



EXTENSIONNet

October 2007

Vol. 15 No. 1

Newsletter of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Inc)

A0029919P ISSN 1445-2111 Contact: 02 6024 5349

Australia Post approved PP347637000014

Environmental Communication an emerging new field of scholarship and practice

Nadarajah Sriskandarajah (Professor, Environmental Communication, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)



The 2007 Conference on Communication and the Environment (COCE) held in Chicago during 22-25 June this year was the ninth in a series and it saw the launch of a new academic journal 'Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture', published by Routledge Journals. The journal's editor, Stephen Depoe from the University of Cincinnati sees the journal functioning as a nexus, the place where scholars from a variety of disciplines exploring communication *about* and *within* both natural and cultural environments, and their practitioner counterparts working in environmental communication would connect and converse - among themselves and between each other.

The recent launch of the journal firmly sets in place the identity of Environmental Communication (EC) as a distinct area of study and practice. Over the past decade and more, pioneer scholars within EC in the United States have worked hard to create EC as a Division within the National Communication Association, the body representing the communication discipline. The first issue of

the journal is in fact an extended conversation among key members of the EC community. It opens with the lead article by Robert Cox, Professor of Communication Studies at the University of North Carolina, who depicts EC as one of Nature's crisis disciplines, similar to the manner Conservation Biology emerged as a discipline. He then goes on to ask the question 'Does EC have an ethical duty?' Other authors respond to Cox's provocative question and in the process set the territory as well as the future course for EC as a transdisciplinary and integrative field.

My intention here as an APEN member, and the recently appointed Chair of EC in Sweden, is to highlight the developments in the field of EC to members of the extension community and thereby pointing to overlaps of interest and opportunities for connecting and conversing with those in EC.

The Unit

The Unit of Environmental Communication at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences was created in 1998 by broadening its original emphasis on rural extension, and today it is situated in the Department of Urban and Rural Development. The work of the interdisciplinary group of 15 young researchers in the Unit includes studies on the conflicts in environmental decision making in relation to natural resource management and environmental protection and studies connected to extension and knowledge management in Swedish rural contexts. We also work with integrated management of water resources in developing countries in Africa and Asia.

Planning, design and management of urban landscapes and sustainable development

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of rural communities are areas of interest of the larger Department the Unit is situated in, with many possibilities for collaboration on environment related themes pertaining to Swedish and Nordic issues. The Unit has been involved in providing continuing education programs for people working under the banner of EC at local and regional government levels in Sweden. Beginning this autumn, the Unit is also responsible for offering two new Masters level programs, one in EC and another on Integrated Water Management, both with a strong process orientation. We are actively pursuing the formulation of a research agenda which addresses national and international priorities and we seek meaningful collaboration across national and disciplinary boundaries.

The issues in EC

As society continues to make new environmental policies and add ever more environmental goals to be achieved at the local level, the task of the professional who has to deal with the complexity, uncertainty and competing interests in the public sphere becomes harder and harder. We see Environmental Communication as the new field emerging at the very interface of nature and society, as a way of working not only with society's 'constructing' of environmental problems but also negotiating society's responses to those problems. One is the constitutive role of understanding our perception of the environment and of the problems at hand to work with, and the other is the more instrumental role of reaching out and creating change. The latter entails everything from getting the information across to the citizens to enabling the creation of collaborative networks and learning platforms which bring together the multiple stakeholders towards collective action.

The convergence of the two streams creates the scientific arena of EC which draws its theoretical perspectives from a range of disciplines including communication science, sociology, social psychology, learning theory, systems theory, and environmental science, and bases its professional practice in the coal face of communicative dilemmas and conflicting interests when trying to reach environmental objectives.

Global- Local linkages

The environmental issues that have concerned citizens, practitioners and scholars alike at the local and national levels have clear links to what need to be discussed and acted upon at the international and global levels. Likewise, the challenges posed by

environmental changes of a global magnitude, such as climate change, produce impacts on the environment and livelihood of local communities, demanding action eventually at the local level. So, in order for EC to be an arena for research, education and practice, and for it to realise desirable outcomes at the local level, the discourse and field experiences from international contexts as well as the driving forces at the global level have to be understood and acted upon.

