CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY

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CIELAP's 4th Partnering for Sustainability Workshop
Achieving Resilient Agricultural Systems: Innovation, People and Partnerships

November 13 and 14, 2008 – 111 Sussex Dr, Bytown Room, Ottawa, Ontario

Workshop Proceedings

Partnerships have long been valued for their ability to increase productivity, establish support among diverse stakeholders, foster creativity and innovation, and enhance competitiveness. Recently, however, partnerships have been increasingly becoming recognized for the benefits that they bring to advancing sustainability.

CIELAP's 4th Partnering for Sustainability Conference provided a meeting place for 60 Canadian sustainability leaders from business, civil society, government, and academia to share best practices, lessons learned, challenges, trends, and community initiatives about the thematic areas of CSD 16/17 – agriculture, rural development, land use, drought, desertification and Africa. The forum also provided participants an opportunity to acquire skills and networks to help them develop successful partnerships.

CIELAP's conferences, held in 2002, 2004, 2005, and now 2008 as well as our reports on sustainability partnerships, have worked to pull together information about innovative and effective partnerships for others to learn from. You can find other CIELAP materials, including our previous conference proceedings, on our website at www.cielap.org.

Workshop Summary

Sixty people from governments, non government organizations, the private sector, academia and farms came together for a two-day workshop on November 13 and 14, 2008 in Ottawa.

Grant Caven and Anne Mitchell from CIELAP and Rachel McCormick from DFAIT introduced the workshop, providing some background to the P4S workshops and the CSD process.

Jean-Charles Le Valée, PhD gave the initial presentation on Resilient Agricultural Systems based on his work on Agriculture in Belize. His model shows that large scale global systems are more difficult to adapt to necessary changes than smaller grassroots systems. He concluded that policy should support change: encouraging local systems to develop and larger systems to adapt.

The workshop participants then heard presentations on the three workshop sub-themes: valuing landscape services; local food systems; and agricultural production systems.

Jamshed Merchant, ADM at AAFC, gave a lunch-time address that outlined his department's imperatives for agricultural and environmental policy. His discussion also highlighted the importance of partnerships.

After lunch the group broke into six multi-sector subgroups, two for each sub-theme, and then reported back to the larger group on key questions. The discussions were lively and the comments informative.

The facilitator reviewed the day and the workshop participants adjourned to a reception.

On day two the emphasis shifted to partnerships. Participants heard about the Environmental Farm Plan from a federal, provincial, organizational and farmer perspective. Participants also heard about the partnership between CIELAP and Fundación Ambio (Costa Rica) on waste, plastic and agricultural issues. Presenters provided the theory of partnerships, how policy could help partnerships, and how to make partnerships work.

The group then shifted gears to look at the question of "what policy instruments, programs, and processes need to be put in place for the development of a national vision and practices that foster resilient agricultural systems and advance sustainable development in Canada?"

Finally, the group touched on how to address the priority themes of the CSD over the next two years: Production and Consumption; and how we could continue the discussion about the CSD in Canada.

The workshop closed after the group had discussed ideas for how to move the workshop priorities forward.

Day #1 – November 13

Grant Caven, Chair of CIELAP's Board of Directors, welcomed everyone to CIELAP's 4th Partnering for Sustainability workshop: Achieving Resilient Agricultural Systems.

Anne Mitchell, CIELAP's Executive Director, welcomed everyone to the workshop. She introduced the Steering Committee and the CIELAP personnel who worked on the arrangements of the event. She thanked the sponsors and supporters of the workshop. She then provided some background for the Partnering for Sustainability events. CIELAP sees these events as an opportunity to benchmark Canada's progress towards sustainability. The first Partnering for Sustainability Conference was held in 2002 prior to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. After the 3rd event in 2005 CIELAP received funds from the Suncor Foundation to evaluate the events. As a result of this evaluation, CIELAP decided to focus them more closely on the priority agenda of the CSD process. Anne reminded everyone of the objectives for the two days: participants will share best practices, lessons learned, challenges, trends and community initiatives about the CSD themes; and participants will find out about partnerships and develop networks to help develop successful partnerships. Anne then introduced John Vincett, the workshop facilitator.

Rachel McCormick, Deputy Director in the Sustainable Development Division at Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), welcomed participants and provided greater context about the UN's Commission for Sustainable Development and how CIELAP's workshop linked with the CSD themes and process. Rachel informed participants that, since the World Summit in 2002, the CSD has focused on key sub-themes in a 2-year review/policy cycle. The current cycle is focused on Agriculture, Rural Development, Land, Drought, Desertification, and Africa. It is in its second year of the cycle, and is so focused on policy and implementation. Rachel highlighted how the CSD has recognized the value of partnerships for sustainable development.

Presentation and Discussion: Resilient agricultural systems
Presentation by Jean-Charles Le Valée, PhD (powerpoint presentation available from the CIELAP website)*

Jean-Charles presented the concept of resilience and Panarchy theory and its application to agricultural systems. Resilience refers to the capacity of a system to experience change while retaining essentially the same function, services, structure, feedbacks, and therefore identity. Jean-Charles provided a model, which showed that systems follow an adaptive cycle made up of four primary states: growth, conservation, release, and reorganization. In the process of following this cycle, systems can see increasing, decreasing, and exchanging economic, social, ecological, and absolute wealth. Agricultural systems also see increasing and decreasing connectivity or relationships between system elements as they move along the cycle.

