

UGEC Scientific Steering Committee Meeting 2010
October 18th 2010

Meeting Minutes

Agenda

9am – 10am	Coffee and introductions amongst SSC members
10:00am – 10:30am	Reflection over UGEC conference proceedings (what was achieved, what needs to be further pursued)
10:30am – 11:30am	-- Establishing milestones for the next 5 years, including outputs and products; -- Near-term UGEC activities proposals and suggestions for the next 1-2 years (we ask the SSC to come prepared with a single page document describing potential activities they are willing to lead) -- How to measure UGEC success and impact for the next period.
11:30am – 12am	International Project Office (IPO) structure and finances (report on state of finances after conference; securing additional funds for the smooth operation of the project)
12noon – 1pm	Lunch (catered at GIOS)
1pm-2pm	-- IPO structure and funding continued -- Strengthening connections with host institute and university (Rick Shangraw, GIOS director and Sander van der Leeuw, School of Sustainability Director - potentially present)
2pm - 3pm	Strategies for SSC expansion (ideas for Indian, SE Asian, and L. American colleagues)
3pm – 6pm	Outdoor activity - Hiking in northern Phoenix
6pm	Dinner in Scottsdale

Participants (in alphabetical order)

- Christopher Boone, Professor, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University, USA
- Xiangzheng Deng, Associate Professor, Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, China
- Michail Fragkias, Executive Officer, UGEC project, Arizona State University

- Corrie Griffith, Project Coordinator, UGEC project, Arizona State University
- Shu-Li Huang, Vice President; Professor of Graduate Institute of Urban Planning , National Taipei University, Taiwan
- Shuaib Lwasa, Lecturer, Department of Geography, Makerere University, Uganda
- Darryn McEvoy, Principal Researcher in Climate Change Adaptation and Leader - Climate Change Adaptation programme, Global Cities Research Institute, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia
- Roberto Sanchez-Rodriguez, Professor, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Mexico
- Karen C. Seto, Assistant Professor, Yale University, USA
- David Simon, Professor, Royal Holloway University of London, UK (via Skype)
- Bill Solecki, Professor, Hunter College, City University of New York, USA

Guests

Rob Melnick, CEO, GIOS, ASU

Sander van der Leeuw, Director, School of Sustainability, ASU

Minutes

Introduction

Given the recent addition of 5 new members, the SSC members introduced themselves making particular reference to the country of origin, country in which the work and the region on which they do their research in. **Karen** is originally from Hong Kong but grew up in the US. She is a Geographer, trained at Boston University. She lives in New Haven, CT. Her research is on urban growth modeling and drivers among many topics. She addresses issues at the level of metropolitan areas but also at the global scale. She has studied urban areas extensively in China and India and to a lesser extent in the Middle East. **Xiangzheng** lives in Beijing, China has a background in Regional Planning, GIS and Economics. He studies land use change in urban areas of China. **Shu-Li** holds a degree in City and Regional Planning from UPenn, currently at the Graduate Institute of Urban Planning at the National Taipei University in Taiwan. He is interested in issues of industrial ecology, land use, material flow analysis, urban sprawl and metabolism. **Chris** is originally from Canada with a degree in Geography from the University of Toronto. His research focuses on issues of ecology and environmental justice in urban areas. He has primarily focused on Baltimore and Phoenix in the US but has also done research extensively in Brazil. **Darryn** is from the UK and holds a degree in Geography from the University of Hull and is the Leader of the Climate Change Adaptation Program, Global Cities Research Institute in RMIT University in Australia. He is also Deputy Director of the Victorian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Research (VCCCAR). He has lived most of his life in Europe. His expertise is on climate risk assessment and adaptation, innovative adaptation practice (both institutions and technologies), institutional adaptive management (and adaptation as a process), vulnerability assessment, the building of local adaptive capacity, and the synergies and conflicts between the adaptation and mitigation agendas. He is interested in global comparisons and syntheses of case studies of urban adaptation to climate change. **Bill** is from the US and holds a PhD from Rutgers in Geography. Bill was one of the original members

of the panel that formulated the idea for the UGEC project. Among many research interests, Bill is exploring the interconnections between cities and climate change in North America. **Shuaib** is trained as a Regional Planner and works at the Makerere University in Uganda. He studies themes of urban adaptation to climate change but also the wider effects of climate change in Africa. **Roberto** is an urban/environmental planner at El Colegio de la Frontera Norte and UC Riverside. He lives in Ensenada, Mexico and the US and studies urban areas in both regions. **Corrie** grew up in Arizona, holds degrees in Political Science and Environmental Studies from Northern Arizona University. **Michail** grew up in Greece, studied economics, works mostly as a geographer and has lived in the US for the last 10 years. His research focuses on the intersection of cross-scale urban and environmental dynamics from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Conference reports and suggestions for the synthesis conference in 4 years

