

## **Workshop Report**

**Global Environmental Politics on a New Earth  
Monday March 14, 2011  
Montreal, Canada**

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American University**

### **Summary**

This is a report of the ISA-sponsored workshop *Global Environmental Politics on a New Earth: Deepening Community and Research for the Environmental Studies Section*.

This venture workshop was held Monday March 14 2011, at the Fairmont Hotel. It brought together around 50 members of the Environmental Studies (ES) section for a day of focused conversations. The workshop was a great success. In addition to rich discussions, the workshop also proved a worthwhile exercise in the development of professional connections, and in building fellowship between section members. Feedback from participants and from session moderators was overwhelmingly positive.

Below we will set out the plan for the day, the outcomes, some expected follow-up publications and other outcomes, and a detailed budget summary (see [Appendix I](#)).

### **Plan for the Workshop**

The Montreal workshop was designed to mirror and update a highly successful ISA-sponsored event, developed by Paul Wapner and Simon Nicholson, which took place just prior to the 2002 ISA Convention in New Orleans. There, approximately 60 ES section members met for a full day of sustained, facilitated conversations around a set of carefully prepared questions. The event was designed to forge new lines for research, promote new research collaborations, establish a common understanding of the “state of the discipline,” and build relationships among the members of a then relatively small research community.

We decided to repeat the workshop at the 2011 Montreal meeting for two main reasons. First, the global environmental condition is worsening despite our collective scholarly efforts to comprehend and respond to environmental threats. Our species’ collective impact, especially with climate change and the destruction of worldwide biodiversity, has created what author Bill McKibben (2010) calls a new “eaarth”—one in which the human signature is everywhere and in desperate need of humane and insightful guidance. We called the workshop to help chart new research directions in the face of this quickly changing set of conditions.

Second, the ES section has expanded a great deal in recent years. It has gotten to the point where many of us know well just a small percentage of the people in the section. As our

numbers expand, substantive conversations become much more difficult to have. The workshop was designed to allow for professional development, the building of contacts, and fellowship, in ways that traditional conference panels struggle to achieve.

### **The Workshop's Structure**

This full-day workshop was set up with two major sessions. In the morning, four separate conversation streams were organized around the ecological and political conditions that define the new earth. The afternoon session also had four simultaneous conversations, focused on responses to the new earth-world. In addition, we encouraged participants in the workshop to engage in conversation over lunch, and we ran a "speed networking" session after the lunch break to give section members a chance to meet new colleagues in a novel way.

Here is the final schedule:

- 9:00-9:30 Registration and coffee (Mackenzie)
- 9:30-10:15 Orientation (Mackenzie)
- 10:30-12:15 Morning Sessions
  - Causes of the New Planet (Mackenzie)
  - International Institutions and the New Earth (Hochelaga 4)
  - Global Civil Society on a New Earth (Hochelaga 5)
  - Geopolitics of the New Planet (Hochelaga 6)
- 12:30-2:00 Lunch (Mackenzie)
- 2:15-3:00 ESS "speed-networking," aka getting to know our colleagues (Mackenzie)
- 3:00-3:30 Coffee break (Mackenzie)
- 3:30-5:15 Afternoon Sessions
  - Pedagogies of Hope: Teaching as the World Burns (Mackenzie)
  - Narrative Frames for Living on a New Earth (Hochelaga 4)
  - Energy on a New Planet (Hochelaga 5)
  - Science, Media, and Policy Creation on a New Planet (Hochelaga 6)
- 5:30-6:15 Summary and Conclusion (Mackenzie)

### **The Participants**

We ended up with around 50 workshop participants. This meant that each of the morning and afternoon discussion groups had around 12 people, including a facilitator. The sizing

turned out to be perfect. These numbers meant that everyone had plenty of space to contribute, without the danger that any of the conversations were flat through lack of engagement.

Participants were sought through advertisements in the ES section newsletter, and through the GEP-ed listserv managed by Michael Maniates of Allegheny College. Each prospective participant was asked to complete a short application (see [Appendix II](#)). Kate Goodwin, a doctoral candidate at American University, served as our chief organizer. She collected applications, followed up as needed with participants, organized participants into discussion groups, and otherwise did a masterful job of assembling all of the pieces.