It is important to note that agricultural systems are made up of systems of different sizes, each represented by an adaptive cycle. Smaller systems / adaptive cycles impact larger systems through Panarchy. Systems can sometimes have an abundance of one form of wealth (social, economic, or ecosystem) but at the expense of other forms of wealth, or of the wealth of smaller systems. These can undermine the resilience and absolute wealth of the entire system.

Resilience is not always positive. Jean-Charles discussed four undesirable situations that he referred to as pathological traps:

- Lock-in occurs when a situation is stuck in a pattern, and where there is little likelihood that change will happen to correct its instabilities, for instance when agricultural intensification masks the degradation of natural resources.
- Rigidity takes place when approaches do not consider contextual differences, such as the broad introduction of technology without considering regional or cultural factors.
- A structural trap occurs when forms of wealth are either not accessible or undervalued, for instance when valuable farmland is paved over, or when human labour or knowledge are under-used.
- The poverty trap takes place when wealth and connectivity are low and there are few inputs into the system.

Jean-Charles closed by calling for the further research to provide an adequate framework to explain food-based system dynamics and the relationships between systems. He also supported investments in productivity, sustainability and social protection as well as more effective resilient-sensitive food policies.

Question (to Jean-Charles): Can public policy itself be a "trap" (in the sense of resilience)
Answer: Absolutely, it can be, in such times policy can do more harm than good. Policies which support export-led agriculture while ignoring, or at the expense of, domestic agriculture systems will lead to increases in food insecurity.

Jean-Charles discussed the institutional challenges involved with fostering resilience for agricultural food systems and mentioned his efforts both in leading Canada's Food Security Bureau at AAFC, as well as collaborating with the city of Ottawa to create 'Ottawa Just Food', a municipal level grassroots organisation similar to a food policy council. Jean-Charles recommended that participants learn about and contact the Food Security Bureau, which has the role of monitoring Canada's Action Plan for Food Security (1998) (the plan is available at http://www4.agr.gc.ca/resources/prod/doc/misb/fsec-seca/pdf/action_en.pdf).

Audience comment: Contacting local MPs should be an "action item".

Question (to Jean-Charles): Is there a best "size" for government so that it can foster resilience? Schumacher spoke about how "small is beautiful". Is that the case in this situation?
Answer: Government size is not the most important aspect here. It is more relevant to focus on adaptive cycle resilience thresholds.

<u>Presentations and discussion:</u> Introduction to sub-themes and how these can contribute to resilient agricultural systems

<u>Presentation – Valuing landscape services</u>
Ian Campbell, AAFC-AAC – (powerpoint presentation available from the CIELAP website) *

<u>Questions for Ian</u>

What about those who are already supporting ecosystem goods & services (eg&s)?

- Conversion is a problem – those that are doing it already don't get paid
- It is a tough political question because we tend to want to see value for money (we don't want to pay for something that already exists or is already being provided)
- It becomes a question of equity. Are we rewarding bad practices? What is the minimum accepted stewardship practice?

What are auctions with regard to eg&s?

- Reverse auction: ask for a proposal from producers within the area; auction is a sealed bid
- Collect all offers from producers in the area and accept all offers in the lower end. There is motivation for producers to calculate and evaluate the true costs and how much compensation would make it really worth while.
- Australia has been doing this for awhile and the process is now being tested in Saskatchewan. One project has been on nesting success for ducks.
- Legal mechanism – easement, tends to be multi year (10-15 year) and in Australia they can be attached to a land title.

In terms of conversion and payment for conversion towards more ecological practices, is the government looking to services that consider land that they are already protecting?

- Federal gifts program – producers donate land easements to groups such as nature preserves to get tax benefits
- Quota/cap set when maintaining a certain level of greenbelt or land-based activity – can sell off or trade those rights to maintain ecological functions in that area
- Looking at other methods for future

What are the expectations of the Growing Forward program?

- Critical for multiple stakeholders to be involved
- Helping local leaders help local communities; helping people help themselves better; reaching out to local people to build a community
- Relationship between the Federal govt and local food systems? For this to work we need to design a program that will include networks of offices working in local areas across the country and form integrated partnerships
- Shelter belt (1930 Saskatchewan) - in this situation the community's level of engagement increased drastically in response to major crisis – directly contrasts the slow progression in the context of climate change. Neighbours no longer looked at each other as neighbour but competitor

What are the barriers?

- We just need to do it, and mobilize people
- The government will have public incentives with programs such as Growing Forward but it will never have the money to do everything
- We need to show people how to work, allow people to learn
- In 1930s the whole system fell apart. Now we need to help get the system get going again (empower people to do things for themselves)

Presentation – Local food systems

Mike Schreiner, Local Food Plus – (powerpoint presentation available from the CIELAP website)*

Questions for Mike

How do we make the local food movement more effective?

