

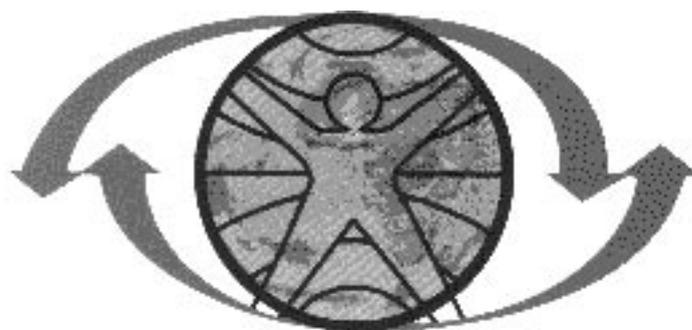
Aims and Scope of the Netherlands HDP Committee:

on the Threshold of the Third Millennium

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REN LOUYS ENDE HENDRICK TRIP STAENDE OP
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CHWAL BY S^r ANTHONIS MARCT TOT AMSTERDAM.



**Aims and Scope of the Netherlands HDP Committee:
on the Threshold of the Third Millennium**



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Summary

The Netherlands HDP Committee aims to promote and co-ordinate research on the human dimensions of global environmental change. Its main objective is to stimulate Dutch social scientists to participate in national and international global change research and to facilitate contacts between these researchers and potential funding agencies. The Committee is developing several strategic activities to bridge the gap between the Netherlands social science research community and the Science Projects that have been identified within the context of the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP). The Science Projects covered include Industrial Transformation (IT), Global Environmental Change and Human Security (GECHS), Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (IDGEC) and Land Use and Land Cover (LUCC) respectively.

Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change

Global change is as old as planet earth. Physical, chemical and biological processes have been shaping and reshaping the earth's system right from its beginning. Since humankind has entered the stage, millions of years ago, individuals and societies depend on these processes for their very survival. Humanity has always felt the impact of the changes in their natural environment upon their daily life. With the explosive growth of the world's population and economic activity, negative consequences of environmental changes demanded both immediate and creative responses. At the same time, the notion dawned that human societies not only are influenced by processes of environmental change, but contribute to these as well: the human factor – along with natural processes – has been identified as one of the forces of change on our planet, including climate change, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, pollution and desertification. However, the precise nature and gravity of the different processes involved as well as their interlinkages are poorly understood yet.

What are 'Human Dimensions'?

Human dimensions are the ways in which people and societies

- a. contribute to global environmental change,
- b. are influenced by global environmental change and
- c. mitigate and adapt to global environmental change.

Challenge for the social sciences

Social sciences have been asked to join the research effort on global environmental change which initially had been dominated by a natural scientific approach. The involvement of the social sciences is indispensable to clarify the roles individuals and societies play in environmental changes, the consequences of these changes for human societies, and patterns of responses to those changes at various levels of societal organisation. A wide range of technical, social, economic, political, legal, cultural and religious aspects can be discerned and accordingly have to be taken into account. The variety and complexity of the issues involved urge many disciplines within the social sciences to participate.

**Social sciences involved in research on the
Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change**

Environmental economics
Sociology
Political sciences
Public administration
Law
Psychology
Anthropology
Human geography
Demography

However, it should be realized that no ready-made solutions are to be expected from the involvement of social sciences in this endeavour. Social scientists differ in their interpretations of the economic, social and cultural reality. The main value added of the social sciences is to provide differentiated and carefully balanced information, new sound insights and more encompassing understanding of these realities. These may help in identifying ways in which societies might wish to respond to global environmental change.

The international setting: IHDP

The *International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change* (IHDP) is an international, interdisciplinary, non-governmental social sciences programme to promote and co-ordinate research aimed at describing, analysing and understanding the human dimensions of global environmental change. It provides a comprehensive international framework for research on economic, social and cultural processes in their interplay with natural environmental processes.

The first steps towards this programme were taken in the early eighties by mostly social science researchers under the umbrella of the International Social Science Council (ISSC). In 1996 the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) joined ISSC as co-sponsor of IHDP and with the endorsement from the government of Germany and a well-equipped secretariat located in Bonn, the programme in the same year officially took off.