This in fact will be the focal theme of a conference being hosted by the Unit in October. As outlined earlier, most amount of work in EC over the last decade and a half, and the shaping of it as a scientific arena has taken place in US institutions and in the context of a variety of settings in North America. With the emphasis given to Sustainable Development at present in Europe, we believe that it is timely that a conference on this theme is held this year centred on Nordic and European issues but with an international and global outlook. We hope that this event will lead to the setting of the scope of the field, recognition of a broad based research agenda and expansion of the fledgling EC network in Sweden into the European and international arena.

Reaching out

As a founding rationale for EC as a discipline, it was proposed in 1996 that scholars working under its auspices would, among other things, act as identifiable source of theoretical and applied knowledge to public policy decision makers, communities, businesses, educators and citizen groups. A proponent of the above, Susan Senecah of State University of New York, now says that building disciplinary legitimacy achieved in the last decade should be followed by internal strengthening and external outreach and partnership building in the next phase. That way, those in EC can contribute to the enhancement of society's 'communicative competence' on environmental issues, she says.



Seen in a UK Newspaper -

Subject: Letter written by farmer to extension agency in Europe Agricultural Extension Service Livestock Husbandry Division

16 May 2007

Dear Sir / Madam

I am seeking advice on a proposed pig rearing business. My friend, who is a long time farmer, recently received a cheque for £3,000 from the Rural Payments Agency for not rearing pigs. I would now like to join the "not rearing pigs" business.

In your opinion, what is the best kind of farm not to rear pigs on, and which is the best breed of pigs not to rear? I want to be sure I approach this endeavour in keeping with all government policies, as dictated by the EU under the Common Agricultural Policy.

As I see it, the hardest part of this enterprise will be keeping an accurate record of how many pigs I haven't reared. Are there any Government sponsored courses for on this topic for potential non-readers of pigs?

My friend is very satisfied with this business. He has been in pig rearing for forty years and the best he ever made on them was £1,422 in 1968. That is - until last year, when he received a generous cheque for not rearing any.

If I get £3,000 for not rearing 50 pigs, will I get £6,000 for not rearing 100?

Incidentally, I wonder if I would be eligible to receive tradable carbon credits for all these pigs not producing harmful and polluting methane gases?

Because these pigs I plan not to rear will not eat 2,000 tonnes of cereals, will I qualify for payments for not growing cereals? This type of business is a new concept to me, so any advice you could provide me would be very welcome.

Yours faithfully,

Nigel Berkshire-Landrace

Ed sez ...

- Roe Currie

John James and I have been guest editors for this issue while Chrissy (Dr Christine King) is busy with an important new part of her life. Chrissy and partner welcomed their daughter at the end of August. Mother and baby are doing well and we send congratulations and best wishes from APEN.

A former colleague of Chrissy's and long time member of APEN, "Sri" Sriskandarajah begins this issue with information on the developments in the field of Environmental Communication (EC). He mentions the overlaps of interest and opportunities for connecting and conversing between those in EC and extension. So let the interchanges begin. This article is then followed by an emerging problem in UK.

In this issue's second major article, John Petheram, Mark Paine and Anne Crawford provide the follow up article from the last issue on publishing your work. There is some helpful information on where to publish and also a copy of the criteria used in refereeing for peer reviewed conference proceedings.

In our final major article for this issue, Kate Roberts, Jeff Coutts and Justine Lacey give an interesting round up of their workshop

series Measuring Engagement, Measuring Empowerment which we promoted in the APEN eBulletin. This article is packed full of very useful information for extensionists!

On page 10 Jess Jennings and Laura Hassan have given us updated information on APEN Forum '07's exciting program and they ask for your comments and suggestions. We hope as many as possible can attend to be part of this unique experience and assist in the development of a unique extension publication. The AGM will be a breakfast meeting on the second day of the Forum.

Lastly, but not leastly, we welcome our new members and feature an Overseas Affiliate member, Augustine Udoh from Nigeria and ordinary members Geoff Kuehne from South Australia and Sue Peoples from New Zealand. A special welcome, also, to those who have joined by registering for APEN Forum '07. We look forward to meeting you there.