- This direction was initiated at the grassroots level
- To make it more effective and to have it reach up to 10% of the market we come in conflict with larger food organizations
- Areas that require change/support:
  - Organization – commodity-based and supported by government (both federal and provincial)
  - Changes in regulation – smart regulation that address the scale and needs of smaller farmers
  - Co-ops – external help
  - Financing
  - A broader recognition that local food is a valid way of feeding people in this country

What changes are going to be necessary to make breakthrough?

- Leverage points – need to talk about local food when we think about scaling up
- Major deals with conventional supply chains – it's a tough road to go down but it is starting to pay.
  - i.e. Cisco is starting to stock local sustainable products because there is demand.
  - Driven by leverage point – demand created and market is seeing this opportunity (the market is often ahead of regulations)
- Co-ops and grower associations are success stories
  - Norfolk, Ontario Corn-Fed Program
  - Holland Marsh (most of carrots grown in Country; highly competitive and farmers did not work together in the past; 35 growers have come together seated with money from greenbelt; success stories starting to happen because growers see opportunity that was not there before).
- LFP was asked to sit at the table with the Minister of Agriculture. This, in itself, is recognition on the part of government that there is something here that will be sustained and long-term. Some of the issues on the table are procurement
- Goal - maybe getting back to 60% of the market (that would be billions of $). The interest is there and many people are forcing it on the agenda.

What are your feelings on regulations stifling innovation with regard to artisan cheeses?

- Milk marketing board has been somewhat successful at preserving small farms but restrictions have stifled innovation and made it impossible for artisan cheese to get off the ground.
- Supply management system is the original process in province.
- There are some problems around innovation – i.e. organic milk (significant premiums) but it has found its way
- We need to retain the system but allow a cooling-off period so that people can engage in other areas i.e. organic and artisan cheese
- For artisan cheese – we need to get to a level of innovation that would allow the system to work while strengthening it
- The supply management system needs to catch up with world we live in (will take a while due to entrenchment of the system and the stake farmers currently have in it)
- We have a much more segmented marketplace than ever before. There is a lot of room for hope.

How are global food systems related to local food barriers and local food developments?

- Small farmers make up 60-80% of population globally (different from Canada)
- People who push against imports are small farmers and women – livelihood and survival are factors
- So many people make their livelihoods on small local farms
- 900 million people are not benefitting from the current system (starving)
- How do we talk about panarchy in terms of relating local and global food system and how do we participate in supporting aid and growth?
- A big criticism of local food is that it impedes small farmer access in the developing world
    - However, international farmers that are trying to access our markets tend not to be small – they are agribusiness
    - The questions is – how do we shift production so that is profitable for Ontario farmers without hurting global farmers?
- We export way more pork then we consume. This has not benefited pork producers. A lot of that export market has dried up or is at such low prices that is no longer economically viable
- There is also a great redundancy in trade systems
    - Eg. Apples imported to Canada from Washington and China and Canadian apples sold to England
- In Canada processing is dying. There are regulatory complaints and concerns for food safety. We need safety but there is a lack of regulatory relevance for small-scale farms
- How do we move forward to a better distributive system?
    - Need to get a better deal for famers and shorter food chains
    - Need smart regulations. They are currently written for large operations (eg. 1 person operation, regulations required male and female washroom). Need to be able to adjust to scale.
- The onus on Ontario processors
    - Things have changed and not all processors have kept up

    - The days of producing cheap are over – this approach does not include externalities and makes it hard to compete
    - Producers can now compete on quality – have to get regulatory barriers removed so that the high quality producers can succeed.
- Impact of climate change
    - Develop policies that will bring resilience to farms
    - Cheaper sources of alternative energy at farm level
- Trade:
    - There is an increasing demand for Local
    - A shift is happening. Larger systems are meeting their point of release (resilience model) and losing money.

Presentation - Agricultural production systems

Dale Petrie, Ontario Soybean Growers (powerpoint presentation available from the CIELAP website) *

Soybean crops occupy three million acres of land in Canada; approximately 75% of which is in Ontario. The OSG encourages crop rotation among soy, wheat, and corn to improve soil quality, reduce insect and disease pressure, spread risk, reduce weed resistance, and reduce soil erosion. They support four different markets: GM crush (15,000 farms), non-GM identity preserved (4,000 farms); non-GM crush (850 farms); and non-GM organic (150 farms). Each of these markets has been established to meet different consumer demands (for instance demand from Japan for organic non-GM soyfoods). The OSG example demonstrates that there are many approaches to advancing sustainability and that different production methods can co-exist.

Comment from Jean-Charles: A great example of ensuring resilience is crop rotation - if you don't rotate your crops you will have release and crop loss. Alternative markets ensure conservation to create sustainability

Questions for Dale

Is there an opportunity for organic soybeans to have more prominence in the market?

- A lot of Ontario soybeans are organic and are processed into food products
- Soybeans are the largest crop in Ontario

Are energy inputs truly higher with organic growing?