Each participant was placed, based on preference, into one morning and one afternoon discussion group. We asked the participants to prepare ahead of the workshop by writing 1-page responses to a series of questions for each of their two discussion themes. Each participant was asked also to read the 1-pagers written by others in their discussion groups.

These 1-page responses were posted on a website that Kate Goodwin designed and oversaw. The website also displayed background and logistical information for participants. Here is the url for the website: <http://gepworkshop.blogspot.com/>

A full list of participants is included below as [Appendix III](#).

## **The Day**

The workshop ran smoothly, and was a great success. We, the organizers, received fantastic support from the ISA, particularly from Jeanne White. The rooms, lunch, and other arrangements all worked without a hitch.

The day began with coffee and breakfast. At 9:30am, the formal program opened with Simon Nicholson and Paul Wapner making some opening remarks, providing an overview of the workshop's themes and expectations, and setting up the conversations to come.

From there we moved directly into the morning discussion groups. Each of the discussion groups had a facilitator (see [Appendix IV](#)). The facilitators and workshop organizers had been in close touch via email throughout the preparation phase, and gathered for dinner in Montreal the night prior to the workshop. Facilitators were asked to take a light-handed approach to moving conversations forward. There were no lengthy opening statements nor prepared remarks of any kind. The tone was one of engaged dialogue over large issues of common concern. This format proved effective, and the facilitators all did wonderful work.

At lunch, a senior member of the ES section and colleague at American University, Ken Conca, was invited to say a few words. Kate Goodwin also spoke.

From lunch we moved into a "speed networking" session, organized and run by one of the workshop instigators, Sikina Jinnah. Sikina invited those who had received their PhDs



more than 7 years prior to remain seated, and all others to stand. Each in the standing group was then invited to seek out a seated colleague, and to spend a couple of minutes getting to know one another. Sikina kept time, and after a few minutes a bell sounded to encourage a new round of seeking and conversation. We went through about 6 rounds of this, and then everyone was invited to stand and seek out a colleague for a couple of open rounds of introductions. This exercise achieved three things. First, it was a huge amount of fun, and gave people energy for the afternoon session. Second, it was an extraordinarily useful way for new section members to get to know some of their colleagues. And third, it proved beneficial to senior members of the section, as a way to discover some of the work being undertaken by their junior colleagues. We, the organizers, found out in conversations after the workshop that for many, this speed networking session was the highlight of the day.

The afternoon discussion group sessions were followed by a 45 minute wrap-up. Rather than asking people to simply report on their conversations in the wrap-up session, we went with a different format. At the conclusion of each of the discussion group sessions, we had asked facilitators to invite their groups to propose "bumper sticker" slogans that would capture the sense of what they had talked about. Each group came up with a list of interesting and often witty slogans. The wrap-up session involved the facilitators each reading through their bumper sticker ideas, along with some quick reflections from the organizers, and general comments from participants about take-home lessons and future directions.

### **Follow-up work and Proposed Publications**

There are four anticipated pieces of follow-up work:

1. Shortly, the bumper sticker ideas prepared by the workshop participants will be made available online. Workshop participants will be asked to vote for their favorite. The Global Environmental Politics program at American University has agreed to print out and send the top vote-getter to all participants, as a way to capture a small slice of the work done that day.
2. We, the organizers, suggested at the beginning of the workshop that participants *not* strive to identify potential book projects or article collaborations based on their interactions. Our hope instead was for a conversation free of the pressure of some particular expected outcome. Even so, we heard from participants of a number of new research connections and likely collaborations that were sparked by meeting new colleagues, and by the content of the conversations.
3. The facilitators provided notes and feedback based on their various sessions. We, the organizers, will use these notes over the summer to prepare a "state of the global environmental politics field" article for one of the ISA or APSA journals, likely PS. In this article we will reflect on changes to the field in the 10 years between the New Orleans and Montreal workshops. One notable change that we will stress in the article is the vastly

increased intellectual and scholarly diversity. In New Orleans there were two quite clear camps within the global environmental scholarship community. The first camp was interested in international regimes, and the second camp encompassed everyone else. In Montreal, the scholarly landscape appeared much more multi-polar. There is still a regimes crowd, but this group appears far less dominant in the section, and looks more interested now in research that facilitates incremental progress towards stronger regimes and regime coverage, rather than in pushing regime development as a blanket solution to all environmental problems. This change means that there is far more room in the ES section for a variety of intellectual positions, methodologies, and projects. The article will spell out the most important of these new poles.

