



## Part II: IHDP Main Event 2001

### Open Meeting of the Human Dimensions Research Community Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Opening Session

The Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Research Community met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 6-8 October for the Fourth Open Meeting. The meeting was hosted by the Brazilian Academy of Sciences and generously supported by the Brazilian Science and Environment Ministries. Other co-sponsors were the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), IHDP and the Inter-American Institute (IAI). A wide range of organisations from all over the world also provided financial support.

This was the first Open Meeting to be held in a developing country. The 250 participants came from 50 countries. Developing country participation was high, thanks to funding from a number of sources.



Oran Young, Pier Vellinga, Mauricio Tolmasquim and Eckart Ehlers

After a brief Opening Session, the meeting began with a panel discussion on the challenges of integrations: integration across disciplines, across the developing and developed worlds, and across the science-policy interface. During the discussion, young scholars were encouraged to discuss their expectations for the meeting and for human dimensions research. This stimulated a lively discussion!

Plenary topics included "Human Dimensions Research and Climate Science and Policy", "Urban Sustainability", "Trade, the State and the Environment", "Poverty and the Environment" and "Vulnerability". Several of these topics introduced an explicit developing country perspective to human dimensions issues. Each plenary was followed by a series of parallel sessions. Some focused on topics reviewed in plenary sessions, while others encompassed a wide range of additional human dimensions research topics.



Mauricio Tolmasquim, Chair,  
Local Org. Committee, Brazil

As in previous Open Meetings, many sessions were centered around key foci of the Core Projects of IHDP. Given the location of the meeting, several sessions had a Latin American focus, e.g. on land-use change in Amazonia, vulnerability to climatic change in Latin America, and Brazilian perspectives on the Rio+10 process. There were also many sessions with a focus on other regions, in particular on cross-cutting themes.



View from Conference

Following the success of the poster session at the 1999 Open Meeting in Japan, the International Scientific Planning Committee decided to organise two poster sessions in Rio de Janeiro. The poster sessions provided an opportunity for scholars to have in-depth conversations with those interested in their work. The high quality of posters and large interest in the sessions showed, once again, the value of this form of interaction at Open Meetings.



At the Closing Session, Eckart Ehlers, Past-Chair of the IHDP Scientific Committee, reflected on the success of the meeting and on new perspectives introduced by holding the Open Meeting in a developing country. Young scholars were asked to reflect on the design and content of the meeting. These contributions will be useful in planning the next meeting.

IHDP was particularly excited about the active participation of young scholars who had participated in the International Human Dimensions Workshops of 1998 and 2000. An active network of young researchers on human dimensions issues has now developed as a result of the numerous discussions amongst younger participants at this Open Meeting. The initiative has been taken to establish a Young Human Dimensions Research (YHDR) Network. A list server has been established, in order to facilitate communication between the members ([yhdr@listhost.ciesin.columbia.edu](mailto:yhdr@listhost.ciesin.columbia.edu)).

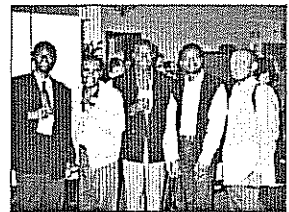
IHDP has co-sponsored and helped in the organisation of the Open Meetings of the Human Dimensions Research Community held in Laxenburg, Austria (1997), Shonan Village, Japan (1999), and now Rio de Janeiro (2001). These meetings with 250-350 participants are an invaluable opportunity to strengthen and expand research networks. The IHDP Core and Joint Projects have been able to present their research results at each of the meetings and measure them against research going on elsewhere. In all cases, the projects were able to attract new scholars into their networks and demonstrate the increasing strength of the Programme.



*From left: Pier Vellinga, Alex de Sherbinin and Jill Jäger*



*From left: Biran Prasad, Mahendra Shah, Tunde Agbola*



*Young Human Dimensions Researchers*



*From left: Elena Nikitina, Galina Churkina and Dellef Sprintz*