

## From expert to facilitator: the changing face of natural resource managers

For the third year in a row, researchers, students and practitioners from governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, companies has the unique opportunity to meet around burning natural resource management issues.

There are too few meeting places today and efforts of trying to bridge the gap between universities and the realities outside too often have the opposite effect leading to different groups are stigmatised, which makes communication even harder. This conference provides a chance for real discussions, sharing of experiences and knowledge through a program which tries to balance and meet the needs of all the participants.

The 2009 conference in Environmental Communication will focus on the new expectations of natural resource management and managers to no longer be experts on environment but also on facilitating change. In all the directives and policies that decides on management of our resources we find words such as dialogue, cooperation, participation, communication, consensus building etc. This means that the directives and policies demands the implementers to actively involve the stakeholders in the planning, implementation and follow-up of change. These words are attractive but also deceptive, since they focus on facilitation to make the changes happen. If the people who are expected to implement the directives don't know how do to this, the failure easily lands on them, and we fail to see it as a problem that lies rather in the organisations than the individuals.

At this conference we will hear **Tarla Peterson**, well-known environmental communication professor from Texas A&M University will discuss how environmental communication may (1) contribute to our understanding of connections between the biosphere and human politics, (2) encourage further expansion of those we consider appropriate interlocutors, (3) inspire us to engage in argumentation or dissent related to natural resource management.

**Magnus Ljung**, Unit for Environmental Communication, SLU will speak under the title: *How do we handle the swarming of directives in NRM? From Expert to Facilitator-what might that mean?* Professor **Rolf Lidskog** from Örebro University will discuss the ideas behind the concept participation under the title: *Public inclusion in risk regulation, what do we expect?*

**Julie Kalil Schutten** from Northern Arizona University are interested in the feminisation of environment and will speak about why gender is an important aspect of environmental communication: *What Does Gender Have to Do with Environmental "Management"?*

**Anders Wijkman**, well-known Swedish parliamentarian will reflect on what is best for the environment, Top-down or bottom-up approaches, and is there enough time for participation to stop the climate change? Also, there will be possibilities to hear more about the research done at the 



As usual at these conferences, there will be much time set aside for discussions, interactions using different methods, which in themselves serve as a learning opportunity for the participants. The format for the conference will be a mixture of presentations and different methods and exercises for participation.

To know more about the conference and to register please visit our website [www.sol.slu.se/mk](http://www.sol.slu.se/mk) or contact Stina.Powell @ sol.slu.se



---

Swedish University of  
Agricultural Sciences



Forskningsrådet Formas