The next issue is planned to reach you before Christmas and will include the AGM and forum reports as well as your contributions. Copy is due to the Editor by 23 November. Happy reading J.

ENET

Writing for peer-reviewed journals - Where should I publish ?

John Petheram, *Freelance Extensionist*; Mark Paine, *Principal Research Fellow* and Anne Crawford, *Research Fellow [Innovation & Change Management], The University of Melbourne.*

Having raved on about the value of writing for peer-reviewed publication (ExtensionNet 14; 3) we are now obliged to provide advice on where best to publish on extension work. These guidelines are mainly for people new to writing for academic journals. Later articles will provide some guidelines on 'How to write a journal article' and the criteria used by reviewers in assessing papers and providing feedback to authors.

Purpose in publication

Remember that your main purpose is to expose your ideas and work to an audience of professionals who have interest and theoretical knowledge in your field. Their scrutiny and feedback is important for you to develop the ideas and networks needed to advance your expertise in extension. In selecting a journal you would therefore consider where best to obtain such a readership – in Australia or internationally. Thankfully there is a broad range of journals available to extension professionals so most people will find their specific field is represented by a journal or technical series of some type. Acceptance by a journal of high standing increases the chances that your work is in turn quoted by other authors who read and publish in journals of high standard. This may sound elitist or academic, but the alternative of writing only for local newsletters or conferences, and seeking no international acclaim for your work, will do little to advance the extension profession or your own career.

Having said that, for some purposes peer-reviewed conference proceedings may provide a useful vehicle for an initial publication. Writing for conferences is an excellent way to launch your writing career and hone your writing skills because you can gain comprehensive feedback on your paper from an interested audience. Conferences also enable you to follow-up with leading writers in your field. However, employers and funding agencies generally regard conference papers as at a relatively low level in the publication hierarchy. Authors seeking proper recognition for their effort often rewrite papers for submission to an academic journal, after seeking initial comment from a local conference. It can seem like quite a jump from a conference paper to a journal article. One way of bridging

this gulf is to publish in periodicals like PLA Notes (Participatory Learning and Action) that value practitioner accounts of methods that work in field settings (<http://www.earthprint.com/catalog/>); then look under participation and training).

Journals and journals

Writing for conferences is an excellent way to launch your writing career and hone your writing skills

A main dilemma in extension is whether to publish in journals that specialise in 'extension' or those with a focus on some discipline or commodity. Extension agents with a background in sociology or economics often prefer to publish their work in journals of their own discipline. However, many discipline-focused journals (e.g. agronomy, animal science, ecology) are not sympathetic to papers on 'social' or 'information' aspects of the discipline. In Australia the set of titles produced by CSIRO Publishing includes a range of such journals with fairly high (and international) status (see <http://www.publish.csiro.au/?nid=17>) but strongly focused on research. However, CSIRO publishing has made special effort to provide a venue for extension papers in the Australian Journal of Experimental Agriculture – which can be a good option because of its age (Vol. 48) and status - despite its rather misleading title.

Publications sponsored by commodity organisations, such as grain, fruit or timber production are usually interested in papers on extension. But these 'magazines' tend to have no real peer-review process, and therefore do not rank on the scale of academic journals at all. Journals run by professional associations generally have a better peer review process and hence a reasonable standing. Many people submit papers to international journals as this gives their work the greatest prestige and exposure.

Some extension journals

Area of Interest	Journal	Country published	Web address for more information
<i>Applied Extension</i>	<i>Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	www.informaworld.com/RAEE
	<i>Journal of Extension</i>	<i>USA</i>	http://www.joe.org
	<i>Extension Farming Systems Journal</i>	<i>Australia</i>	http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/science/rman/afbmnetwork/efsjournal/index.htm
	<i>Agricultural Systems</i>	<i>All over</i>	http://www.elsevier.com/locate/agsy
	<i>Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment</i>	<i>All over</i>	http://www.elsevier.com/locate/agsy
<i>Social aspects of managing natural resources</i>	<i>Ecology and Society</i>	<i>Canada</i>	www.ecologyandsociety.org
	<i>Society and Natural Resource Management</i>	<i>UK</i>	http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/08941920.asp
<i>Technical and people issues in agriculture, landuse, environment</i>	<i>Agriculture and Human Values</i>	<i>USA</i>	http://web.archive.org/web/20011021062511/web.clas.ufl.edu/users/rhaynes/afhvs

Some extension journals

In seeking a suitable journal for your topic, you need to look at the range of papers in the above journals and many others available on the internet. You will begin to get a feel for their style, the focus they have on theoretical perspectives and their adaptability to publishing articles on extension which may not fit traditional approaches for writing up research and development. It is wise to contact the editors before making a decision - to assess their interest, and because there may be special editions planned that particularly suit your intended topic.

