



Workshop 3.4: Promoting the discovery of alternative futures by reframing climate change communication

Convenors: **Nadarajah Sriskandarajah and Tarla Rai Peterson**

Communicating climate change: conceptual issues and questions for farming systems thinkers

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We examine how relationships between farming and climate change are produced, reproduced, and transformed through communication, and suggest harnessing the analytical potential of systemic perspectives. To illustrate how scientific, political, economic and social dimensions of climate change are represented in discourses about agriculture, we analyse materials prepared for COP 15 by the CGIAR. We then suggest how, by reminding people of the multiplicity of possibilities, a systems approach may encourage more productive conversations about farming's future contributions to climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and cultural heritage as allied, rather than antagonistic, goals.

From conservation heroes to climate villains – How changes in social recognition may contribute to changed identities of farmers

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Swedish farmers have been recognised as important contributors to biodiversity since the 1990s. In this media analysis, we document a shift to presenting farmers as villains because methane emissions contribute to climate change. The discussion focuses on how identity, attribution, and recognition may contribute to motivation. Whether farmers respond to negative media portrayals by accepting, denying or ignoring the image of self as villain, this negative attribution of farmers' environmental role influences their identities, and may limit future motivation for farmers to engage in nature conservation and other environmentally friendly activities.

Our common table: Constructing trans-border understanding of shared risks, resources, and responsibilities

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The *Common Table Project* fosters face-to-face interaction between farmers and community members in an effort to identify common values and develop collaborative strategies to address common threats to sustainable agriculture and social justice in rural communities. This paper discusses a trans-border project with sites in northern Mexico, central Michigan, and the U.S./Mexican border. A series of cross-border visits and dialogues revealed the need and potential for discursive alignment of technical-cultural and local-global tensions in responses to the effects of climate and industrialization on sustainable food production systems and diverse agricultural communities.

Communicating climate change, REDD and political ecology: A global land question and prospects for agroecology

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Approaches to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) occupy a prime place among political proposals for mitigating climate change. This paper maps interconnections among four crucial dynamics associated with forestry and climate change that interface with REDD proposals: changes in agricultural needs, energy transitions, dynamics of communicating climate change at different levels and scales, and, livelihoods of forest dependent people. The paper places such dynamics within a political ecology framework with a focus on an emerging global land question. Finally, the paper argues that agroecology has important potential as a farming alternative within the politics of climate change.

Learning for communication about climate change in the context of farming using Vickers' concept of an appreciative system

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Communication about issues of climate change in the context of farming takes different forms and serves various purposes. To what extent does such communication serve present-day and future needs? Some forty years ago Sir Geoffrey Vickers developed the concept of an 'appreciative system' to help understand the part that human communication plays in the regulation of human societies. This paper presents and extends Vickers' model, drawing on the author's research. It considers what kinds of communication lead to social learning and purposeful action and what might help to challenge and change some existing practices and behaviours related to farming.