

### **Comments from Tana Stratton, 16.01.03**

1. The key impression that remained with me from the workshop (from a policy perspective) was the importance of an interdisciplinary approach with each discipline receiving and inputting to various other disciplines, with a number of underlying shared issues such as data and information.

2. One could imagine a flowchart entitled "integrated assessment". The boxes might include key disciplines such as: scientific assessment, economic assessment, impacts, adaptation and vulnerability assessment, policy assessment. An underlying box common to all disciplines includes shared information, for example, socio-economic information.

3. The exchange of information between these assessment communities is something that is being worked out, for example at the OECD workshop. These exchanges seem to be characterized by the level of dependency a discipline has on the availability of information from other disciplines, and a "propagating" factor representing how sensitive a discipline's assessments are to the precision, comprehensiveness and uncertainty of that information. For lack of a better example, the economic assessment community might provide a very thorough analysis of the appropriateness of various possible valuation methods, and even if this is sufficient to allow policy makers to agree on a [suite of] method[s], an assessment of what the value of actual damages will be is highly dependent on the uncertainties in the preceding scientific, impacts, adaptation and vulnerability assessment information. Vulnerability assessments, although dependent on and sensitive to uncertain regional and sub-national impact information, might use vulnerability to current climate as a proxy and therefore be somewhat more robust under uncertainty than other assessments.

4. I am trying to visualize a system where the uncertainties that matter most are highlighted and point out where further research and cooperation is most needed, as well as a system which points out where each assessment community can be made more robust in itself. The conceptual framework discussed at the workshop seeks to "optimize" a climate response by improving information through the system to policy-makers. However, it is also trying to "minimize" the constraints of uncertainties on policy assessment.

5. My impression of the workshop is that it identified several objectives:

- 1) We are trying to improve the holistic functioning of this "interdisciplinary organism" - and seeking ideas how to best co-ordinate.
- 2) Also, we seek to better co-ordinate key components, such as development of socio-economic scenarios, which can be shared across disciplines and other inputs which serve to strengthen the whole foundation.
- 3) Likewise, we want to improve the functioning of each part so that it makes optimum use of information available but is not bogged down by uncertainty.

Tana Lowen Stratton  
Policy Analyst  
Climate Change and Energy Division (ESC)  
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade  
125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2  
Canada  
Tel : +1 (613) 944-6134  
Fax: +1 (613) 944-0064