One major distinction of IHDP from other international programmes on global environmental change is its focus on Human Dimensions. Evidently, in view of the interrelatedness of the processes involved, concerted initiatives and joint projects with the partner programmes are frequent.

Major international Research Programmes on Global Change:

Natural sciences:

- International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP)
- World Climate Research Programme (WCRP)

Social sciences:

- International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP)

One of the first tasks of IHDP was to identify those areas of human activity most relevant to understanding the causes and consequences of global change and to specify key research questions. These themes must form a potential solid basis for innovative social science research in the next decades. Four Science Projects have been identified by IHDP:

- Land Use and Land Cover Change (LUCC)
- Global Environmental Change and Human Security (GECHS)
- Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (IDGEC)
- Industrial Transformation (IT)

The key questions that lie at the centre of research within these Science Projects and the programme as a whole are:

- *How do humans and societies interact with their environment?*
- *What are the consequences?*
- *How can individuals and societies mitigate or adapt to environmental change?*
- *How will policy responses to such changes influence present and future economic and social conditions?*

To this end national HDP Committees have been, and are still being set up in many countries. The national Committees form an important link between national research communities of social scientists and IHDP and its projects. They are an essential component of the research strategy, which advocates a bottom-up approach. More information on IHDP's role, its Science Projects, and organisational structure has been included in Appendix I.

The Netherlands HDP Committee

The official start of the *Netherlands HDP Committee* was in 1994. This Committee is a sub-committee of the Social Sciences Council of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)¹. Main objective of the Committee is to stimulate Dutch social scientists to participate in national and international global change research and to facilitate contacts between these researchers and potential funding agencies. The Committee encourages identification of high quality HDP oriented research and stimulates building of HDP oriented research capacity in the Netherlands. It develops its ideas in close collaboration with IHDP and participates in other international research programmes on global environmental change: the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP) and the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP).

Appendix II gives the names of the members of the Netherlands HDP Committee and Appendix III gives the organisational structure and setting of the Netherlands HDP Committee.

¹ The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences is also the basis of the Netherlands IGBP Committee and the Netherlands WCRP Committee (Climate Committee).

Strategy and activities of the Netherlands HDP Committee

In order to reach its goal, the Netherlands HDP Committee develops several strategic activities. Main immediate objective of the Committee is to bridge the gap between the Netherlands social science research community and the research themes that have been identified within the context of the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP). These themes act as the stepping stone for the Netherlands HDP Committee. In its 'Aims and scope of the Netherlands HDP Committee' (1995) the Netherlands HDP Committee already highlighted the strengths of the Netherlands social sciences research community. The Committee has brought and will continue to bring these strengths – as well as new, innovative social science research – to the fore within the framework of IHDP. As an active member of IHDP the Committee contributes to the identification, elaboration and focusing of the research themes to be developed by this programme. Besides, the Committee welcomes liaisons with national and international organisations with a scope towards the research community as well as global environmental change. On the national level the Netherlands HDP Committee also collaborates with the national committees of the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP) and the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP).

Research programmes and funding organisations active on global environmental change

National

National Research Programme on Global Air Pollution and Climate Change (NOP)

Advisory Council for Research on Nature and Environment (RMNO)

Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO)

- Sustainability and Environmental Quality (NWO priority programme)
- Sustainable Use and Conservation of Marine Living Resources (NWO priority programme)

International

European Union (EU)

- Environment and Climate Programme (EU Programme)

European Science Foundation (ESF)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

World Bank

Activities of the Netherlands HDP Committee within the framework of IHDP and related international research programmes include:

- Initiate inventories and monitors of relevant HDP oriented research in the Netherlands.
- Contribute to developing and focusing of research themes within the framework of IHDP.
- Organize scientific meetings and workshops for researchers and experts on the main themes of the Netherlands HDP Committee.

- Encourage dissemination of results of HDP oriented research to research organisations, funding agencies and decision makers by means of i.e. general reports of HDP oriented workshops and symposia.
- Participate in platform activities and steering committees on global environmental change research.
- Act as an exchange and clearing house on HDP activities.