- Tilling may be higher but energy overall may be lower
- Corn-soy rotation may make a difference – The Keystone study looks solely at soybeans (see slideshow)
    - Corn uses a lot of nitrogen – success of no till corn would be harder then no till soybeans
    - May be different with whole system (corn-wheat-soy)

Other thoughts

- It all comes down to money – we are prepared to grow and deliver for those who want our goods and we cannot forget that farming is a business

- Cheaper to no till and to rotate crops is economically efficient – makes more economic sense

Lunch Presentation
Jamshed Merchant, AAFC – (powerpoint presentation available from the CIELAP website) *

Day 1 Case study discussions:

Valuing landscape services Group 1:

Case study used to spark discussion: pilot project in Huron county (brought forward by Susanna Reid and Kate Monk). Approach – marrying ecology, environment & economy. It is different depending on what sphere you enter from. Norfolk county values land from farmer's perspective.

Elements that foster resilience and bring us towards sustainable development:

- Economic development; ecosystems that integrate more land into a natural state
- Funding is the elephant in the room (how do you pay?)
- Need to figure out how to integrate the spheres (environment, economy, society)
- Education – need to let people understand that there is a problem as well as possible solutions
- Looking for opportunities to pay for EG&S
- Providing farmers with an income for retiring land along riparian corridors
- Enhancing ecosystems along riparian corridors
- Developing economic opportunities around natural capital

How do we build on these practices?

- Looking at opportunities through a "PEGS" lens (Payment for Ecological Goods and Services)
- Focus on best bets – e.g. municipal wellhead areas and provincially significant wetlands created through PEGS-like tools
- Recognizing existing PEGS efforts – e.g. Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP)
- New revenue source through charging through parklands
- Partnerships – NCC (Nature Conservancy of Canada) and DU (Ducks Unlimited) – existing organizations may have an interest and could perhaps be good partners for protecting natural heritage areas

Valuing landscape services Group 2:

Case Study used to spark discussion: Agriculture and Food Council of Alberta (brought forward by Miriam Esquitín). The AFCA doesn't have a program in place to pay farmers but they have started a dialogue. They are exploring tools such as voluntary agreements and market-based instruments such as easements and held a public consultation last year to explore these options. There was a lot of interest but not much awareness. In Alberta easements will be supported by the provincial government.

Elements that foster resilience and bring us towards sustainable development:

- A diversity of tactics (including awards)
- Long-term funding (many pilot projects depend on a secure source of funds)
- An institutional framework
- Multi-lateral commitment from stakeholders
- Capacity-building (community, education, technology, research)
- Define specifics of the program
- Minimum standards (what do we want to target, at what level – e.g. water quality; forest cover)
- Enforcement
- Adaptive regulations
- Recognition of best management practices; bring other landowners on board.

How do we build on these practices?

- Do we need more pilot projects or do we start getting them institutionalized?
- Trial and error needed, demonstrating best practices
- On-farm research (bring farmers on board for research, monitoring, etc…)
- Communication and awareness
- Farm leadership – if people at the grassroots support these practices, policy makers will eventually. If we move the constituency, we will move government
- Feedback from farmers on-the-ground
- Bundling services – focus on key services, reduce complexity
- Involve all stakeholders
- Strategic targeting
- Determine benchmarks (basic levels), goals, timelines
- Need to understand how eg&s pilot projects or institutional projects are contingent on other laws such as those that protect species at risk. Need to integrate with other laws

Question: How do we decide on what species should be present? Those who were around 50 years? Those who were around 100 years?

Answer: Minimum standards should be expressed to reward those who are doing right thing rather than wrong thing (due diligence). How would we put these criteria into place?

Local food systems group 1:

Case study used to spark discussion: New Brunswick apple farm (brought forward by Tom Beach, AIC). Four families came together and developed a market structure, diversified, and developed a wider range of vegetables in addition to apples. They worked with other producers to access large distributor market (Sobeys). These players brought different strengths and strategies together; they diversified their strategies to access funds. They also had down-time that allowed them to be creative, to not get burned-out, and to take advantage of granting cycles.

Elements that foster resilience and bring us towards sustainable development:

- Diversity (farm gate, various products)
- Other producers were able to deal with larger distributors (3 big ones)

How do we build on these practices?

- Regulation – some dumb, some smart. Need to regulate and establish programs better with the understanding that different sizes need different capacity, not 1-size fits all.
- Stakeholder engagement (so many different levels of engagement)
- Dealing with waste (by-product) – what happens when you have waste issues? Is there a way the waste can be used in the community? (eg. compost waste in city)
- Distribution and transportation capacity – to get small producers to network with urban counterparts. In addition to finding the contact info for the chef or supermarket distributors need to ensure that they can get their products to the purchasers in a timely manner. This takes networks.

Local food systems group 2:

Case study used to spark discussion: idea of establishing a sustainable and resilient "urban" agricultural system within the context of the Nation's Capital Greenbelt (brought forward by Cynthia Levesque). The Greenbelt is now down to 62 landowners (from 1000). What should be done?

