

2010 ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATORS NETWORKING FORUM

ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION: QUALITY IN AN ERA OF RESULTS-BASED PERFORMANCE

history

The purpose of the Environmental Evaluators Network (EEN) is to advance the field of environmental program and policy evaluation through more systematic and collective learning among evaluators and evaluation users. The EEN hosted its 5th annual Forum in Washington DC at The George Washington University on June 7-8, 2010. The EEN 2010 Forum brought together evaluators and users of evaluation to explore and articulate the significance of the emerging era of results-based performance on the quality of environmental evaluations.

theme

The EEN 2010 Forum explored the practical and theoretical issues that affect evaluation quality that are most pertinent to environmental evaluators, including:

- Balancing the need for accountability, transparency, evidence and improvement
- Integrating measurement and evaluation into the design of programs and policies
- The dispersed and disjointed nature of relevant data and information
- Participatory evaluation vs. expert driven evaluation
- The utility of logic models and other articulations of program theory
- Communication in evaluation - social media and data visualization
- Demonstrating short-term and long term results

presentations

- **Keynote Speakers** - Robert Verchick, EPA; Monica Medina, NOAA; Shelley Metzenbaum, OMB.
- **Improving the Quality of Environmental Evaluations in an Era of Results-Based Performance** - Shelley Metzenbaum, OMB (moderator); Jonathan Breul, IBM Center for the Business of Government; Andrew Pullin, University of Bangor, UK; Nick Salafsky, Foundations of Success. Participants discuss how an era of results-based performance affects the quality of environmental evaluations, and introduce specific opportunities for improving the quality of environmental evaluations.
- **Building Results-Based Management Practice in the Biodiversity Conservation Community: Implementer and Funder Perspectives** - Patrick Grasso, Evaluation and Management Consultant; Mark Zimsky, Global Environment Facility; Elizabeth O'Neill, World Wildlife Fund International. This plenary draws from a recent two-day meeting of major biodiversity conservation NGOs and foundations to discuss current barriers and opportunities to advancing results-based management efforts.
- **Navigating Evaluative Complexity in the Age of Obama** - Eleanor Chelimsky, U.S. GAO.
- **Improving the Quality of Evaluative Practice by Embracing Complexity** - Andy Rowe, ARCeconomics; Andrew Knight, Stellenbosch University; Seerp Wigboldus, Center for Development Innovation; John Stephenson, U.S. GAO; Claudia Romero, University of Florida. This session focuses on how evaluative practice can be improved, given the complexity caused by the interdependencies of social and ecological systems.

concurrent sessions

- **Evaluation and Conservation Planning** - Madeleine Bottrill, University of Queensland, Australia; Alejandro Ortega-Argueta, Instituto de Ecologia, A.C., Mexico. Facilitator: Helen Fox, World Wildlife Fund. Presenters outline recent progress and new developments in evaluation strategies applied in two areas of conservation planning: recovery planning for threatened species and spatial prioritization to inform conservation management.
- **Social Network Analysis and Evaluation** - Ken Vance-Borland, The Conservation Planning Institute; Chris Ellis, NOAA; Ken Genskow, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Facilitator: Lou Nadeau, ERG. This session explores the potential utility of social network mapping, analysis, and facilitation for environmental program evaluation.



ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION: QUALITY IN AN ERA OF RESULTS-BASED PERFORMANCE

concurrent sessions cont.

- **Communities as Engines of Change: Achieving Quality in Environmental Policy Evaluations** - Mary Kreger, University of California-San Francisco; Johanna Morariu, Innovation Network; Rosemarie Moreken, Inter-American Foundation; Andre Barros, Environmental Defense Network Cabo de Santo Agostinho. Facilitator: Kim Penn, NOAA. These presentations outline specific tools, indicators, and issues of scale that are critical to ensure quality in evaluation for communities, funders, and policy makers.
- **Evaluating Coalition and Advocacy Capacity** - PeiYao Chen and Kate Locke, TCC Group; Rhonda Schlangen, Evaluation Consultant. Facilitator: Richard Gelb, King County Government, State of Washington. This session discusses evaluation tools and strategies to assess the short- and long-term impact of advocacy efforts, as well as organizations' advocacy capacity.
- **Evaluative Thinking from the Beginning** - Chuck Herrick and Diana Lane, Stratus Consulting, Inc.; Terell Lasane, EPA; Tracy Dyke Redmond, Industrial Economics, Inc. Facilitator: Natalie Hanson, EPA. Presenters consider different roles evaluators may play, from independent evaluator to project consultant, and reflect on how evaluators can work within these roles starting at the outset of a project.
- **Response to Ecosystem Change - Case Examples of Measuring Species Recovery and Governance Response to Ecosystem Change** - Glenn Page, SustainaMetrix; H. Bruce Rinker, North Cross School. Facilitator: Lawrence Baschak, Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment. This session explores the importance of a conceptual framework to understand complex systems dynamics and how the establishment of a baseline as a reference point to measure response to change is essential.
- **Multi-Method Evaluation: Tools that Work and Ones that Don't** - Russ Winn, New Mexico State University; Alison Kerry, Environmental and Management Consulting; Michael Gullo, Stratos. Facilitator: PeiYao Chen, TCC Group. This session highlights the tools employed to assess the success and impact of (1) a major environmental conference and (2) environment legislation.
- **Data Visualization and Evaluation** - Juan Paulo Ramirez, University of Nebraska; Richard Gelb, King County Government, State of Washington. Facilitator: Linda Zarow, EPA. This presentation focuses on the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and remote sensing for project evaluations.
- **From Science to Service: Evaluating Quality and Impact of Science Translation for Decision-Makers** - Kalle Matso, University of New Hampshire; Chad English, Communication Partnership for Science and the Sea; Holly Hartmann, University of Arizona. Facilitator: Kate Barba, NOAA. Panelists discuss their experience in managing and evaluating collaborative processes to engage decision-makers in the research design and implementation to ensure end-user application.
- **Increasing the Capacity of Results-Based Management for Conservation Efforts** - Nick Salafsky, Foundation of Success; Mark Humpert, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; Matt Birnbaum, NFWF. A group of NGOs and foundations recently met to open a dialogue about actions that can be taken to coordinate efforts at results-based management. This session expands this conversation to include government agencies that are wrestling with the same issue.
- **Social Media and Evaluation** - Susan Kistler, American Evaluation Association; Katherine Dawes, EPA. Facilitator: Annelise Carlton-Hug, Trillium Associates. The presenters explore issues and roles related to social media for the evaluator.
- **Organizational Approaches to Measurement and Evaluation** - Kerstin Åstrand, Swedish EPA; Jill Ferguson, Natalie Hanson and Jeffrey Harris, EPA. Facilitator: Rhonda Schlangen, Evaluation Consultant. Presenters provide issue-based examples from their experiences in the public sector, highlighting similarities and differences in their approaches.
- **Program Learning in Complex Systems: Improvement Through Modeling** - Jeff Wasbes, Research Works Inc.; Daniel Hayden, Rare Conservation. Facilitator: Kara Crohn, Research Into Action, Inc. This session explores the application of a system dynamics model to Rare's Pride campaign.
- **Evaluation Policy in the Environmental Community** - Kristin Komives, ISEAL Alliance; Per Mickwitz, Finnish Environment Institute. Facilitator: Ginger Potter, NOAA. Presenters share two case studies – national evaluation policy in Finland and evaluation policy in the ISEAL Alliance – bringing together the general features of the evaluation policy debates and the current state of environmental evaluation.