Main themes and research questions

Considering the expertise and diversity of the current Dutch research capacity the Netherlands HDP Committee has chosen to join all four Science Projects which have been identified by IHDP. Nevertheless, the Committee is fully aware that the potential contribution of the Netherlands research community varies from project to project. Consequently, the coming years the Committee will support in order of decreasing involvement respectively: Industrial Transformation (IT), Global Environmental Change and Human Security (GECHS), Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (IDGEC) and Land Use and Land Cover Change (LUCC).

Industrial Transformation (IT)

Focus and key question

Industrial Transformation (IT) is a new perspective on research addressing the environment. The IHDP Science Project IT aims at understanding the societal mechanisms and human driving forces that could enable a transformation of the industrial system towards sustainability, and in physical terms to decouple consumption and production, commonly denoted as industrial activities, from their environmental impacts. The project studies the dynamic interactions between physical, technical, economic, social and cultural aspects of industrial activities in relation to the natural environment. It involves the analysis of production and consumption patterns (over space and time) and their corresponding modes of organisation, technologies, material and energy transformations, environmental impacts, and the consequences of these impacts for the quality of life.

A major part of research involves analyses of how alternative ways of production and consumption can be facilitated. These alternative ways should increase efficiency of resource use and reduce pressure on the natural environment, taking due account of the cultural, social, institutional, economic and physical barriers and opportunities to the implementation of these alternatives.

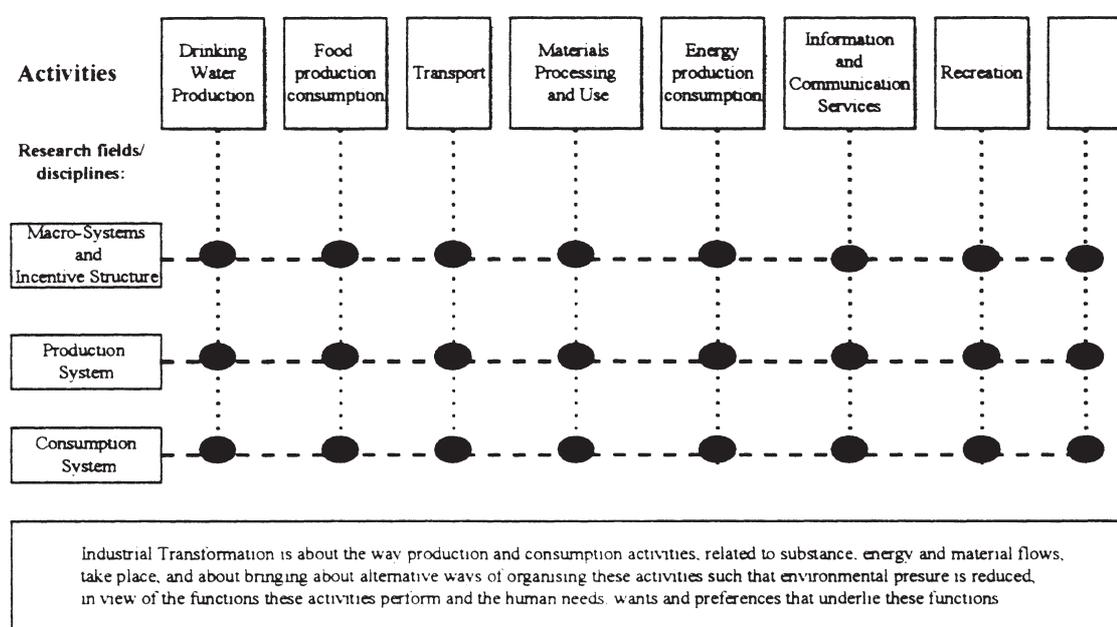
The added value of research in this area is its integrative and multidisciplinary character: IT-research focuses on the dynamic interactions and mutual dependencies between the socio-economic, the technological producer and the consumer domains, which have, so far, been studied in isolation.

The following three related fields provide the framework for research within IT:

- *Macro-systems and the incentive structure*, concerning not only the physical setting of the economic system and its institutional and financial aspects, but also its cultural setting.
- *Producers perspective/eco-efficiency improvements in production*, including physical/technological aspects, economic aspects, internal institutional/organisational and cultural preconditions and last but not least the external networks environment of production and marketing units.
- *Consumers perspective/sustainable consumption*, focusing on the role of consumers in decision making processes, the development of needs, preferences and life-styles in relation to social trends, and relations between income and environmental resource use.

