AVEC Integrated Assessment of Vulnerable Ecosystems under Global Change

Peyresq, Provence Sep 14-27, 2003



...my closing remarks and observations...

What is AVEC?

A "Concerted Action", sponsored by the European Union (FP5, 600k)...

...under the "Specific Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration", on

... Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development



AVEC SC: Dagmar, Uta, Volkmar, Wolfgang, Christian, Gerhard, Bob & Rik

Denis Peter, European Commission



AVEC looks at...

...services provided by European ecosystems (agriculture, forestry, freshwater, recreation, biodiversity, carbon sequestration etc...),

...climate and land use change,

...vulnerability of human society to changes in ecosystem service provision

Integrated Assessment

considers...

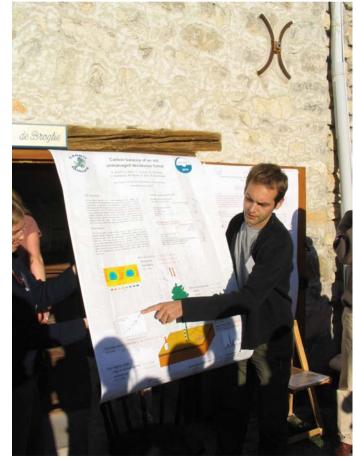
- multiple forcings (climate, land use, pollution, etc.)
- multiple impacts (yield, biodiversity, transport, etc.)

... using a consistent methodology

Poster sessions

 Showed participants' ongoing work with respect to vulnerability





Keynote lectures

- Did not provide one coherent picture of vulnerability
- Were thought-provocative
- Provided (some) material for group work

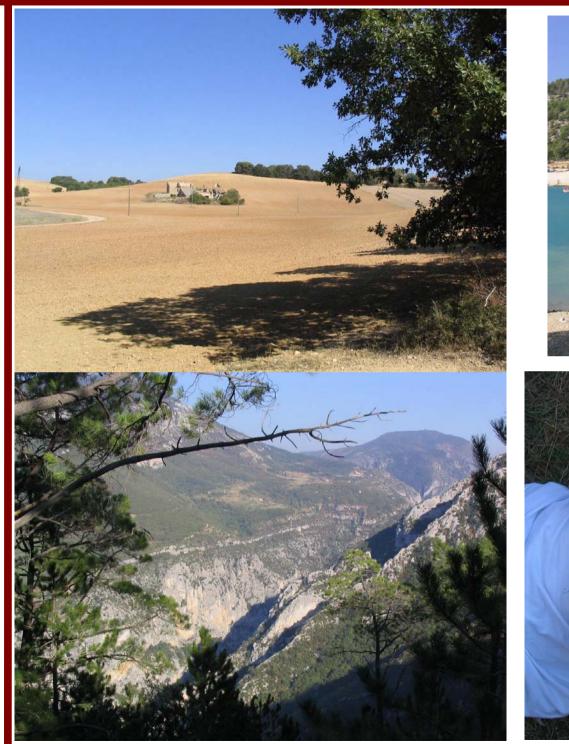
Lectures

- Monique Lejoly
- Jean "de Peyresq"
- Wolfgang Cramer
- Dagmar Schröter
- Robert Nicholls
- Anne de la Vega-Leinert
- Pierre Frapa
- Tim Carter
- Gordon Sillence
- Rik Leemans
- Mark Rounsevell
- Christian Körner
- Fabien Quetier
- Harald Bugmann
- Jacqui de Chazal

- Klemens Ekschmitt
- Zbigniew Kundzewicz
- Sara Vassolo
- Mike Ahern
- Otto Schäfer-Guignier
- Stephen Sitch
- Pete Smith
- Rik Leemans (again)
- . Gary Yohe
- Monika Zurek
- Marc Metzger
- Carlo Jaeger
- Everybody
- Wolfgang Cramer (again)

Field trip

 Looked at ecosystem (service) vulnerability to land use change in Haute-Provence







Working groups

- clarified open questions from keynote lectures ? I think so.
- considered lectures with respect to selected world regions
 ? Certainly.
- explored different views on vulnerability, based on participant and tutor experience
 ? Wow, lot's of it...

A few observations...

- Different selection of stakeholders for different scenarios
- Aggregation across sectors is easier at the local scale, but always problematic
- Selection of stakeholders influences the outcome of the assessment (all groups)
- Numbers may help the assessment and may convey messages (but not always)
- Does vulnerability assessment always find high vulnerability?
- Powerpoint presentations don't always work as expected

A new vulnerability theory?

- Providence, ethics & solidarity
- Who is vulnerable...

...and to what?

• Quantitative vulnerability assessment (VA)...

...based on what data and how good are the data?

A few notes on process:

- A good audience can do miracles for lecturers!
- Groups seem to have spent more time assessing sociopolitical / economic aspects than ecosystems or climate
- Five to six people can get a lot done in two weeks

Where do we all go from here?

• The science process:

perhaps we know the gaps in our knowledge better than before?

(tutors, lecturers and students alike)

inter- and transdisciplinarity are selv-evident necessities, and often exciting

conceptual development works best when a clear problem is on the table

• Politics and citizenship:

sustainable development goals can transcend our work without the actual use of the term

advocacy for sustainability may work without doomsday scenarios – if based on a credible systems analysis

Vulnerability assessment...

...may end up being a balancing act...

...and requires dedication!



