



2nd Call for
s e a m l e s s SEAMLESS-Training Course

Integrated Assessment of Agriculture and Sustainable Development in Central and Eastern European Countries

Nové Hradý (Czech Republic)
2-6 February 2009

Location:

Conference Centre of the Institute of System Biology and Ecology of the Academy of Science of the Czech Republic in Nové Hradý (Czech Republic), website: <http://www.usbe.cas.cz/index.php?node=465>

Date:

Monday 2nd of February to Friday 6th of February 2009 (course duration 5 days)

Target group:

PhD students, post-docs, young researchers

Expected group size:

20 participants (from Monday to Tuesday the course will be together with policy experts from CEE countries)

Introduction:

Besides the recent EU accession, the socialist era and the agricultural reforms during the transition phase lead to particular drivers and barriers of change in the agricultural sector of the Central and Eastern European countries.

Yet, the New Member states are alike affected from the current driving forces for agriculture in Europe and the world: unrest in the international food markets, increasing demands, both in quantity and quality, shifts to biofuel production at the expense of food production. These have already resulted in sharp increases in the prices of food and will very likely include land use changes with potentially negative environmental impacts.

At the same time the agricultural world is being confronted with changing societal demands, the increasing consequences of climate change and with other environmental concerns.

Concerns about these issues have put sustainability in agricultural development prominently on policy agendas. There has been a shift from

supporting agricultural production towards policies supporting sustainable (rural) development in a broader sense.

At the latest with the better regulation strategy of the European Commission integrated assessment, i.e. the assessment of social, economic and environmental impacts of policies, have become an integral and systematic part of the political decision making processes at European and national level.

Over the past four years, a large European research consortium has developed an integrated modelling framework to support analysis of relationships between agricultural systems and sustainable development: SEAMLESS-IF (System for Environmental and Agricultural Modelling; Linking European Science and Society – Integrated Framework; www.seamless-ip.org).

The SEAMLESS-IF is a computerized integrated framework to assess and compare, ex-ante, alternative agricultural and environmental policy options, allowing:

- analysis at the full range of scales (farm to EU and global), whilst focusing on the most important issues emerging at each scale;
- analysis of the environmental, economic and social contributions of a multifunctional agriculture towards sustainable rural development and rural viability;
- analysis of a broad range of issues, such as climate change, environmental policies, rural development options, effects of an enlarging EU, international competition and effects on developing countries.

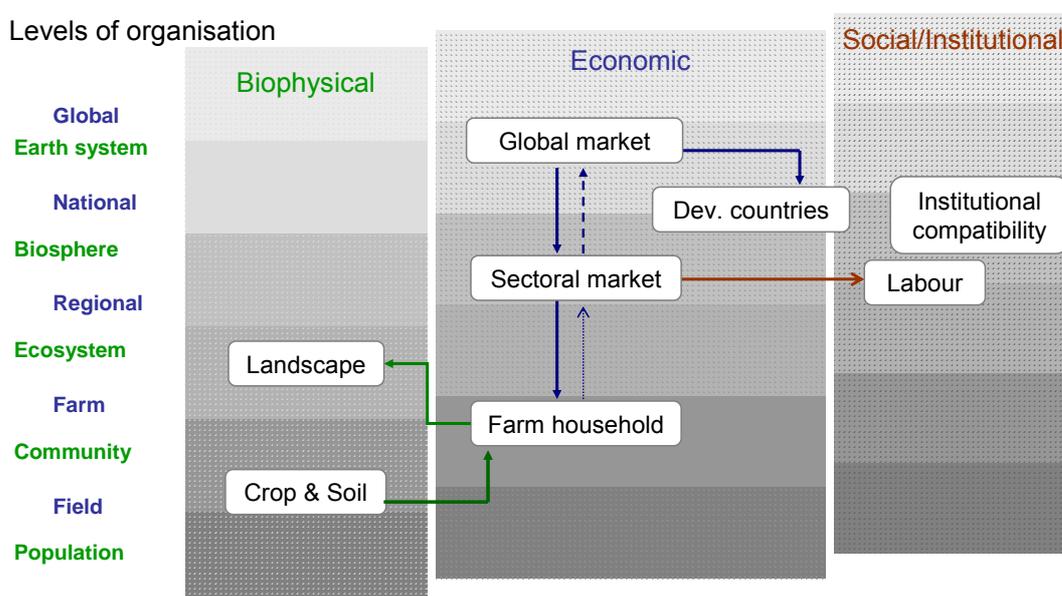


Figure: SEAMLESS-IF integrates models from different disciplines and levels of organisation