The main research question to be answered is:

What opportunities and barriers exist to guide production and consumption patterns in more sustainable directions, i.e. what is the potential of delinking economic growth from a parallel increase in environmental pressure?



Tentative Research Framework for IT.

Source: Industrial Transformation: a new approach to environmental research, M.W. Hofkes and P. Vellinga, 1998.

Seven umbrella research themes have been identified:

- Cities and Industrial Transformation
- Energy
- Food
- Information and Communication
- Transformation, Tools
- Transformation, Processes
- Governance and Accountability

For each of these themes, the so-called ‘cores’, several potential research areas have been selected.



IT explores the potential of delinking economic growth from its environmental impacts. Hoogovens steel plant of IJmuiden, the Netherlands

Source: ANP

Objective and initiatives

Main objective of the Netherlands HDP Committee is to identify and form social science research groups that contribute to IT-research. As a starting point the Committee in collaboration with the Advisory Council for Research on Nature and Environment (RMNO) has commissioned a programming study in order to take stock of current relevant Dutch research activities and its potential to contribute to IT and to develop a research agenda in this field. Moreover, on the international level eight Regional Workshops have been held (in Eastern and Western Europe, in North America and Latin America, in South, East and Southeast Asia, and in Africa respectively) to explore and develop research projects to be included in the programme. The results of both the programming study and the regional workshops were vital to the first Open Science meeting on Industrial Transformation, in February 1999 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, devoted to the drafting of a Science Plan for IT.

The Netherlands HDP Committee plays a pivotal role in the Science Project on IT: the Scientific Planning Committee of IT is chaired by Pier Vellinga, professor at Free University in Amsterdam.

Global Environmental Change and Human Security (GECHS)

Focus and key questions

The IHDP Science Project GECHS focuses on the interrelationships between environmental change, resource use, vulnerability and conflict. Human security is not only concerned with threats to the physical security of individuals, it encompasses economic, health, and environmental concerns as well. For GECHS human security means 1) ensuring the existence of options to mitigate or adapt to threats to human, environmental and social rights and 2) ensuring the freedom of those affected to exercise these options. Above all it implies a new way of thinking which incorporates principles of participatory development along with the protection of human, environmental and social rights. The project seeks to develop strategies to improve the quality of the environment and the society, and the institutions that govern these, to ensure that human beings are adequately protected from environmental degradation and environmental hazards.

The following five thematic areas have been identified:

- *Conceptual and Theoretical Issues in Environment and Human Security*
- *Environmental Change, Resource Use and Human Security*
- *Population, Environment and Human Security*
- *Modelling Regions of Environmental Stress and Human Vulnerability*
- *Institutions and Policy Development in Environmental Security*

The overall research question is:

What is the relationship between global environmental change and human security?

From this general question more concrete research questions have been identified:

- *What is the present extent of insecurity?*
- *Which regions are the most insecure?*
- *What types of environmental change threaten human security?*
- *How does environmental change threaten human security?*
- *Why are some regions more vulnerable to specific environmental changes than others?*
- *Can we predict future insecurities?*
- *What strategies are potentially available to cope with the insecurities caused by environmental change?*

Objective and initiatives

Main objective of the Netherlands HDP Committee is to identify and strengthen the contribution of the Dutch research community to the thematic issues of GECHS. To this end a study has been undertaken to identify a limited number of projects in each of these themes. Several projects have been selected from current research activities on the basis of their potential in supporting GECHS oriented research goals. For example within the theme ‘Environmental Change, Resource Use and Human Security’ two sub-themes will be covered: 1) Impacts of climate change on water availability, agriculture and food security in semi-arid regions and 2) Resource management problems in coastal zones. For the second sub-theme a research project has been developed on the assessment of the impacts of sea rise in vulnerable coastal areas. Social, economic, ecological and institutional aspects will be addressed in this assessment. Besides endorsing these and similar projects the Netherlands HDP Committee has



Urgent actions to counter imminent inundation. In Groningen, the Netherlands in 1998 embankments were cut to create an outlet for eight million cubic metres of water. It was the only option left to prevent inundation of valuable land.