Elements that foster resilience and bring us towards sustainable development:

- Moving to longer-term leases – farmers would prefer a longer-term lease to reinvest.
- Market development to increase demand (supply will follow).
- Links with professional (chefs) and amateur consumers. If you work with professionals the work gets popular and trickles down. A critical shift happens when women have their first child. This is a niche opportunity.
- Communication among multiple stakeholders (multi-stakeholder co-ops)
- Diverse variety of crops
- Ownership by local farmers / producers / community of processing infrastructure

How do we build on these practices?

- Land trusts – agricultural context (easements)
- Multiple stakeholders to get together
- Infrastructure to allow dialogue to take place
- Ownership by local farmers is extremely important. Need to own land to grow diverse crops.
- Competing against high-value markets with external inputs; access to land very important.
- Farmers don't eat their own food. They tend to have a suburban lifestyle. Teach farmers how to grow their own food first and then it'll trickle down. (There was some debate about whether this is possible because at the end of the day farmers are exhausted. This may relate to how food and production are viewed).
- Municipal planning needs to involve health, environment, land use. When a master plan is developed ecological values should be put in. E.g. if a conservation easement is put in place the municipality resists using money that has been taken out of the tax base. This use of funds should be built into a master plan.
- Agriculture representatives need to be reintroduced. Telephone services just don't work – a rep needs to understand the community.

- Business advisory services to support collective local food businesses (from governments, lending institutions) – Quebec is an example
- Tax structure reform – structure is key point for changes. If you get a tax incentive you're still in control.
- Payment for ecosystem gods & services
- Tax benefits for buying into co-operatives; useful to develop networks and cooperative management. Co-ops, which can perform marketing, can remove responsibility from individual farms. Co-ops can emerge into larger orgs or they can remain local.
- Need specialized business advisory services to help people come together to form co-ops. These services need to be close to where people are.

Agricultural production systems group 1:

Case study used to spark discussion: Canadian Organic Growers' Growing Up Organic (brought forward by Laura Telford).

Elements that foster resilience and bring us towards sustainable development:

- Agreed that healthy soils, biodiversity, organic matter help us foster resilience; need to bring profit back to the farm; need to help organic growers meet demand.

Other points brought forward:

- Labour resources
- Education is important to address the urban / rural disconnect
- Coexistence of production systems: consumer choice
- Contribution of approaches like organic, supply management to farm profitability: what can be expanded? What are the implications?

The group got stuck on the relative merits of different production systems. There is a need to better understand what environmental sustainability means, without even bringing in social or economic.

How do we build on these practices?

Agreed:

- Need to build back extension capacity and technical assistance
- Good to use education to reconnect urbanites to food production
- Farm tours / exchanges needed

Other points brought forward:

- Soil quality improvement
- Use education to reconnect urbanites to food production
- Need to have a higher calibre of debate
- Need better public policy related to food production
- 'Farmers feed cities' campaigns
- Problem not to be underestimated!

Agricultural production systems group 2:

Case-study used to spark discussion: from Northern Malawi (brought forward by Kenton Lobe, Canadian Foodgrains Bank). There was a debate about soil fertility and yields. Fertilizers were imported. Malawi exports food. Discussions about production systems became discussions about food systems. They looked at agri-ecological processes through an ecosystem lens. They brought together a wide range of stakeholders – people from the UN, farmers. They discussed how to improve soil health. They looked at bringing in seeds that have been conventionally improved, bringing in legumes to fix nitrogen, and other approaches.

Elements that foster resilience and bring us towards sustainable development:

- Access to external knowledge in addition to local knowledge (need both)
- Simple solutions that incorporate local / traditional knowledge to foster innovation
- Reduce dependence on external inputs (ie. petroleum-based fertilizers or non-renewables)
- Community-level support (ie. seed banks) and collaboration
- Renewable seed source
- Continuous evaluation
- Experimentation – big plots, baby plots, sharing of what's working (what is seeing best improvement)
- Strong network of social ties
- Agreements from the beginning and understanding of collaboration and competition and ongoing reflection

How do we build on these practices?

- Develop mechanism for technology transfer while integrating local knowledge
- Develop communication pathways - South-North, North-South, and South-South transfer of knowledge
- Focus on existing wealth; build on what already exists in community; acknowledge wealth that already exists; develop ownership
- Continuing awareness-building; building social cohesion
- Involve all key stakeholders

Closing thoughts from Jean-Charles to bring us back to the model:
We have been talking about resilience, adaptive cycles, how they emerge and how they evolve. The system is evolving; we need to increase connectivity. Harms to food systems are traps. We need to be awareness of the issues and build resilience into discussions. We need to have resilience-sensitive policy-building. We're all participants in the food system at different levels. As a society we need to know what our development goals are (e.g. address obesity). How do we define our goals? What are our social outcomes? Different ideologies come at it from different perspectives. We need a national debate to determine our end goal. This discussion feeds in; we need informed policy-makers and decision-makers. We need to help them fulfill the moral obligations that they have been asked to pursue. We need to address sustainability of incomes; gender division; age of farmers; farmer incomes;

A word from John, our facilitator: Thanks for the tremendous effort. If everyone is a speaker and everyone is a listener we have a good chance of moving forward.