In conclusion

While few of us in extension want to enter into the kind of 'citation race' faced by most research scientists, it is well worth considering the status of the journals in which we publish – as we want our work to be (a) properly peer-reviewed, (b) read by others with understanding

of scientific and extension principles, and (c) accepted by employers as credible and worthy of the extension profession. A paper in a 'high impact' journal can help to gain recognition for the work of all collaborators in a project, and hence in raising their credibility and in seeking future support and funding. While some may prefer to write mainly for newsletters and brochures for their landholder clients, it seems vital that we also publish our work and methods in peer-reviewed journals – if the extension profession is to be seen as more than second rate, when compared with our colleagues who work purely in research.



Example of assessment sheet used in a paper peer-review process

Note: This assessment form has been used by reviewers in previous APEN conferences. It is a blind review process in that neither the author or reviewers' identity is shown.

Criteria for peer-review of papers

Paper IDReviewer's I.D. Date paper first received / uploaded: Date paper reviewed.		Unsatis- factory	Weak	Fair	Good	Excellent
Criterion	Score	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Purpose of the paper is clear, and the content and conclusions are logically related to this purpose</i>						
<i>Paper is interesting to other practitioners, with at least some new or noteworthy content (or is it old-hat ?)</i>						
<i>The method and sources of data are clearly explained</i>						
<i>Relevant theory/philosophical themes are clearly explained (including evidence from previous work/literature)</i>						
<i>The writing is concise and well organised under suitable headings (Or is it garbled, too wordy, lacking in flow, repetitive, or with many grammatical errors ?)</i>						
<i>The conclusions are backed up by clear evidence in the paper</i>						
<i>There are adequate (but not too many) references to relevant academic literature and other work. [References checked]</i>						
<i>The prescribed format is followed (including precise font and layout) - in the text, figures, citations and references</i>						
<p>Reviewer please tick one cell in each row above, and return form to editor with the paper</p> <p><i>Reviewer's detailed comments and edits for use by the author will be made on the paper itself.</i></p> <p><i>Be sure to give guidance on improving the paper – especially in respect of the main criteria for which the paper has scored poorly on the above assessment sheet.</i></p>						
<p>General comments on the paper for the editor.</p>						

Other items to considered by reviewer include:

- ⊙ Abstract reflects paper accurately
- ⊙ Title matches content
- ⊙ Paper length – x pages maximum

Petheram R.J. APEN Conference 2006

Measuring Engagement, Measuring Empowerment – Round Up of the National Workshop Series

Kate Roberts, Jeff Coutts and Justine Lacey



Background

It was just over a year ago that we first took our two day workshop series, Measuring Engagement, Measuring Empowerment, on the road. Since that time, we have delivered our workshop in Melbourne, Orange, Brisbane, Hobart, Perth, Darwin, back in Melbourne again, and on our last stop is Adelaide this month. The workshops were born out of joint research we undertook for the Cooperative Venture for Capacity Building. Our project, the National Extension and Education Review: What Works and Why?, was part of a suite of projects focused on enhancing the understanding of learning, improving organisational arrangements to support rural human capacity building, and inspiring innovative farming practices.

What we found as a result of our research was that all extension and education activities undertaken in Australia fitted under five overarching models of engagement. These five models operate across industries and communities, each playing key and complementary roles within a capacity building framework. Developing the workshops was our way of getting the information out there where it was needed.