Source: ANP

resolved to lend priority to the implementation of the GECHS theme ‘Institutions and Policy Development in Environmental Security’.

The Netherlands HDP Committee has put its mark on GECHS. This Committee and the Canadian HDP Committee initiated in 1995 the international Science Project of IHDP. The Project Planning Committee has drafted a Science Plan for GECHS that at the end of 1998 has received approval from the IHDP Science Committee.

Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (IDGEC)

Focus and key questions

The Science Project on Institutional Dimensions analyses the roles that social institutions play in causing and responding to global environmental changes. Institutions are pervasive at all levels of social organization. Examples are: systems of property rights, legislative political arrangements, and markets or exchange systems. Institutions encompass both formal and informal social practices: local common property systems are no less important as international conventions or treaties. Institutions are complex, form (intended and unintended) linkages with each other, and change continuously over time in response to both endogenous and exogenous forces. Institutions are only one of several categories of social drivers that are relevant to global environmental change. IDGEC aims to separate institutional forces from other forces at stake (amongst others prevailing technology, belief systems and values) and, subsequently, explore their interactions.

IDGEC represents a cross-cutting theme. Consequently, this Science Project aims to develop close links to other IHDP Science Projects, such as LUCC and IT.

The main research question posed by IDGEC is:

What are the roles that social institutions play in global environmental change as determinants of human/environmental interactions?

This leads to the following three questions:

- *What roles do institutions play in causing and responding to global environmental changes?*
- *How effective are institutional innovations which are designed to respond to global environmental change?*
- *What are the prospects for (re)designing institutions to confront environmental challenges?*

Objective and initiatives

Main objective of the Netherlands HDP Committee is to identify one or more groups of social science researchers who are interested in joining the IDGEC project, and more in particular, in participating in the second question: How effective are institutional innovations which are designed to respond to global environmental change? For the committee workshops are a proven means to gain insight in the state of the art of research conducted in the Netherlands and relevant to 'institutions and instruments to control global environmental change'. Besides, scholars will be offered the opportunity to submit project proposals, the building blocs for a research programme on this topic.

The Netherlands HDP Committee stimulates that these and other initiatives from the Dutch research community will dovetail with the plans and activities launched within the international context of the project on IDGEC. Its efforts are aimed at ensuring a limited, but well-defined role within this Science Project.

Land Use and Land Cover Change (LUCC)

