

Summary of the 3rd DKN Future Earth (7.11.2013) meeting

- together with German Scientific Committee members of Global Change Programs to discuss the current status of transition to Future Earth -

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PLEASE NOTE: *This is only a summary of the discussions and reflects not opinions or recommendations of DKN Future Earth.*

Following presentations about the current status of Global Change Programs, its core projects and GWSP concerning the transition to Future Earth, the meeting participants discussed the Future Earth research concept, the global coordination effort and funding issues. The discussion items could be summarized as follows.

1. What is still needed in general

- The definition in detail of what “Co-Design” means and who stakeholders are to avoid misunderstandings. Because “Co-Design” means on the one hand to bring together different scientific disciplines and on the other hand to bring together stakeholder opinions in the scientific process (in partnership relations).
- In regard to transformation: As strong management and governing of research about transformations seems to be the wrong concept, a well defined starting point is needed. On the basis of the starting point research activities can be formulated and all further activities should be developed in an open process (influenced by different learning stages). However, for this motivated people are needed as well as a strong engagement to overcome key barriers.
- Linkages to data and information need to be newly development and access to data, information/knowledge and models need to be improved (e.g. DFG projects can keep data for 7 years); more openness is needed.
- Improve/establish communication links between science and politics and between ministries.
- Concerning education: incentives and evaluation systems are needed.

2. What is still needed on a project level

- Perhaps a complete change of current structures would be helpful to generate new partnerships, as there would be a rethinking of what is really needed.
- Cluster of projects are welcome in Future Earth, but not yet developed.
- Disciplinary (basic) science remains essential but needs communicators and contextualisation in Future Earth.
- Development of shared/common language is essential.
- Social science capacity building is needed.
- Stakeholder involvement:
 - Engage in mutual learning environment, build trust not a negotiation.
 - But: Not every research approach needs stakeholders (added value!)
 - Policy maker but not lobby politics is needed
 - Political processes differ on the globe, how do deal with it, is essential for Future Earth.
 - Should be taken serious. So stakeholders should be involved from the beginning of a project. The involvement of stakeholders may need specific activities in core projects with support from experienced people.
- Facilitation is needed with focus on discussion of problems/issues.
- Longer project times needed / long perspective needed.
- Funding landscape has to be developed for instance to combine research programs that are funded by different organisations (e.g. EU funding with international (not European) funding, or also national research programs with international funding).
- Regional nodes are desirable in Future Earth.
- Metrics of success in Future Earth need to be developed.

3. Recommendations in general

- Increase awareness of Future Earth through fora to exchange information among science, stakeholders, politics without the aim/need to reach consensus.
- Engagement of interested scientists and stakeholders is necessary, but no lobbying!

4. Remaining open questions

- How to collaborate during the research process?
 - by interface programs?
 - by professional communicator?
- Does a global structure necessarily answer regional questions? Unknown: how regional will Future Earth be?
- How can global system research better connected to global development (development takes rather part in regions)?
- Can research results directly be connected with development (example of forest mapping in Russia)?
- How to connect global research and global development in Future Earth?
- Can Future Earth support the scientific basis of SDGs?
 - SDGs are system wide
 - SDGs connect politics and science

- What about social scientists (Willingness to do that kind of research? Do we have enough interested social scientists? Can they respond to such an agenda?) Do we have the right framing for the engagement of social scientists?
- Many open questions regarding funding, governance, procedures etc. are still remaining (that produces planning insecurity).

5. Possible next activities on a national level

- Scoping workshops after the “German Future Earth Summit”
- Scoping workshops together with stakeholders