What we did

Day one of the workshop was devoted to learning about the elements of these five models, identifying what kind of evaluation data needs to be collected for each one, and learning how to select an appropriate range of methods to evaluate projects associated with each model. The five models are outlined as follows:

- **The Group Facilitation/Empowerment**

Model: This model focuses on increasing the capacity of participants in planning and decision-making and in seeking their own education/training needs based on their situation. The project will often provide or fund a facilitator to assist groups to define their own goals and learning needs and to help them realise these.

- **The Programmed Learning Model:** This model is about delivering specifically designed training programs/workshops to targeted groups of landholders or community members to increase understanding or skills in defined areas. These can be delivered in a variety of modes and learning approaches.

- **The Technology Development Model:** This model is about working with individuals and groups to develop specific technologies, management practices or decision support systems which will then be available to the rest of the industry or community. It often involves local trials, demonstrations, field days and on-site visits.

- **The Information Access Model:** This model is about providing a range of information that individuals and groups can access at a time that suits them. It can be based in a library, information centre, on a website, or other centralised location.

- **The Individual Consultant/Mentor Model:** This model is about individualised one-on-one support. It may be a technical expert visiting and providing advice, diagnosis and recommendations. It may be an on-going facilitating mentor relationship which provides a sounding board for decision-makers.

The complementary nature of these models can be captured in the capacity building ladder as illustrated below.

with regard to their learning. While much work has been done on measuring human and social capacity, what we found in our research was that more work was needed to understand and benchmark the concept of empowerment.

The second day of the workshop really sought to address this by delivering information about the skills associated with empowerment and engaging participants in discussions and activities about the skills and indicators of empowerment so that not only would they be able to identify these skills in themselves but also to develop an evaluation strategy whereby they could benchmark levels of empowerment skills. We have isolated the six empowerment skills most significant in relation to extension and they are set out in Table 1.

The workshop took participants through a range of processes for evaluation based on these skills. When individuals have these skills to the level of mastery (see diagram right) they become empowered and indications of empowerment are:

- Having faith in one's own capabilities and approach difficult tasks as a challenge rather than a threat
- Having knowledge of self
- Recovering after failure
- Having a commitment to truth
- being collaborative and open in communication
- Respecting others
- Having the capacity to make choices and to transform those into desired actions and outcomes.

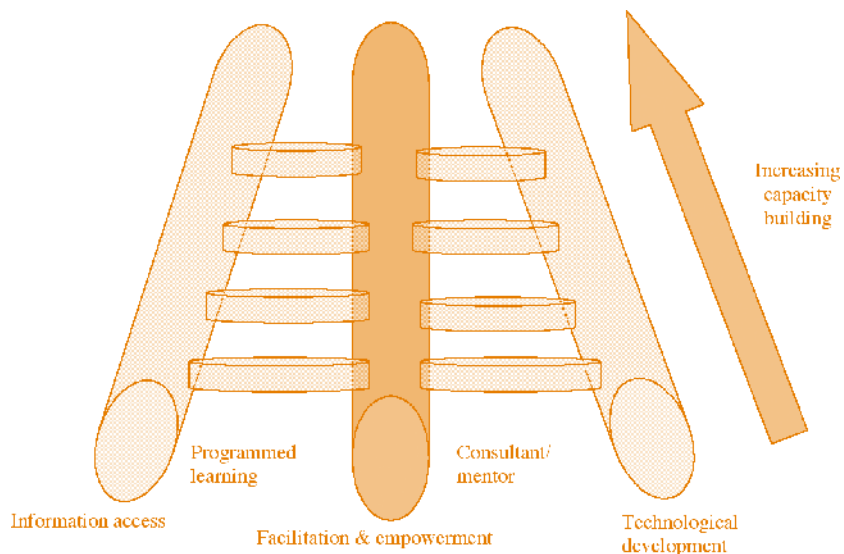
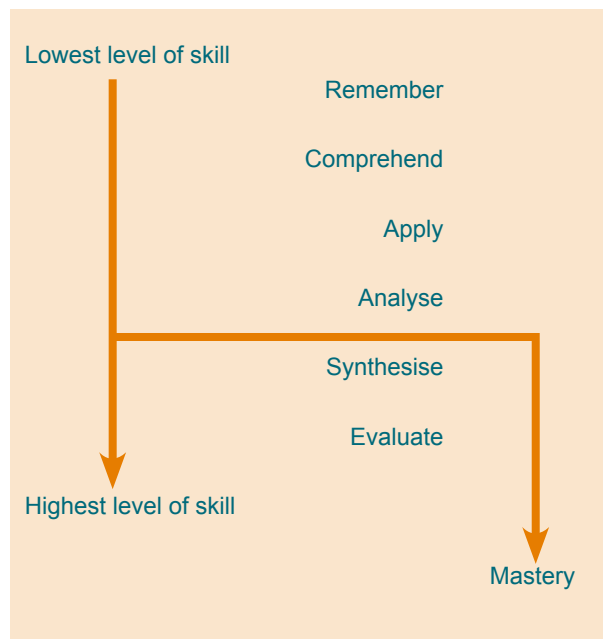