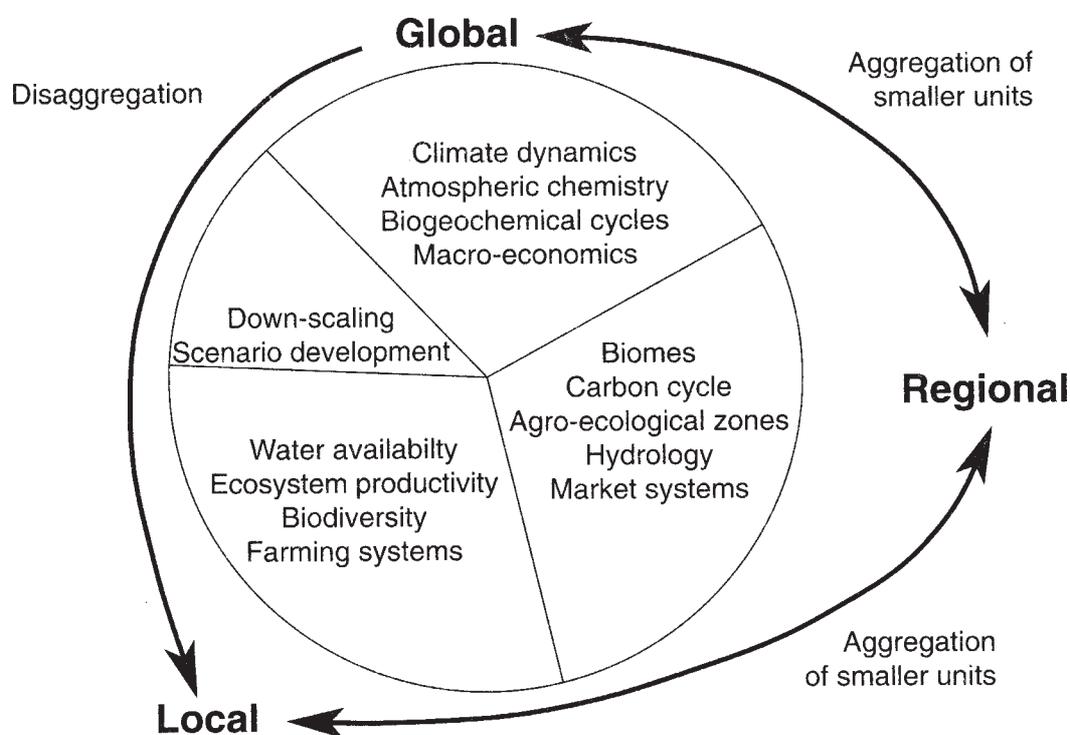
Focus and key questions

Changes in land use and land cover (e.g., degradation and desertification) are in various ways closely related to global environmental change. Land use and land cover changes contribute significantly to interactions between the earth and the atmosphere and are conducive to biodiversity loss. Besides, they are held to be a major factor in sustainable development and human responses to global change. In other words, changes in land use and land cover are in multiple ways linked up with other critical environmental issues, such as climate change, changes in food production, health, urbanisation, coastal zone management, transboundary migration, and availability and quality of water. However, for all its importance to scientists and policy makers confronting the complexities of global environmental change, land use and cover changes are only roughly understood. Modelling the dynamics of land use and land cover change has been hindered by the large variation in those dynamics across biophysical and social settings. Global aggregate assessments based on simple assumptions miss the target for large sections of the world, while local and regional assessments are too specific to be extrapolated to wider scales. Much work remains to be done to fill these gaps in understanding.

Land use/land cover research strives to improve the understanding of the dynamics of land use and land cover changes and of the physical and human driving forces behind these processes. The IHDP Science Project on LUCC advocates basic scientific and scholarly research. It is a co-operative research project of the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP) and the International Human Dimensions of Global Change Programme (IHDP). As a joint venture between a natural sciences and a social sciences programme it reflects the need for an interdisciplinary research approach to the subject. Merging of heretofore disciplinary methods into new interdisciplinary methodologies are considered fundamental to advancing LUCC research.

LUCC advocates a combination of three different approaches: field-based case studies; thematic assessments of the patterns of land cover change; and regional and global prognostic models of land use/cover. Accordingly, three research foci have been selected:

- *Land use dynamics*: comparative case study analysis;
- *Land cover dynamics*: empirical observations and diagnostic models;
- *Regional and global integrated models*.



An example of an integrated modelling framework
 Source: LUCC Report Series No.1 (1996)

The following series of questions is central to LUCC:

- *How has land cover been changed by human use over the last 300 years?*
- *What are the major human causes of land cover in different geographical and historical contexts?*
- *How will changes in land use affect land cover in the next 50-100 years?*
- *How do immediate human and biophysical dynamics affect the sustainability of specific types of land uses?*
- *How might changes in climate and global biogeochemistry affect both land use and land cover, and vice versa?*
- *How does land use/cover change affect biodiversity and how do strategies and policies for preservation of biodiversity affect land uses and land cover?*
- *How do land use/cover changes affect the vulnerability of land users in the face of potential climate change and environmental change in general?*

From these questions the Netherlands HDP Committee has abstracted as its leading research question: *What large-scale external factors that operate at regional or global scales affect land use and cover change, and what collective actions of local change have profound global impact?*

Objective and initiatives

Main objective of the Netherlands HDP Committee is to adapt the rationale and methods of land use/cover change research, as defined for global issues in the LUCC Science Plan, to the specific and complex European reality. This Science Plan was presented and adopted during the LUCC Open Science Meeting held at the premises of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, January 1996 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. During the preparations for this meeting an inventory of current land use/land cover research in the Netherlands had been carried out for integration in the National Research Programme on Global Air Pollution and Climate Change (NOP). The NOP is a policy-oriented research programme with the aim of providing a scientific basis for the development of climate change policies and increasing the involvement of the Dutch research community. As for IHDP, the implementation of the Science Plan has since been somewhat delayed, but the Open Science Conference, March 1998 in Barcelona, Spain, has given a new impetus to this project. The Netherlands HDP Committee closely follows the international developments within LUCC and wherever these appear promising, looks forward to contribute to them.

