is available at <http://www.ihdp.org/>

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