Figure 1

A central leg of the ladder is the Facilitation/empowerment model – an on-going process to maintain motivation and a framework for development and change management. Information access is critical so that individuals and groups can access the type of information in the form that they require when they need it. Mirroring the on-going facilitation and information access is the third leg – projects that deal with specific Technology development – incorporating learning and information into changes in new technology and practice. The left rungs show the need for on-going specific training/education products (Programmed learning) to allow individuals/ groups to move to the next level. The right rungs indicate the value in individual enterprises having iterative consultant/mentoring support for incorporating changes at an enterprise level.

In analysing these models we started to see that there was a real need to increase understanding about the nature of empowerment. Projects based on the empowerment model work with the assumption that people can be taken through processes to develop their individual and collective capacity to learn better, make better decisions and become more self-sufficient



The people

In taking this work across the country we have had the opportunity to work with and meet individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and organisations including government sector and private industry extension officers, natural resource managers, health services workers, students, scientists, evaluators, community workers and many more; each of whom brought a wealth of experience to draw on and challenge us as we delved into how to understand and measure levels of engagement and empowerment.



Logo, Melbourne 2007

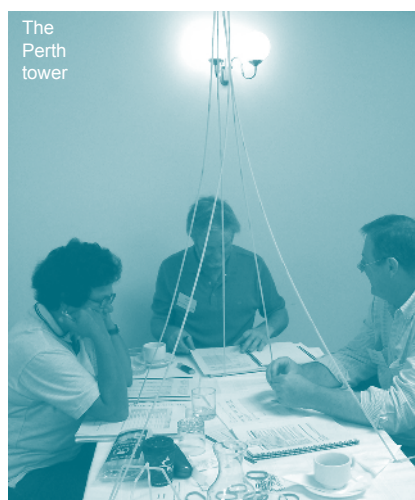
What they said about the workshops

It was interesting to observe the way that presenters engaged us as a group in terms of presentation techniques.

I have found the workshop relevant and inspirational and I look forward to applying it to my work and being more efficient and effective.

Better understanding of empowerment, so will be able to include it in programs and better evaluate levels of empowerment.

We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to all those who have taken this journey with us.



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Table 1

Skills Needed For Empowerment	Ability To
<i>Critical Thinking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse and reflect, to think 'outside the square'. • Synthesise and provide examples of how problems/ issues can be addressed. • Evaluate and make judgments about situations
<i>Planning Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the planning process. • Take oneself or a group through a planning process and cycle.
<i>Communication Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen • Be assertive • Manage conflict • Communicate with others – institutions, community, government etc • Transferring information. • Level of comfort/ confidence/ competence interacting with others
<i>Networking Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with others – individuals and groups. • Have a diversity of the contacts
<i>Facilitation Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the principles and processes of facilitation • Taking a lead in facilitating family/ group/ industry/ community processes
<i>Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and implement of leadership principles

Capture, Consolidate and Communicate

at the APEN National Forum 2007

APEN'07 is drawing close...13-14th Nov, 2007 – Canberra

Register now at www.apen.org.au/forum07

THE FOCUS OF APEN'07

The practice of extension is evolving within the broader context of rural and regional change – what is the nature of that change and how do we make sense of these changes as professionals now and into the future?