Day #2 – November 14

Summary of Day 1
John Vincett, workshop facilitator

- On Day 1 the Model for Resilience was put forward and advanced
- It became clear that the model could be helpful in providing some general direction to how policy-makers might be able to build in the flexibility that is essential to ensure that broadly effective behaviour can be rewarded and ineffective behaviour can be modified. It is quite the challenge to answer the questions of 'how' and 'when' in a cyclical process that is subject to numerous external forces.
- A point that emerged in the discussion is that the model and its implications need to be more broadly understood along the value chain from production to consumption, and including policy making.
- Our second segment introduced three important sub-themes: valuing landscape services, local food systems, and agricultural production systems. It became clear during this session that there are differences in approach that could provoke friction between large scale and small scale producers. The idea that a number of different streams of production for soybeans could co-exist within the same trade association was encouraging and a sense that differentiation could become an important response to public demands for different types of foodstreams. Branding and marketing the difference as a positive element demonstrated a maturing response to consumer demand, and perhaps an increasing sense that there is room for these specialty streams, which are becoming increasingly mainstream in response to consumer acceptance.
- Policies, we learned, are becoming more flexible to respond to changing production and market situations – but it was acknowledged that it is hard to keep up and perhaps the biggest challenge for policy makers is to understand the balance between 'memory' and 'revolt' (see resilience model) both in consulting on policy modification and in designing new paths forward.
- Jamshed Merchant helpfully outlined his own department's policy development procedures and driving imperatives. The word that he left resonating in my head was 'partnerships' and the synergistic and motivating forces they engender.
- In the afternoon you had a chance to share case studies. My sense was that each table had significant insights to occupy a day of discussion and that interaction was continued during the reception in the evening.
- Bludgeoned into addressing questions, participants worked hard and arrived at a number of interesting conclusions in the answers to questions 1 and 2 yesterday, which asked participants to identify key elements that foster resilience and contribute to sustainability.
- In looking over the presentations it was clear that three themes were present in all of the presentations as essential elements:
    1) The importance of **partnerships**, which almost always involves collaboration, information sharing, technologies, goal setting, implementation
    2) The need for many aspects of **education**, whether mutual assistance within groups or consumer education, and former agricultural extension services, which provided a bridge to share community wisdom and best practices and provided an important link to academic and other external information.

3) **Systemic innovation, including policy dimensions.** These include access to land: tenure, ownership, and stewardship. It also includes funding mechanisms of various sorts through market derived pricing systems and various interventions through the tax systems, policy innovation, and planning processes. This involves incorporating flexibility so that the broad concepts can be applied to local situations in ways that make sense to support both innovation and properly functioning systems. This notion also encompassed the architecture that supports agriculture, including distribution, transportation, and marketing systems; as well as integrated local planning to support and enhance local economies. Minimum standards and adaptive technologies were seen to strengthen this infrastructure and enhance the cycle – not inadvertently contribute to the dissipative tendencies described in the model.

- A number of sub themes also emerged including the importance of diversity.

Participant reflections and key insights from Day 1

Need to bring people together

- LFP is trying to achieve a standard but at the same time soybeans are mostly GM
- There is a need to assist in bridging the cultural urban-rural divide (translating between those who are buying and those who are making food).
- How much should we tell people about the importance of purchasing food grown in a particular way?

Need regulation and regular review

- The US Farm Bill is a mess but having a document that has to go through congress every 6 years for a review forces the issues to come to the awareness of the government and public and it creates rural awareness.
- Canada may want to adopt a bill that has built-in complexities and can be reviewed to bring greater awareness to agricultural issues.

Royal winter agricultural fair

- This event only takes place in Toronto
- It has become increasingly more difficulty to exhibit in the fair (e.g. livestock)
- The fair presents an opportunity to involve urban kids in a rural environment. This could be made a requirement for urban schools.

Agriculture is a big tent

- There is room for everyone as long as we work together
- We need to work together to rebuild our food and agriculture systems
- Cities provide some support for agriculture (community gardens and farmers markets). We need to build on that (we are all just a couple of generations away from the land)

Stewardship council

- This model has good payback
- The federal government may want to implement it in the context of local food

Dialogue between consumers and producers

- Dialogue and tradeoffs are necessary
- We need to educate each other with our knowledge

<u>Presentation and discussion:</u> Environmental Farm Plan

Presentation by:
Micheline Begin, Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA)
John FitzGibbon, Ontario Farm Environment Coalition (OFEC)
Maxine Kingston, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)
Paul Smith, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
(powerpoint presentations available from the CIELAP website)*

The Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) began in Ontario in 1990 and, by 2005, was expanded to become a national program. The EFP begins with a 2-day workshop at no cost to farmers. Farmers are given a workbook that they use to fill in and monitor their environmental performance. The workbook is kept completely confidential (even in a legal case). The farmer uses the workbook to identify needed improvements needed. The farmer then develops an action plan for improvements and has it peer reviewed. Once the plan has been reviewed the farmer can apply for funding to make the improvements. Farmer representatives are available during the process to support farmers in filling out the forms and participate in the program.

