

Global Change Scenarios: **FINSKEN** Final Seminar, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE): 27–28 November 2002

Background

Future changes in the global environment due to both natural and anthropogenic influences are of considerable interest to a growing number of individuals and organisations. Projections of these "global changes" requires an understanding of observed trends, of the driving processes of change and of the many alternative pathways that can be envisaged for human development. Since it is not possible to predict (i.e., assign likelihoods to) such future changes, an alternative approach is to develop "scenarios". A scenario is defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as "a coherent, internally consistent and plausible description of a possible future state of the world".

Forewarned is forearmed, and global change scenarios are seen as increasingly important tools for planners, policy makers and researchers, providing an opportunity to analyse widely differing but plausible futures, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The FINSKEN project, part of the Finnish Global Change Research Programme (FIGARE), has attempted to develop up-to-date projections of changes in environmental and related factors in Finland during the 21st century. Scenarios have been developed of the following types:

- Socio-economic scenarios
- Climate scenarios
- Sea level scenarios
- Atmospheric composition scenarios
- Acid deposition scenarios

An important goal of the project has been to strive for integration across different scenario types which hitherto have been treated independently. This goal has been pursued by using a common set of global scenarios describing the driving factors of environmental change reported by the IPCC in 2000. Furthermore, regional inter-connections between some of the scenario types have also been explored (e.g., between tropospheric ozone concentration and temperature and between sea level and atmospheric circulation). For more information on FINSKEN, see: <http://www.ymparisto.fi/tutkimus/ilmakeha/finsken/welcome.html>

Objectives

This seminar marks the culmination of three years' research, and has the following objectives:

1. To present and evaluate a new set of global change scenarios for Finland
2. To consider the approaches to scenario development used in FINSKEN and to compare these with approaches employed elsewhere
3. To discuss the relevance of the FINSKEN scenarios for addressing research and policy-related questions

Location

The Seminar will take place at the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), Mechelininkatu 34 A, Helsinki, in the Auditorium (Laulujoutsen) on the ground floor. For information on how to find SYKE see:

<http://www.ymparisto.fi/eng/contacts/syke/map.htm>

Participation

Participation is primarily by invitation only, for those having an interest in global change scenarios: researchers, policy advisers, local government officials, private sector and non-governmental organisations. A number of top international experts have been invited to the meeting to contribute keynote presentations on different scenario topics and to provide feedback on the FINSKEN scenarios. Those who have not received an invitation but have a strong interest in attending should contact Maria Lindström at SYKE: maria.lindstrom@ymparisto.fi

Programme

The Seminar is organised according to the main themes of FINSKEN, with each project presentation prefaced by a keynote talk introducing the theme and providing some context for the Finnish work. In view of the international participation, the Seminar will be conducted in English. However, audience participation in discussion is warmly encouraged in either English or Finnish. In addition, a Panel discussion has been arranged in which panelists representing six different "stakeholder" groups will present brief viewpoints on global change scenarios followed by general discussion. Refreshments will be provided during both days, lunch is available in the SYKE restaurant (price *ca.* 5 Euro), and participants are invited to a FINSKEN buffet on the evening of 27 November.