APEN'07 will bring together professionals from the ever emerging spectrum of extension that ranges from responsible natural resource management to productive agricultural landscapes. By capturing discussion around key issues within this spectrum APEN'07 will serve to enhance delegates understanding and professional expertise in extension by showcasing leading practices, tools and theories and more so by providing delegates and presenters alike the opportunity to interact, listen and contribute with each other around these issues.

APEN'07 has been structured to consolidate contemporary challenges, trends and debates in extension, and as a final outcome, communicate and develop an Australasian text aimed to assist current and future extension practitioners, researchers and policy makers.

THE PROGRAM –

Vignettes to excite the mind and the senses

Day 1: Let's get into it...

We have two days to make the most of the opportunity of a gathering of the calibre of delegates and presenters alike. As such the program has been designed to listen, learn and participate.

Day 1 – there will be 3 key themes explored during the day

1. Extension and its role within NRM and agriculture

- Develop, explore and explain the overarching context we are all working within, with specific reference to the understanding the interdependent realms of NRM and production agriculture.

2. Extension philosophies, methodologies, methods, tools and practices

- Explain and showcase some of the leading practical applications of extension on the ground, and underlying philosophies. Delegates can take this opportunity to think of how they may be able to apply these to their own practice.

3. Contemporary issues in extension

- Explore a series of emerging issues in extension, such as such as gender, employment, public vs private extension delivery, the economics of extension, and careers in extension.

Delegates will be given the opportunity to hear leading experts present key contributions in short, sharp 15 min presentations. At the end of each themed session, delegates will have the opportunity to make comment and questions in order to draw out the key issues relevant to understanding the changing nature of extension.

Delegates' pre-forum contributions in the form of Posters on case studies relating to the themes will be available to be viewed and discussed during break periods on both days.

At the end of Day 1 professional facilitators will facilitate a session with all delegates to capture and consolidate the feedback and issues that are raised from Day 1 that warrant further discussion. This session will serve as the basis of a series of panel sessions on Day 2.

Did I hear entertainment?

At the end of a stimulating day where we have all absorbed countless new ideas and pondered ourselves half to death, APEN'07 will provide delegates with a shift in mental gear. Over pre dinner drinks and throughout the Forum Dinner delegates can laugh, learn and applaud all at the same time.

Day 1 evening schedule is as follows...

1. Chris Popp as MC and introducing laughter yoga.

2. APEN National Awards for Excellence in Extension, proudly sponsored by the Australian Governments' Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation.

3. Keynote dinners address: Mr Peter Andrews, of Australian Story fame, to give delegates first hand insight into the issues and thoughts when bringing new thinking and approaches into rural sustainability practices. For more information see: www.naturalsequencefarming.com.

Refreshed and ready to go for Day 2

Day 2 morning will comprise concurrent panel sessions. The goal is to provide delegates the opportunity to more fulsomely interact with presenters and peers to learn from each other by discussing the issues that have been identified from Day 1. Following this opportunity we will all come together to collectively share what we have learnt and thought about over the two days of APEN'07.

The end – pulling it all together

Forum'07 will finish with a final after lunch facilitated plenary session to pull together the key issues, needs and directions raised during discussions over the course of the Forum. This will ensure that we have indeed captured and can consolidate our thoughts on understanding the changing nature of extension and how that can help us work more effectively into the future and this ever evolving landscape. Delegate feedback will form the basis for developing an extension publication, expected to be available for delegates and a broader audience by June 2008,

In presenting Forum'07 and the consequent Australasian book publication, APEN is helping forge a relevant basis of what extension is and how that body of knowledge can best be utilised to bring about sustainable Australasian-Pacific regional and rural landscapes.

Your suggestions on the program and content of Forum'07 are welcome through directly contacting Jess Jennings (j.jennings@uws.edu.au) or Laura Hassan (l_hassan@aapt.net.au).

ENET

New APEN members

If you've recently joined APEN, welcome! You'll reap plenty of professional and personal rewards. If you've been in APEN for a few seasons now, be sure to say hello to the new members.