Three main partners contribute to the program: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) at the federal level; Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) at the provincial level; and Ontario Farm Environment Coalition (OFEC). AAFC provides funding for education, cost-sharing & technical assistance and plays a national coordination role. OMAFRA provides technical expertise, training, publications, and coordination. OFEC provides policy direction, industry support, and program delivery. The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) provides farmer representatives and other support for on-the-ground program delivery.

OFEC is not a legal entity and has few resources. It relies on its partners who support the program for space, human resources, communications, and other program needs (University of Guelph, Federation of Agriculture, OSCIA).

Key points:

- The EFP has been so successful because it has been developed by farmers for farmers.
- It has seen great success: 12,000 businesses have gone through EFP (¼ of province farming); a high percentage of farmers (¾) follow through and get cost share.
- An important learning is that partnerships take time (the EFP started in 1990 in Ontario and is still working through its challenges). Consensus is not easily won and people get impatient but the efforts pay off. It takes a lot of people to be involved.

There are many principles behind partnerships

- Autonomy – people have a role in making up the rules they live by
- Welfare – and building quality of life
- Justice – there should be an equitable distribution. In the case of the EFP the farmer puts in labour and time and the government puts in technical support.

- The fundamental principals must be sound for partnership to work
- Trust and communication are key.
- Partnership requires that partners choose to use their power together.
- You can rarely gain consensus but need to have consent – willing to go down the road together and trust each other.

Question & Answer Session:

How can stakeholders leverage partnerships to change public policy?

- Example: In mid-90s OFEC developed a model municipal by-law for nutrient management. This by-law got taken on by some municipalities but many did not want large livestock operations and so it created a patchwork of regulations across the province. Stakeholders sat down and agreed on the need for provincial legislation and standards.

You mentioned that 45% of farmers are continuing in EFP; are there reasons that farmers are not continuing in the program? Is there monitoring in place to measure the impact of the EFP? What does the future hold for maintaining and improving Growing Forward?

- Statistics – 66% of EFP participants have continued to be part of program and are encouraged to come back for an update (every five years is recommended).
- Monitoring – the government is charting performance and progress, is extrapolating from scientific studies, and is looking for best management practices.
- Need to realize that farmers are not in the environmental protection business but economic development business. Farmers need to make money, while Environment Canada is largely an environmental monitor. There are many different interests involved.

Could the EFP Model be delivered to other sectors?

- Other similar systems have adopted this model, such as On Farm Food Safety delivered by commodity-specific organizations.
- They have lacked a broad coalition to advance them, however.

<u>Presentation and discussion:</u> International Partnerships

Presentation by:
Anne Mitchell, CIELAP
Roxana Salazar, Fundación Ambio (Costa Rica)

Anne Mitchell mentioned some of CIELAP's previous work on partnerships, which can be downloaded from the CIELAP website – www.cielap.org. Trust, equality, shared responsibility, shared development of goals and objectives, and open communication have been highlighted as essential for successful partnerships. A partnership is like a covenant – you don't abandon it when the going gets tough. However, there does need to be a mechanism to end a partnership rather than just let it fizzle out.

CIELAP and its Costa Rican partner, Fundación Ambio, discussed some of the lessons learned from their partnership: partnerships take a lot of energy and time to develop; partnerships need to

be sustained; funding needs to be sustained; relationships need to be sustained. If there is a break in the relationship or the funding, the partnership will be set back.

CIELAP also commented on the opportunity that the new Federal Sustainable Development Act could provide. The government will need help to determine goals, objectives and priorities. This Act can be accessed at http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/ShowTdm/cs/F-8.6//en/en.

Comments from participants:

- Partnerships are a subsidiary body of each of the partners' operations. Each partner needs to maintain its independent nature and use the partnership to achieve its own needs. A partnership needs to make sense for each partner.
- People are at the centre of partnerships. The partnerships therefore need to accommodate for change and there needs to be succession planning.

Presentation and discussion: About Partnerships

Presentation by:
Anne Mitchell and Carolyn Webb, CIELAP – (powerpoint presentation available from the CIELAP website)*

Case study discussions:

Agricultural production systems group 1:

What policy instruments, programs, and processes need to be put in place?

Points the group agreed upon:

- Curriculum and education are needed
- Extension staff should be re-implemented

Other points brought forward:

- Labelling
- Traceability
- More transparency in food safety
- Adequate consumer choice

Agricultural production systems group 2:

What policy instruments, programs, and processes need to be put in place?

- Way to-ordinate policymaking with a holistic approach (e.g. environmental, food, energy, water, biodiversity, etc…)
- Long term monitoring programs to understand long term effects to inform policy in future
- Appropriate policy framework for small-medium scale businesses (at all levels of government, i.e. municipal, provincial)
- Framework that incorporates flexibility and addresses disconnect between small and large scale producers.
- Review of disincentives that discourage value chain development

- Investments in renewables
- Supportive municipal policies for local markets and local procurement
- Involve local businesses and private sector; perhaps through partnership
- Community level projects – ie. community kitchens and gardens;
- Raising public awareness around food culture
- Policy that protects prime agricultural land, particularly from urban sprawl
- Support for young farmers
- Support for transition to more sustainable practices (ecologically, environmentally & socially)
- Publicly funded research including analysis of policy impacts
- Agreement about what economic, environmental and social sustainability means (need to include clearly defined indictors, criteria and measurable goals)
- Integrate RESILIENCE into the debate

Valuing landscape services group 1:

What policy instruments, programs, and processes need to be put in place?