Objectives of the SEAMLESS-Training Course:

- to present concepts for integrated assessment of agricultural systems, with a special focus on Central and Eastern Europe.
- to gain theoretical and practical understanding of the methods, models and tools used in integrated assessment of agricultural systems.

- to understand how integrated assessment and modelling can support ex-ante impact assessment and decision-making processes.
- to understand how own specific research relates to an integrated assessment and modelling perspective.
- to recognize where are the limits and problems of integrated assessment and modelling in the policy context, particularly for Central and Eastern European countries.

In the course, SEAMLESS-IF and its research tools are used as an example to present how concepts and models can be integrated to address complex agricultural systems and sustainable development. The training course is problem orientated, so all lectures are linked to practical applications, such as the Nitrate Directive or Trade Liberalisation.

For two days (Monday/Tuesday) there will be the great opportunity to exchange information with practitioners and to discuss the role of impact assessment in Central and Eastern Europe together with policy experts and civil servants from national ministries and agencies.

Computer-based models will be presented and discussed, **but gaining detailed understanding of specific components is not the objective of this course**. Besides plenary presentations by speakers, a number of interactive activities will allow for general and detailed discussion between participants and specialists. At the end of the course participants will understand how an integrated research framework and the individual research components contribute to integrated assessment of a policy option, how this may contribute to decision-making and what are the problems and limitations of ex-ante impact assessments.

Organisation:

The SEAMLESS-Training course will be jointly organised by the Division of Resource Economics at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (UBER), the Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology at the Department of Landscape Ecology at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ILE-ASCR), the Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Central and Eastern Europe in Halle (IAMO) and the University of Life Sciences in Warsaw (SGGW).

SEAMLESS-Training Course website: <http://www.agrar.hu-berlin.de/struktur/institute/wisola/fg/ress/forschung/seamlesstrainingcourse/view>

Who can apply?

Young researchers in post-graduate or post-doctoral studies; young scientists from Central and Eastern European Countries are particularly encouraged to apply. You should have experience in the field of agri-environmental policy analysis, agricultural/environmental economics, integrated assessments or related academic fields. Applicants should participate in the SEAMLESS-Training Course for the whole duration of the event. Further we expect all participants to give a 15 minutes presentation of their current work showing the link to integrated assessment, followed by a discussion in the group. Please apply by sending an email to Robert Fischer (Robert.Fischer@staff.hu-berlin.de), providing the following information:

- name of this course as subject of your e-mail
- your name
- your e-mail address
- your address and affiliation
- status: PhD student, post-doc, other
- curriculum vitae, including the 5 most relevant publications
- a letter of motivation (one page)
- abstract of your doctoral thesis or current research topic (one page)

All files sent for application should be in pdf-format and entitled as follows:

- curriculum vitae: Familyname_Firstname_cv (example: Smith_Mike_cv.pdf)
- letter of motivation: Familyname_Firstname_motiv (example: Smith_Mike_motiv.pdf)
- abstract: Familyname_Firstname_abstract (example: Smith_Mike_abstract.pdf)

All application material must be in English and must be delivered in one e-mail. The **deadline for submission is 02.01.2009**. The successful candidates will be notified by 05.01.2009. You will then receive an official registration confirmation by one of the course organizers. There will be **no registration fee**. However, all participants will have to cover their own travelling and accommodation costs. The participants will be accommodated in single, double or 4-bed rooms at the Conference Center in Nové Hradky (between 11 and 25 Euro/night).

For further information please contact:

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For more information on SEAMLESS and its 29 partners see:

www.seamless-ip.org