Call for participation

In this brochure, a limited number of current and future activities of the Netherlands HDP Committee has been presented. The implementation of the Dutch research agenda remains to be based on present and expected contributions from a whole spectrum of research projects. It is a continuous and 'open-ended' process dependent on initiatives of the participants involved.

Probably some of the issues covered rose your curiosity and/or urge you to comment on them. Possibly you feel qualified and consider joining the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change in general or one of its Science Projects in particular. Or you would rather be kept informed of any future developments. In any of these cases don't hesitate and call or write to:

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Appendix I

IHDP – its role, Science Projects, and organisational structure

The *International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change* (IHDP) is an international, interdisciplinary, non-governmental social sciences programme to promote and co-ordinate research aimed at describing, analysing and understanding the human dimensions of global environmental change.

The programme is a full partner with the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP) and the World Climate Research programme (WCRP) and has been sponsored by the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC) since 1996.

In order to accomplish its goals, IHDP:

- links researchers, policy-makers and stakeholders,
- promotes synergies among national and regional research committees and programmes,
- identifies new research priorities,
- provides a focus and new frameworks for interdisciplinary research, and
- facilitates the dissemination of research results.

IHDP Science Projects are a key mechanism used to: 1) identify and generate new IHDP research activities in priority areas, 2) promote international collaboration, and 3) link policy makers and researchers. Four Science Projects currently receive the full support of IHDP:

- Land Use and Land Cover Change (LUCC)
The scientific steering committee is chaired by Professor David Skole, Michigan State University, USA.
Project Office: LUCC, Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya, Parc de Montjuïc, 08038 Barcelona, Spain.
Web site: <http://www.icc.es/lucc>
E-mail: lucc@icc.es
- Global Environmental Change and Human Security (GECHS)
The Scientific Planning Committee is chaired by Dr. Steve Lonergan.
Project Office: GECHS, c/o Dr. Steve Lonergan, Dept. Geography, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 3050 Victoria BC, Canada V8W 3P5.
Web site: <http://www.gechs.org>
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- Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (IDGEC)
The Scientific Planning Committee is chaired by Professor Oran Young.
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– Industrial Transformation (IT)

The Scientific Planning Committee is chaired by Professor Pier Vellinga.

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Web site: <http://www.vu.nl/ivm/hdp/hdp.htm>

E-mail: pier.vellinga@ivm.vu.nl

IHDP is guided by a *Scientific Committee* comprised of scientists from different geographic and disciplinary backgrounds. Professor Eckart Ehlers was elected chair of the Scientific committee in 1996. A *Scientific Advisory Council* meets every three years to evaluate and assess IHDP's activities.

National Committees are an essential component of IHDP's networking and research strategy, which advocates a bottom-up approach. There are currently over twenty National Human Dimensions Committees and Programmes at various levels of development worldwide.

By IHDP particular emphasis is placed on expanding and strengthening the network of national human dimensions committees and programmes and on enhancing IHDP's capacity to support them.

The *IHDP Secretariat* has been located in Bonn, Germany, since November 1996. The secretariat provides direct support to the Scientific Committee, National Committees, IHDP Science Projects and other research initiatives. It provides information services, such as the IHDP Update Newsletter and the IHDP Web site, facilitating the mobilisation of research funds and the maintenance of relations with international organisations, including the UN system.

