



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY INITIATIVE

Highlights, 2005 and 2006

A. EPI Profile

EPI is an interdisciplinary program, one of several Public Policy initiatives funded by the Office of Academic Affairs since 1999. It has more than 50 members from 8 colleges and the Glenn School, typically about 20 associate members (graduate students and post-docs), and about 40 affiliate members (nationally and internationally recognized collaborators, distinguished visitors, etc.). EPI programs include seed grants for research, working groups to prepare proposals in response to specific interdisciplinary RFPs, conferences that bring together the academic and policy communities to discuss environmental policy issues, distinguished visiting speakers, workshops, dissertation proposal grants, and travel grants for graduate students to present papers to professional meetings.

EPI's basic purpose is catalytic – to encourage and support environmental policy research, teaching, and outreach at Ohio State; and to build collaborative networks across the Ohio State community, and linking the Ohio State environmental policy community with practitioners in government, NGOs, and the private sector, and with the global research community.

EPI seed grants and working groups have yielded several major extra-mural research grants. EPI has collaborated with on-campus programs such as CCERI, CIRIT, the Center for Resilience, the Center for Mapping, and Women in Development, as well as with a broad range of OSU departments, colleges, and schools; and with government agencies, NGOs, and business organizations. EPI can point to tangible successes (e.g., a NSF Biocomplexity grant, \$1,400,000, 2004-2008), and intangible successes (e.g., EPI's catalytic efforts, along with those of several other cross-cutting programs, were crucial in establishing the credibility of the Carbon, Water, and Climate TIE proposal, which was highest-ranked and funded at \$11.5 million by OAA).

B. Activities

Conference

2006. Sept. 26-27 Ohio Responses to Federal Environmental Regulation

This conference, co-sponsored with the John Glenn School, American Electric Power, and several NGOs, featured nationally recognized speakers. The conference planning committee was broadly representative of the university, private sector, agency, and NGO communities. The conference attracted substantial off-campus participation, with almost 100 participants representing business, regulatory agencies and NGOs, in addition to

the OSU community, discussing Ohio's current and future environmental responses to air and water pollution and climate change, as well as economic competitiveness and fostering innovation.

2003 Conference Papers Published in *Climatic Change*

EPI's November 2003 conference on Adaptive Research and Governance in Climate Change has produced a special issue of *Climatic Change* (Vol 78, 2006) titled "Economy, Politics, and Institutions: From Adaptation to Adaptive Management in Climate Change". This special issue of the journal, guest-edited by Alex Thompson, Paul Robbins, Brent Sohngen, Joe Arvai, and Tom Koontz, represents the culmination of five years of work by the ARGCC group at Ohio State. ARGCC and the conference were supported by EPI, in partnership with CCERI, CIRIT, and the Mershon Center.

Seed Grants

No new seed grants have been initiated since 2004. No seed grants are presently active.

Working Groups

The **Biocomplexity working group** received a \$1.4 million NSF grant in autumn, 2004. Research goals are to develop a suite of models to explore the role of human-biophysical linkages in generating complex dynamics of the lake and human systems; to explain phenomena observed in the Lake Erie ecosystem such as adult fish kills and last summer's "Dead Zone;" and to contribute to the science of complex systems modeling by developing methods to aggregate fine-scale models of component processes to coarse-scale models of the coupled system. The research team includes scientists from biology, civil engineering, physics, agricultural and environmental economics, ecological engineering, and social work. Research is well-advanced, and the working group continues to receive support from EPI for special activities not covered by the NSF grant.

On September 12-13, 2006, Alan Randall participated in NSF Hill Days (researchers lobbying Congress for NSF budgets). His discussion of the Biocomplexity project was well-received in the offices of nine different Senators/Representatives from Ohio ("Gee-whiz stuff with real consequences for Ohio's economy and quality of life").

The **DMUU working group** has been inactive since Autumn 2004, when we learned that EPI's proposed NSF Center for Decision Making Under Uncertainty would not be funded. OSU/EPI was one of 7 finalists in a competition that attracted 22 proposals.

Distinguished Visiting Speakers

2005

1. May 20. Astrid Ulloa: Representations of Indigenous Peoples within Global Environmental Discourse.

Astrid Ulloa presented sociological research on impacts and origins of indigenous roles in eco-tourism and bio-preserves, along with image of indigenous peoples in environmental discourse in Latin America and Columbia in particular (sponsored jointly with CIRIT).

2. Dec 13. Auron Tare: Opportunities for Collaboration with World Heritage Sites – Butrint and Gjirokaster, Albania

Presentation of opportunities and resources available for partnership with World Heritage sites at Butrint National Park and Gjirokaster in Albania by director Auron Tare. Focus on sustainable economic development, land use, wetland restoration, tourism development and park design as opportunities for undergraduate study abroad or graduate research work.

2006

1. March 30. Alex Anas: Urban Sprawl Policy – Comparing Planners’ and Economists’ Approaches

Alex Anas, SUNY Buffalo, met with more than a dozen economists and urban planners for lunch, followed by a presentation to about 40 professors and graduate students on differences in planners’ and economists’ paradigms for research into and proposed solutions for urban sprawl. Focus on new economic model to explain sprawl and incentives necessary to reduce sprawl.

2. May 15. James Hammitt: The Statistical Value of Life – Anonymous vs. Identifiable Lives

James Hammitt, director of Harvard’s Center for Risk, discussed differences in survey participants’ valuation of health when the problem impacted an anonymous population vs. a population identified by demographic characteristics. About 25 people attended.

3. Nov 1-2. Madhu Khanna: (1) What Motivates Firms to Adopt Voluntary Environmental Controls? (2) Spatial Analysis of Biofuels Adoption in Illinois

Madhu Khanna, University of Illinois, presented 2 different seminars to around 30 people each time. The November 1 EPI seminar drew a mostly off-campus audience of pollution prevention practitioners interested in costs and impacts of voluntary environmental management. The November 2 AEDE seminar drew a university audience for geographic models of biofuel use in Illinois under different carbon reduction regulations. Khanna also met with small groups at the Glenn School of Public Policy, Center for Resilience, and the AEDE environmental economics workshop.

Workshops

2005, July 1. Reports from 2004 dissertation proposal grant awardees

Presentations of EPI supported research by graduate students In-Young Yeo (City and Regional Planning, Advisors: Steven Gordon & Jean Michel Guildmann), *Modeling optimal land-use patterns and critical buffer land locations for reducing nonpoint source pollution* and Louie Rivers III (Natural Resources, Advisor: Dr. Joseph L. Arvai), *Investigating intra-racial differences in African-American risk perception and perception formation relative to the White Male Effect*

2006, May 1. Alan Randall: Albanian Study Abroad and Research Program

Planning workshop (Geography, AEDE, Natural Resources, and International Programs participating) – feasibility of a study abroad and graduate research program in Albania.

2007, Winter (planned). Reports from 2004 dissertation proposal grant awardees

Summer dissertation proposal grants

Since 2005, EPI has funded 4 Ph.D. students for 3 months during the writing of their dissertation proposals in environmental policy:

- Bibhakar Shakya (AEDE, Advisor: Fred Hitzhusen)
- Robyn S. Wilson (Natural Resources, Advisor Joe Arvai)
- Theresa Wong (Geography, advisor Kendra McSweeney)
- Myungje Woo (City and Regional Planning, Advisor: Jean-Michel Guildmann.)

Some of this research has already been presented at professional meetings in these various disciplines.

Graduate student travel grants

Since 2005, EPI has funded 8 travel grants for students presenting original research on environmental policy at national and international meetings.