

**Travel Support for the 2003 Open Meeting of the Human
Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Research
Community (APN 2003-14)**

Project Leader:

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APN funding:

US\$ 33,000

Participating countries:

Participants from the following countries were funded: China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines and Viet Nam.

A representative of the APN, Mr. Martin Rice (Programme Manager, APN Secretariat), was funded by APN directly.

Brief introduction and background:

The 2003 Open Meeting was the fifth to be held. The Open Meetings have consistently served as important vehicles to stimulate the networks in the regions where the meetings have been held. The Third Open Meeting, held in Shonan Village, Japan in 1999, was very successful at attracting (with APN support) scholars from the Asia-Pacific region and was, therefore, a major driver in building-up and strengthening the regional and national Human Dimensions networks. As a result, it was felt to be particularly important to ensure participation of Asia-Pacific scholars, both to ensure continuity, and because a major function of the Open Meetings is to bring together researchers and younger scholars from developing countries and from USA and Europe, who otherwise would not be able to participate in a major international conference along with senior scientists. As a result, the 2003 Open Meeting organizers raised close to two hundred thousand dollars (US\$ 200,000) in travel fellowships for such scholars.

Outline of activities conducted:

The primary activity was the Open Meeting itself, which convened more than 300 researchers from around the world. The meeting was structured as a series of plenary and panel presentations. In addition, there were numerous lunch-time sessions and ample opportunities for networking during the opening reception, the banquet, and informal lunches and dinners among participants.

Outcomes and products:

The major outcomes were as follows:

- A consolidation of the field of human dimensions research under the theme “Taking Stock and Moving Forward”;
- One hundred and twenty papers and posters available for download from the conference website: <<http://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/openmeeting/>>;
- A summary report of the plenary sessions and selected panels, also available from the website;
- A strengthening of the research community with active participation of many Asian researchers, including several young researchers who participated in the one-day Young Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (HDGEC)

- Researchers meeting prior to the conference; and
- At least one APN-funded researcher has, on the basis of her participation, been asked to submit an article for the International Human Dimensions Programme (IHDP) Update newsletter.

Future directions and follow-up work:

Plans are already underway for the 2005 Open Meeting. There will also be many additional follow-up activities among APN-funded participants (related to contacts they made at the Open Meeting).