



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY INITIATIVE

Highlights, 2008

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

Seed Grants

No new seed grants have been initiated in 2008. 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.

Workshops

2008, May 21st. 2007 grant recipients presented on the progress of their research to a university audience of 14.

- Jack Schieffer (AED Economics, Advisor Steven Wu), *Compensation for Regulatory Takings*
- Atalan Helicke (Geography, Advisor: Becky Mansfield.) *European Union Accession and Conservation of Wheat Diversity in Neoliberal Turkey*
- Hyowon Ban (Geography, Advisor: Ola Ahlqvist) *Interactive Visualization of Uncertainty in Geographic Terminology*

Summer dissertation proposal grants

In 2008, EPI funded 3 Ph.D. students for 3 months during the writing of their dissertation proposals in environmental policy:

- Abiye Alamina (Public Policy and Management, Advisor: Andrew Keeler)
"A Comparative Political Economy Evaluation of Environmental Policy"
- Kevin Grove (Geography, Advisor: Matthew Coleman)
"Effects of Catastrophe Insurance Programs on Disaster Management Policies and Practices in Jamaica"
- Kora Dabrowska (Environmental Science, Advisor: Fred Hitzhusen)
"Hedonic Modeling of Anaerobic Digestion in the U.S."

Graduate student travel grants

No travel grants were awarded in 2008.