- Way to bridge economic and ecological paradigms
- Market forces to engage eg&s
- Revisit the GDP vs. other indicators e.g. Ecological footprint / GPI
- Using tax incentive programs such as Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program. Can use existing programs to deliver new programs and reduce admin work.
- Long term policy for paying for ecological functions. Need to determine that we will end up with a net benefit.
- Tool to bring into civil society; measure progress for the larger sustainability system.
- Policy dialogue that achieves sustainable paradigms
- Identify programs that already have eg&s component
- Dialogue re: consumption / sufficiency

Valuing landscape services group 2:

What policy instruments, programs, and processes need to be put in place?

- More pilots
- Diversity of instruments
- Collect the experiences to have a memory and share with other groups or countries
- School curriculum (mandatory) should focus on local ecology of the region
- Define clearly desirable EG&S
- A lot more education and awareness (there are currently more questions then answers)
- Clear value mechanism
- Market should operate with accountability and transparency
- Willingness to pay and sell – need to identify who is the buyer (seller (farmer) will remain the same)
- Clear market rules for access
- Identify what is the govt role at each level – will it allow markets to thrive and what is the level of involvement?

- Distribute the risk – there is room for partnership
- Question is there more private benefit – then maybe more private entities buying/supporting?

Local food systems group 1:

What policy instruments, programs, and processes need to be put in place?

- **At the government level**: providing regulation, funding, experts, research and oversight, facilitating public private partnerships, local procurement
- **At the producer level:** Innovation and greater control
- Stakeholders consultation (6 months to 1 year) – create programs / policy / initiatives
- Revisit polices to ensure that they are efficient to needs of consumption and productions (regular review – perhaps every 5 years)
- Appropriate legal instruments to help small producers access large chains and not to be taken advantage of – protect small consumers and help with contracts with large buyers
- Co-operation, networks (including between producers and consumers)
- Knowledge
    - Local is based on trust and knowing where and who your food comes from
    - About the social benefits local food brings to society at large
- Cost pricing based on carbon footprint – need to take into account price externalities in the product
- Rural Maintenance of farms for cultural, not just production, value. Could establish national agricultural parks.

Local food systems group 2:

What policy instruments, programs, and processes need to be put in place?

- Revise & create policies & regulations that respond to medium and small-scale farms ("scaled" policies)
- Infrastructure spending – local food/farming
- Local food co-coordinators at municipal level
- Sustainability planning around food/economic development, planning & health (people, resources to implement)
- Local food procurement policies
- National food policy (& local). Many different departments need to be involved (Environment, AAFC, Health, National security, Indian Affairs, Revenue Canada, Fisheries and Oceans). A new government structure could oversee this and collaborate to bring together different ministries).
- Society arm – perhaps a national round table on food (on the ground)
- Link food issues to all level of government – including land use issues and procurement

Closing Discussion:

- For any solution to work there must be something in it for government and it must meet their ideological inclinations. Otherwise the government will do the absolute minimum. Any solution must also be doable over the short term (five years).
- Likely need to link to food, health and economy to get the government's attention.

- Should get people involved in the food system – everybody eats.
- Link with Food Secure Canada – goal is a national food policy in Canada.
- We need to start at the community level. Change the community, community changes the culture, and culture changes the government.
- The culture of young farmers needs to pick on these values
- There are few alternative agriculture programs and there is a need for education. Schools do not teach alternative agricultural economics; diversity of education.
- Need to collect case studies and make them better known

To do list – moving forward:

- Get the Prime Minister involved! Need an ideological fit; a real benefit; a political benefit; public support. The issue needs to be effectively marketed; it must demonstrate public benefit; it needs to show results; it should link to interest – economy & food health / nutrition, health care costs. One approach - deliver good high quality food to 24 Sussex! (PM's house).
- Act on opportunity for generational change. Need alternative agriculture programs (to help change the culture).
- Increase involvement in CSD – production & consumption
- Continue discussion on CIELAP wiki
- Gather case studies; send to CIELAP
- Continue to be involved in a range of networks
- Broaden the market for local food – beyond upper middle-class urbanites
- Build a bigger tent; mainstream it
- Look at the international context (also farmers of the south)
- Start from scratch – and look at difference from existing policy directions
- Outline connection between resilience and sustainable agriculture – write a paper, collect case studies; use as a lobby tool

Next Steps – for CIELAP:

- CIELAP will prepare draft proceedings;
- Draft proceedings will be circulated to participants for comment; (before the end of December)
- Final proceedings will be distributed to participants and put on CIELAP's website; (by end of January)
- CIELAP will identify its top three priorities for moving forward and circulate to participants. (January)

* Powerpoint presentations are available from the CIELAP website: http://www.cielap.org/ResilientAgSystems_ProceedingsPresentations.php

Thank You

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