

***2003 Annual Report of the
Human Dimensions of Global Change Specialty Group
of the Association of American Geographers***

I. Mission Statement (no change)

The HDGC Specialty Group seeks to promote communication and interaction among geographers interested in the human dimensions of global environmental change, and to enhance the contributions of geographers to human dimensions of global change research.

II. 2001-2002 Dues (no change)

Regular Members: \$5.00; Students: \$1.00

III. Board of Directors

Chair

Susanne Moser, Ph.D.,
Union of Concerned Scientists (until 6/30/03)
National Center for Atmospheric Research (as of 9/1/03)
smoser@ucsusa.org

Secretary-Treasurer (Chair-elect)

Kirstin Dow, Ph.D.
Stockholm Environment Institute, on leave from University of South Carolina
kirstin.dow@sei.se

Directors

Jennifer L. DeHart, Ph.D.
Allegheny College
jdehart@allegheny.edu

Brent Yarnal, Ph.D.
Pennsylvania State University
alibar@essc.psu.edu

Student Director

Outgoing: Rob Neff
Pennsylvania State University
rjn3@psu.edu

Elected as of 3/03: Shannon Donnelly
Indiana University
sdonnell@indiana.edu

Webmaster

Rob Neff
Pennsylvania State University
rjn3@psu.edu

Newsletter Editor

Susanne Moser, Ph.D.,
Union of Concerned Scientists
smoser@ucsusa.org

IV. Accomplishments, Activities Scheduled, Future Plans and Directions

Newsletter

The HDGC Newsletter (published two or three times a year) is edited by SG Chair, Susi Moser. Her first newsletter was sent out in the Fall of 2002 and a second just prior to the Annual Meeting in New Orleans. (Both are attached.) Since the newsletter is only published electronically, no cost is incurred in its publication. The current circulation of the newsletter is 163, with about a dozen of the recipients located overseas. The newsletter is available online at the HDGC website, which is hosted by <http://www.essc.psu.edu/hdgc/>.

Student Paper Award

No competitions was held this year.

2003 Annual Meeting

At this year's annual meeting, the Specialty Group was represented as cosponsor of 12 sessions. Lead sessions showcasing Human Dimensions research included a double session on the HERO Project, a session on the intersection of hazards and global change, three sessions on development and security issues related to global change, another on the communication of climate information, and other sessions on the intersection of human-dimensions research and political ecology and biocomplexity. Finally, there was a panel discussion -- featuring young scholars -- on the next 10 years of geographic human-dimensions research. Beyond the co-sponsored sessions, there was also a large number of human-dimensions related papers and sessions that illustrated the far-reaching interests of SG members.

A planned field trip deep into coastal Louisiana drew significant interest from members but regrettably had to be cancelled at the last minute due to lack of planning and follow-through of a volunteer organizer from the University of New Orleans.

2003 Business Meeting

The Business Meeting was held on March 6, 2003 in New Orleans with at least 18 members in attendance. After distribution and formal acceptance of last year's business meeting minutes, the agenda listed the following discussion items:

1. Election of New Student Board Member
2. SG Budget Status Update
3. Student and Young Scholar Travel Support from SG
 - i. In general
 - ii. Shanghai and Montreal conferences
4. Plans for AAG Centennial
5. Plans for HDGC Science Community's Open Meeting in Montreal
6. Website Needs
7. Announcements

Of these, the most important were the election of a new student member, the decision to support a student competition for a modest travel award to attend international conferences (see below), and beginning plans for the AAG Centennial.

Future Directions

1. **Shanghai conference** – Bill Solecki – a SG member – is one of the key organizers of this international conference, focused on urban issues related to global change. He requested student travel support, which the group supported. Unfortunately that conference was postponed due to the threat from SARS.
2. **Montreal conference** – A significant number of specialty group members participate in this bi-annual international conference, possibly the most important of conferences for human dimensions researchers. The group agreed to student travel support – similar to the procedure followed for the last Open Meeting in Brazil in 2001.
3. **Student paper competition** – The group will make an effort to revive this tradition for the Centennial meeting in Philadelphia.
4. **Centennial plans** – Plans are mostly still in the making and a number of ideas were brainstormed for consideration. Specialty group members Kirstin Dow and Roger Kasperson, however, have already initiated to bring the extraordinary “Earth From Above” photo exhibit by French photographer Yann Arthus-Bertrand to Philadelphia during the Centennial celebration. The AAG headquarters has been contacted and is excited about this opportunity.

V. Membership and Participation

Membership as of December 31, 2002 is estimated to be 174, including 100 regular members and 74 student members, according to information circulated to Specialty Groups from the AAG office before the New Orleans meetings. This size is somewhat lower in comparison to the last 2 years, and we will make efforts to remind members to renew their memberships within the SG. The current size, however, still puts us in the same range as long-established Specialty Groups such as GPOW and Hazards.

A listserv for the HDGCSG is maintained by the Specialty Group Chair, Susi Moser at the Union of Concerned Scientists. It currently has about 160 names, but also a growing number of bounce-backs (about 10 at present). See special request below.

The listserv is primarily used for announcements from the chair (or from members via the chair) to the group. Most frequent type of announcements include job, post-doc, and research opportunities, conference or journal calls for papers, specialty group-related business, and occasionally calls to members to speak out publicly about specialty group-related issues. For example, during the public comment period on the government's 10-year strategic global change science plan, the Specialty Group chair informed members of the issues at stake and encouraged members to submit written review comments and to attend a public science workshop in DC in December 2002. Several members submitted comments and attended the conference.

The Group includes an active core set of individuals. Most members have significant contact with the HDGC community outside of geography and are active with the Open Meeting of the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change research community. A number of activities are planned for the next open Meeting in Montreal in October, as well as at other human Dimensions conferences, nationally and internationally.

VI. Financial Report

The HDGCSG's bank account is kept at Wainwright Trust & bank in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and currently jointly administered by the Secretary-Treasurer, Kirstin Dow, and the previous S/T, now chair, Susi Moser because it was too complicated to establish an account in Sweden and transfer funds there.

The balance appears to be relatively stable over the past two years. The statement below was prepared by the secretary treasurer and distributed to members at the business meeting and – embedded within the business meeting minutes -- via the listserv.

Entry	Deposit/Withdrawl	Interest	Balance
12/31/01			\$1,311.32
1/31/02		\$0.28	\$1,311.60
2/28/02		\$0.25	\$ 1,311.85
3/29/02		\$0.26	\$1,312.11
4/30/02		\$0.29	\$1,312.40
5/31/02		\$0.28	\$1,312.68
6/28/02		\$0.25	\$1,312.93
7/29/02	+\$796.75 AAG membership fees		\$2,109.68
7/31/02		\$0.30	\$2,109.98
8/30/02		\$0.38	\$2,110.36

9/30/02		\$0.27	\$2,110.36
10/31/02		\$0.27	\$2,110.90
11/29/02		\$0.19	\$2,111.09
12/31/02		\$0.19	\$2,111.28
1/31/03		\$0.18	\$2,111.46
BALANCE as of 2/15/03			\$2,111.46

Note: The declining interest despite growing income reflects the general economic downturn and a nearly 60% decline in interest rates over this period.

VII. Special Requests or Questions for Council

This may not amount to a request to the council, but we have a significant problem keeping up-to-date with emails and addresses of our members. Is there a way to automatize sending updated email lists to those administering listserves and to chairs of specialty groups on a regular basis? I, for one, do need such an updated list. Thank you.

Submitted May 13, 2003 by:
Susanne C. Moser, Chair