4. The 1-pagers written by workshop participants turned out to be a real boon. One of the organizers, Simon Nicholson, talked with MIT Press about taking the best of the 1-pagers under a selection of the workshop themes, and inviting the authors to expand on their thoughts for an edited volume. Simon will prepare a proposal for this project over the summer.

### **Final thoughts**

The workshop was a great success, and lot of fun. A number of participants asked that a workshop of this type become a semi-regular part of the ISA experience for ES section members. We, the organizers, have proposed to the ES section that we look to run the workshop every 4 to 5 years, subject to continued interest. Thank you to the ISA for its support of this somewhat unusual workshop format. We hope for continued support in the future.

## Appendix I: Budget Report

### Summary:

|                                 | Budgeted        | Actual          |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Room rental at conference hotel | 100             | 100             |
| Boxed Lunch                     | 2015            | 2015            |
| Coffee breaks                   | 1900            | 1900            |
| Accommodations                  | 2376            | 1775.93         |
| Research Assistant              | 3500            | 3500            |
| Per diems                       | 900             | 825             |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>10791.00</b> | <b>10115.93</b> |

*Food.* The budget allocated \$2015 for boxed lunches for workshop participants, and a further \$1900 was allocated for coffee breaks, all of which was spent:

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| <b>Food</b>         |             |
| Boxed Lunches       | 2015        |
| <i>AM Coffee</i>    |             |
| Coffee              | 540         |
| Fruit               | 495         |
| <i>PM Coffee</i>    |             |
| Coffee              | 540         |
| Cheeses             | 325         |
| Total coffee breaks | 1900        |
| <b>Total food</b>   | <b>3915</b> |

*Hotel accommodations.* The workshop budget allocated \$2376.00 for one night's hotel accommodation (at an estimated \$198 a night) for the following: three workshop organizers, one research assistant, and seven session facilitators (though the workshop had eight total sessions, one session was facilitated by Sikina Jinnah, a workshop organizer). Of this amount, \$1775.93 was used.

| <b>Accommodations</b> |           |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Dauvergne             | \$        | 218.25          |
| DeSombre              | \$        | 237.93          |
| Detraz                | \$        | 203.28          |
| Goodwin               | \$        | 203.80          |
| Jinnah                | \$        | 203.28          |
| Maniates              | \$        | -               |
| Muñoz                 | \$        | 75.78           |
| Nicholson             | \$        | 202.81          |
| Pulver                | \$        | 84.30           |
| Wapner                | \$        | 204.22          |
| Webster               | \$        | 142.28          |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>\$</b> | <b>1,775.93</b> |

*Research assistant.* \$3500 was allocated as a stipend for a research assistant, Katherine Goodwin.

*Per diem.* \$900 was allocated for a \$75 per diem for each workshop organizer and session facilitator, as well as for the research assistant (12 people). Because there was one fewer session facilitator than expected, only \$825 of this (as \$75 for 11 people), is being requested for reimbursement.

## Appendix II: PARTICIPANT APPLICATION

### Global Environmental Politics on a New Earth: Deepening Community and Research for the Environmental Studies Section

Please fill in the information below and return along with a 1-page CV to [GEPWorkshop@gmail.com](mailto:GEPWorkshop@gmail.com) by Friday October 15.