The discussion over the proceedings of the conference was very positive. Thematically, the group discussed challenges of organizing the sessions into different days and slots. It was noted that there was a large emphasis on climate changes, but other gec issues should be addressed. What ideas do we want to pick up and mature? For future conferences, the group suggested a stronger emphasis or an expansion of topics towards the role of ecosystem services and in particular, the spatial variability of ecosystem services, especially in connection to the theme of adaptation to global environmental change and climate change. There is the opportunity to forge linkages between UGEC and science communities through engagement with CAPLTER. Other ideas included health and quality of life issues, more emphasis on key concepts like vulnerability and resilience, the urban poor, the need for modelling at the neighborhood scale, etc. As the UGEC community grows, the next opportunity for a UGEC conference will allow for an improved thematic organization of the conference topics.

In general, the conference created space for discussion and reflection on the agreed upon topics. But in a few cases, the structure of sessions (e.g. too many presentations - mostly due to the Sunday overlap day) may have not allowed this. Furthermore, quality of conference proceedings could be established through a more explicit guide to the plenary/parallel session chairs, submission of full papers by the conference participants at the time of choice of papers, template powerpoint to presenters providing directions for presentations. Finally, getting more stakeholders involved would be very desirable; we need to deepen the connections we already have with practitioners and develop new ones. Also, giving a greater global coverage (getting more Europeans on board) would be a good strategy.

Ideas for future UGEC conference(s):

- Emphasize to presenters the need for “reflection”, in order to discuss gaps and where/how to move forward
- Better manage the variable quality of presentations and session cohesiveness by using paper submissions rather than abstracts (ask - how does this research fit, etc.). This can give session chairs a greater capacity to run good sessions.
- Have a discussant in the sessions
- Record everything so that people have the full record of sessions at the conference

- Have an event/dinner/reception on the first night of the conference; although a field trip the day before is also a good idea, having all the participants together the first night is needed

Post conference action items

- Follow-up communication
- Survey of participants
- Encourage Project endorsement application

Future UGEC activities

November 2010

- Early Roundtable of CNC-IHDP (Xiangzheng)
- IAI/UGEC training in Chile (Roberto)

January 2011

IHDP 2011 Conference: The IHDP National Committee - The Academy of Sciences located in Taipei will host the conference of "Industrial Transformation, Urbanization, and Human Security in the Asia-Pacific" in January of 2011 at Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan. (Shu-Li)

<http://web.ntpu.edu.tw/~shuli/2011IHDP-TaiwanConference.htm>

March 2011

Urban-growth modeling workshop (Karen/Michail)

October 2011

Next SSC meeting - alongside the National Conference for Adaptation, Melbourne Australia (?)

Other events:

Shu-Li will work on getting a training event in SE Asia

Sometime in 2011 - larger UGEC meeting, China (Xiangzheng)

Goals, Products

Future Goals

Metrics of Value Added

New Knowledge/Meta-Studies Synthesis

Global and Regional Meta-Analyses

Steering of Academic Publications/Journals

Strengthening Scientific Capacities (Students)

Branding

Products

Vision/State of the Art Publication

IPCC Input

Translation - revamp of Science Plan (Spanish and Mandarin)

Special Issue in Journals
Books
Post-conference Dialogue (web-oriented)
Survey
Young Scholars
Comparative Research Projects

Our interests:

Shuaib - synthesis and regional meta analysis in Africa, how cities adapt to climate change (African Universities Network on Climate Change and Development - AUNCCD)

Michail - Getting the “gray” literature out - social networking

Darryn - research projects, comparative study on cities and how they view adaptation, formulating workshops to bring people together to get proposals for smaller projects

Chris - wants to connect UGEC with CAPLTER, meta-analysis

Roberto - meta-analysis of Latin America

Karen - meta-analysis of urbanization patterns and processes

IPO Structure and Funding

Background: in the first funding cycle of UGEC (September of 2006-August 2009), the funding for the project was at the total of USD 270,000 per year. The NSF contribution was USD 170,000 (covering the EO position and activities) and the ASU contribution was USD 100,000 a year (covering to a large extent the second coordinator position of the project and activities). For the second funding cycle (Sept. 2009 - Aug. 2012), UGEC is solely funded by NSF at the level of approximately USD 200,000 per year covering wages and benefits for two employees as well as funding for project activities such as workshops and publications. There was never a formal request to ASU because as the IPO was building the proposal for the renewal we were asked by the leadership of GIOS and Chuck Redman to propose getting all our funding needs from NSF. After we got increased funding (but not quite enough) the message was clear that there is no funding coming from ASU. Then Michail managed to secure a portion of the ASU cut out of the NSF funding for UGEC purposes (in particular, covering a portion of our needs for the project coordinator wage and benefits).

Action item: UGEC will formally request financial support that covers fully the project coordinator position and possibly one additional person at the IPO.