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Appendix II

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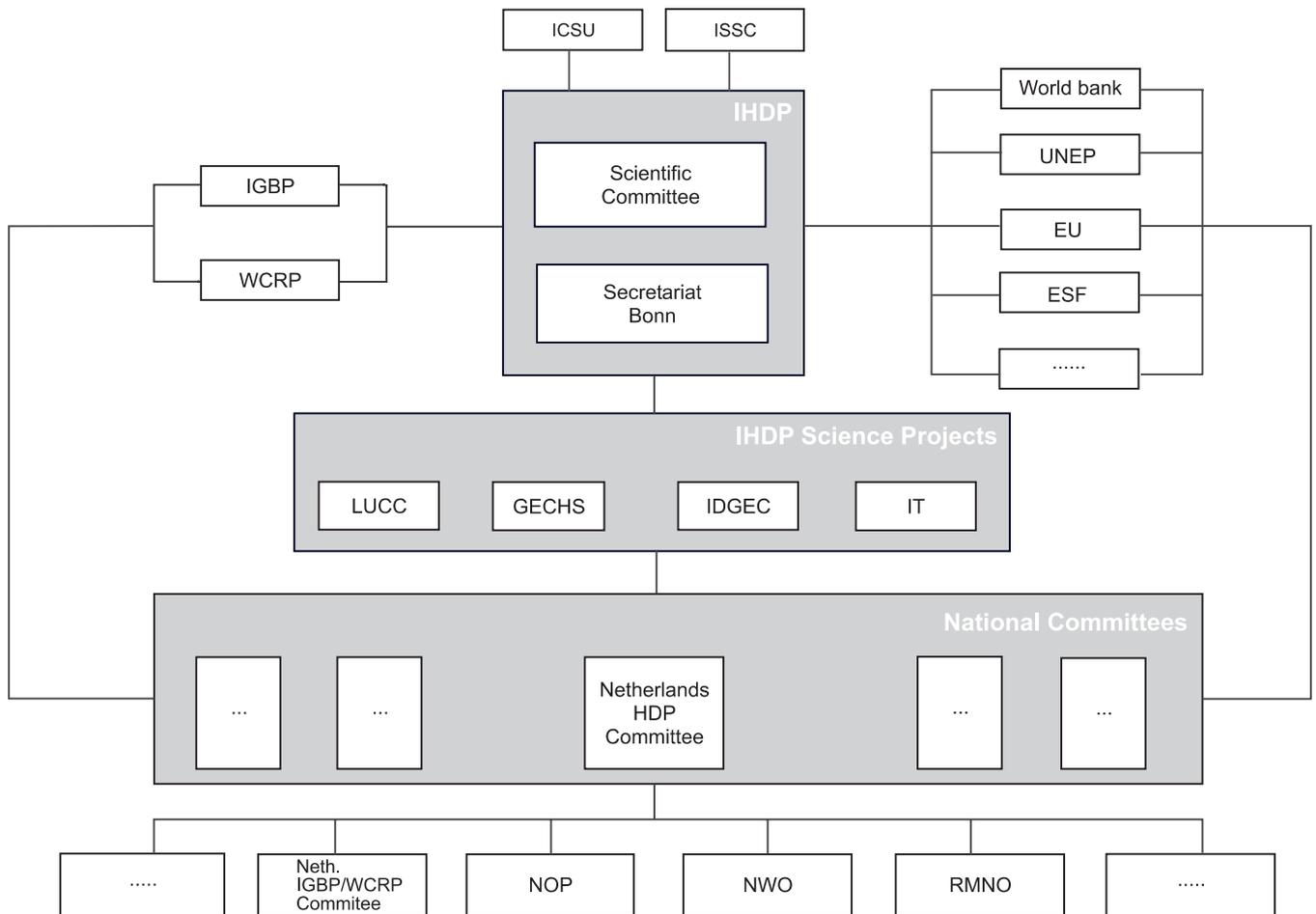
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Organisational Structure and Setting of the Netherlands HDP Committee



List of abbreviations

ESF	European Science Foundation
GECHS	Global Environmental Change and Human Security (IHDP Science Project)
ICSU	International Council of Scientific Unions
IDGEC	Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (IHDP Science Project)
IGBP	International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme
IHDP	International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change
ISSC	International Social Science Council
IT	Industrial Transformation (IHDP Science Project)
KNAW	Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences
LOICZ	Land-Ocean Interactions in the Coastal Zone (IGBP core project)
LUCC	Land Use and Land Cover Change (IHDP Science Project and IGBP core project)
NOP	National Research Programme on Global Air Pollution and Climate Change
NWO	Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research
RMNO	Advisory Council for Research on Nature and Environment
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WCRP	World Climate Research Programme