

Summary of meeting on FINSKEN socio-economic scenarios, Turku, 28.8.2001

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Summary by Tim Carter

BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. The socio-economic component of FINSKEN seeks to describe possible future socio-economic and technological developments in Finland in sectors which are likely to be sensitive to the *impacts* of environmental change. FINSKEN is *not* concerned (at least, directly) with constructing scenarios of the socio-economic conditions that may influence Finland's contribution to environmental change (e.g. emissions), though responses to international environmental agreements may of course influence general socio-economic development and the ability to adapt to environmental change.
2. Stakeholder involvement is a vital component of FINSKEN. The credibility of any scenarios that are produced will depend on their acceptance both by potential users of the scenarios and by other researchers. Dialogue is required to explain our objectives for scenario development, to clarify terminology and avoid misunderstandings, to prioritise the sectors of interest to be investigated (e.g. according to their potential sensitivity to environmental change), to discuss the most effective methods of presenting scenarios, and to reconcile differences between short-term operational projections usually adopted in decision making and the long-term scenarios envisaged in FINSKEN.
3. The modelling framework outlined by Jyrki is a useful and transparent method of displaying national scale, sectoral trends in basic indicators such as GDP, employment, population. This will be very valuable as a tool for quantifying some of the scenarios and for communicating them (in some cases) to stakeholders.
4. The research community needs more information on the methodology of scenario development. In particular, natural scientists need to understand why social science methods are essential for dealing with uncertain future developments, and how such methods are being applied.
5. Key sectors for emphasis in scenario development should be defined following discussions with stakeholders, and data on historical trends collected for new sectors, where required. The current detailed emphasis on energy production needs to be balanced across some other sectors.

AGREED GOALS

In order to follow these principles, we agreed on the following goals up to December 2002:

1. Solicit opinions from FIGARE researchers (at the Aulanko meeting) on their view of the key environment-sensitive sectors for which scenarios may be of importance.

September 2001

2. Initiate a set of 5-8 stakeholder dialogues, each in a key sector. We identified the following tentative list:

Information and communications technology
Agriculture and food
Forestry and Forest industry
Transport
Tourism and recreation
Energy
General economic development

Another focal point might also be human health

Each dialogue session would be of a half day duration, and comprise a structured discussion addressing a few key questions and involving perhaps 5-6 experts (10 maximum), drawn from ministries, private sector, regional authorities, public utilities, research institutions.

November 2001 - February 2002

3. Prepare a background report on the methodology and objectives of socio-economic scenario development, designed to provide a foundation and lexicon that can be understood by natural scientists as well as social scientists. A distillation of this report can be targeted at an environmental science journal (e.g. *Boreal Environment Research* or *Global Environmental Change*).

September 2001 - June 2002

4. Compile the results of the stakeholders dialogue sessions and construct a draft set of qualitative storylines for each of the sectors covered. Quantitative scenarios can also be developed, if data/models are available. Send these draft scenarios to stakeholders for comment.

March - September 2002

5. Organise a seminar on socio-economic scenarios to discuss the revised scenarios with the stakeholder groups (plus possible international participation from scenario experts)

October 2002

6. Present scenarios in FINSKEN final meeting, including international participation.

November/December 2002

7. Special issue on scenarios for a journal (e.g. *BER?*)

2002/2003