



IHDP Open Meeting 2009

7th International
Science Conference on the
Human Dimensions of
Global Environmental Change

26-30 April 2009
World Conference Center Bonn
UN Campus
Bonn, Germany

The Social Challenges of Global Change

IHDP Secretariat | Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10 | D-53113 Bonn | P +49 (0)228 815 0600 | F +49 (0)228 815 0620
www.openmeeting2009.org | openmeeting@ihdp.unu.edu

Time: Wednesday 29 April 11:00 - 12:30

Human Security in the 21st Century

Organised by: Global Environmental Change and Human Security Project (GECHS)

Convenor: Karen O'Brien, University of Oslo

Panelists: Karen O'Brien, P.H. Liotta and Allan Shearer, Lyla Metha, Asuncion Lera St. Clair

Venue: BMZ Nelson Mandela

This session will revitalize the human security concept and its meaning in global environmental change research. During the past ten years there has been a considerable evolution in the ways that both human security and global environmental change research have been framed and discussed. In terms of human security, the emphasis is increasingly on how individuals and communities can respond to a variety of stresses and shocks to their social, environmental and human rights, rather than on how they are influenced by conflicts and violence. In terms of global environmental change, perspectives from the social sciences and the humanities are increasingly seen as critical to understanding the causes and consequences of biophysical changes.

Using climate change and water scarcity as examples, this session argues for a comprehensive and integral approach that focuses on individuals and communities ability to respond to change. This ability is not only shaped by social, economic and political factors; factors such as worldviews, values and beliefs also play an important role. Global environmental change has different meaning to different people and groups, and this influences the actions that are taken in the face of environmental stress and its manifestations. There are critical research gaps in understanding human security dimensions in global environmental change research. This session aims at critically addressing this research gap and identify key research challenges and opportunities within global environmental change research.