



Sustaining the World's Rural Populations

A Cumberland Colloquium

19 June 2012

In contemporary society, global issues threatening the future sustainability of the planet are at the forefront of media and public debate. Rural populations are vulnerable to several stressors such as natural hazards, economic hardship and food deficiency. Such pertinent and topical issues are continuously communicated in the media: e.g. famine in the horn of Africa or floods in Pakistan. Media articles and charity pleas actively engage the general public in worldwide poverty following such acute events. However, the underlying vulnerability of rural populations to such stressors is generally a chronic problem, and the plethora of issues inducing rural vulnerability provides exhaustive opportunities for important and impactful academic research. Development agencies such as the United Nations Environment Programme, Food and Agriculture Organisation and Department for International Development are heavily investing in alleviating rural poverty worldwide and such institutions are becoming increasingly engaged with research outputs from the academic community. This conference will provide a platform for early career researchers to discuss issues regarding the future sustainability of the world's rural populations; to exchange theories, concepts, case studies and methods, learning from each other and priming potential future collaborations. A truly multidisciplinary focus will be adopted, selecting delegates from a broad range of backgrounds and disciplines including environmental sciences, sociology, ecology, complex systems, development, hydrology and demography.

Conference Themes:

- Food security for rural populations
- Water scarcity and security in challenging rural environments
- Migration: desire or necessity?
- Climate impacts on rural environmental sustainability
- The adaptive capacity and resilience of rural systems
- Rural poverty or prosperity?
- Environmental hazards and rural vulnerability

Within these themes abstracts will be selected where research focuses on the spatial aspects of environmental and social rurality from an applied perspective.

We welcome applications from any sector. Academic applicants must be Early Career Researchers. For those in academia, applications will only be considered from those in their final year of PhD or within three years of award. For researchers, policy officers or field workers in non-academic sectors you must be within three years of appointment.

Abstracts can be submitted for either poster or oral presentation. Oral presentations are strictly limited to 15 minutes. Poster size TBC.

Draft programme schedule:

- 09.00 Arrival and registration, tea in the bar
- 09.25 Welcome from **Dr Owen Gower**, Director of Cumberland Lodge Programme
- 09.40 Sustaining the World's Rural Populations: Introduction from the committee
- 09.50 **Morning Session 1 (Keynote presentations)**
- 10.50 Coffee Break
- 11.10 **Morning Session 2 (Delegate presentations)**
- 12.00 Lunch

- 13.00 **Afternoon session 1 (Delegate presentations)**
- 15.50 Tea Break
- 16.10 **Afternoon session 2 (Poster and networking session)**
- 17:30 Round-up debate
- 18.00 **Public Lecture**
- 19.15 Bar followed by 19.30 Dinner
- 19.30 Colloquium dinner
- 20.30 **Poster Prizes**