#### General Info

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Member of the International Studies Association? Yes  No

#### Discussion Session Preferences

Please **rank** your top 2 discussion preferences for each session below. Detailed descriptions of each discussion session can be found at: <http://tiny.cc/mc7wmt02uh>

Session #1: Into the New Planet: Causes of Planet-wide Change and the New Architecture of Global Environmental Governance

- \_\_\_ Causes of the New Planet
- \_\_\_ International Institutions and the New Earth
- \_\_\_ Global Civil Society and the New Earth
- \_\_\_ Geopolitics of the New Planet

Session #2: Pedagogical, Ethical, and Scientific Responses to the New Earth

- \_\_\_ Pedagogies of Hope: Teaching as the World Burns
- \_\_\_ Narrative Frames for Living on a New Earth
- \_\_\_ Energy on a New Planet
- \_\_\_ Science, Media, and Policy Creation on a New Planet



### Appendix III: Participant List

| <b>Last name</b> | <b>First name</b> | <b>Institutional affiliation</b>                  |
|------------------|-------------------|---|
| Allison          | Juliann           | University of California, Riverside               |
| Axelrod          | Mark              | Michigan State University                         |
| Biedenkopf       | Katja             | Vrije Universiteit Brussels                       |
| Bouteligier      | Sofie             | KULeuven  |
| Bozzi            | Laura             | Yale University                                   |
| Brito            | Rafaela           | University of Southampton                         |
| Bruyninckx       | Hans              | Institute for International and European Policy   |
| Burch            | Sarah             | Oxford University                                 |
| Chasek           | Pamela            | Manhattan College                                 |
| Conca            | Ken               | American University                               |
| Dauvergne        | Peter             | University of British Columbia                    |
| Deibel           | Eric              | Mellon Foundation                                 |
| DeSombre         | Beth              | Wellesley College                                 |
| Detraz           | Nicole            | University of Memphis                             |
| Elver            | Hilal             | UC Santa Barbara                                  |
| Falk             | Richard           | Princeton University                              |
| Gibson           | Shannon           | University of Miami                               |
| Goodwin          | Kate              | American University                               |
| Gunter           | Michael           | Rollins College                                   |
| Ivanova          | Maria             | University of Massachusetts Boston                |
| Jinnah           | Sikina            | American University                               |
| Jungcurt         | Stefan            | Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies     |
| Kütting          | Gabriela          | Rutgers   |
| Lederer          | Markus            | University of Potsdam                             |
| Maniates         | Mike              | Allegheny College                                 |
| Manno            | Jack              | SUNY  |
| Martin           | Pamela            | Coastal Carolina University                       |
| Matthew          | Richard           | University of California, Irvine                  |
| McDonald         | Bryan             | Pennsylvania State University                     |
| Mert             | Aysem             | VU Amsterdam                                      |
| Muñoz            | Miquel            | University of Barcelona                           |
| Nicholson        | Simon             | American University                               |
| O'Niell          | Kate              | UC Berkeley                                       |
| Park             | Jacob             | Green Mountain College                            |
| Princen          | Thomas            | University of Michigan                            |
| Pulver           | Simone            | Brown University                                  |
| Sapra            | Sonalini          | Saint Mary's College                              |
| Schreurs         | Miranda           | Freie Universität Berlin                          |
| Schroeder        | Heike             | Environmental Change Institute, Oxford University |

|            |          |   |
|------------|----------|---|
| Shapiro    | Judith   | American University                           |
| Spray      | Sharon   | Elon University                               |
| Sprinz     | Detlef   | Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research |
| Valentine  | Scott    | University of Tokyo                           |
| van Asselt | Harro    | Oxford University                             |
| VanDeveer  | Stacy    | University of New Hampshire                   |
| Wapner     | Paul     | American University                           |
| Warner     | Rosalind | Okanagan College                              |
|            |          | Environmental Studies Program, Dartmouth      |
| Webster    | DG       | College                                       |
| Weinthal   | Erika    | Duke University                               |

## **Appendix IV: Facilitators**

### Morning Sessions

1. Nikki Detraz
2. Sikina Jinnah
3. Simone Pulver
4. DG Webster

### Afternoon Sessions

1. Beth Desombre
2. Peter Dauvergne
3. Miquel Muñoz
4. Michael Maniates