Augustine Udoh



Augustine is an Associate Professor of Agricultural Extension in the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria. He has been involved in teaching and research for over 23 years. He has worked in association with Research and Extension Organisations. He plans and implements extension courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels. He is involved in administrative, consultancy and community service and peace keeping missions. He has been the coordinator to the Center for Gender and Social Studies in the South - South Zone of Nigeria. His area of interest includes diffusion of innovations and adoption of improved agricultural technologies in agriculture; gender participation in poverty alleviation programmes; community development and capacity building; and farming systems and environmental extension. He has published numerous refereed articles in small farmer agriculture and have served as an external examiner for postgraduate examinations.

Geoff Kuehne



Geoff has had a twenty-five year career as a wheat and sheep farmer in South Australia. After selling his farming interests in 2000, he undertook a part-time MBA with the University of South Australia. This led to employment, combining his interest in the environment with his business management skills, project managing substantial environmental rehabilitation activities in the riverine areas of South Australia's Mid-Murray region. This often involved working with farmers, and motivating and encouraging them to achieve improved environmental outcomes.

He is a recipient of a PhD scholarship with the purpose of researching irrigators' management responses to reduced water entitlements. The study area is the Namoi Valley of New South Wales North West, and the study group are the groundwater irrigators of the valley who are facing cuts to their water entitlements of up to 94%.

His research interest is identifying and exploring how farmers' values towards; family, land, water, community, lifestyle, and profit, influences their behaviour. This work has recently gained added significance with the Governments' legislated intention to ease the problem of over allocation of irrigator entitlements through the spending of three billion dollars on purchases from what may be illusory voluntary sellers.

Welcome to these new members who have joined since last edition, listed in chronological order of joining.

Inga Berzina	<i>Latvia</i>
Hari Dahal	<i>Nepal</i>
Phil Hausler	<i>NT</i>
Augustine Udoh	<i>Nigeria</i>
Janet Conte	<i>WA</i>
Robert Hodge	<i>SA</i>
Jacinta Stower	<i>Qld</i>
Sue Peoples	<i>New Zealand</i>
Letitia Cross	<i>NSW</i>
Geoff Kuehne	<i>SA</i>
Greg Bekker	<i>Vic</i>
Kristy Roche	<i>Vic</i>
Ugo Mantelli	<i>Vic</i>
Catriona King	<i>Vic</i>
Jill French	<i>NSW</i>
Virginia Brunton	<i>NSW</i>
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Belinda Barr	<i>SA</i>
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Sue Peoples

Sue lives in Dunedin, New Zealand, and works as a Social Scientist for AgResearch. Having taught within the secondary and tertiary education sectors for nearly fifteen years, Sue decided to pursue another career. To accomplish this she completed a PhD in Geography at Otago University, which sought to establish what dominant discourses shape the lives of farm women, their responses to these discourses and how their discursive positioning influences their agency.

Currently, Sue's work focuses on farmer adoption and learning within the dairy farming sector, investigating current adoption/learning characteristics, barriers to adoption/learning, and network characteristics. In addition, Sue will be focussing on gender issues within farming, particularly farm women and their influence on farm adoption and learning. Furthermore, Sue has an interest in family farming, particularly farm succession strategies and the role of patriarchal inheritance within the 21st century. Other areas of curiosity include education within the rural sector, particularly long distance education, and how distance learning can be improved for isolated farmers, particularly women.

Having joined APEN, Sue aims to increase her understanding of how change is managed within agriculture, particularly from a social researcher's point of view. Furthermore, she hopes to broaden her network of contacts involved in agricultural social research, and to gain a greater appreciation of Australian farming systems, particularly those based on large scale family farms.

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Guidelines and deadlines

Submissions should be made in MS Word 6.0 with minimal formatting. A portrait photograph of the author is required. All photographs, figures and/or tables ought to be provided as separate files (preferably TIF or JPEG; photos scanned at 300 dpi). Feature articles should be around 1000 words and minor articles 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit submitted material to meet space restrictions. Letters to the editor or general items of news of interest to the network are welcome. Articles should be submitted at least four weeks prior to publication.

Preference is given to articles that are grounded in some form of project or event.

Editing: Rosemary Currie, John James.

Layout: Ross Tasker, Snap Printing Wodonga, Victoria.

Production management: Rosemary Currie, APEN Secretariat, Wodonga, Victoria.

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Stories and photos (next edition) due to Editor 23 November 2007