

# **Assessment Report**

**on**

***Mansholt Graduate School  
of  
Social Sciences  
and  
Social Sciences Chair Groups***

**Wageningen University**

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## Preface

On behalf of the Peer Review Committee I have the pleasure to present the Assessment Report on Mansholt Graduate School of Social Sciences and on the social sciences chair groups of Wageningen University.

The Committee gratefully acknowledges the preparatory work by staff and management. Detailed and well-structured self-assessment reports by the Mansholt Graduate School and by the 21 chair groups were made available to the Committee well in advance, as well as key publications by the research programmes. The Review Committee's work was concentrated in a five-day site visit from June 15<sup>th</sup> to June 19<sup>th</sup> in which the Committee, partly divided in subcommittees, spoke with representatives of the chair groups, the Graduate School, The Executive Board and representatives of the two Sciences Groups, and with PhD students. An invitation had been sent out to everybody involved in the social sciences in Wageningen to meet the Review Committee, which led to 5 additional personal meetings.

Although the time frame was tight and the organisational structure of Wageningen UR is complicated, the Committee feels confident to have a good grasp of the situation of the social sciences in Wageningen. On that basis we formulate our assessment and offer recommendations for the future.

At the end of the Committee's visit I presented our general observations and recommendations to the staff of the Mansholt Graduate School, the chair groups, the Social Sciences Group, the Environmental Sciences Group and the Pro-Rector.

As a panel we experienced a week of good fellowship. We felt this exercise was a positive experience and we hope that the conclusions and recommendations in this report will contribute to prosperous developments of the Mansholt Graduate School and the Wageningen social sciences more generally.

Prof. dr ir W.E. Bijker  
Chairman Peer Review Committee

## Executive summary

1. This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of an International Peer Review of the Mansholt Graduate School of Social sciences (MG3S) and 21 social sciences chair groups undertaken in June 2009.

2. The evaluation was conducted according to the national recommended protocol as adapted for Wageningen University and Research Centre (Wageningen UR). The focus of the evaluation was on scientific quality, productivity, relevance and vitality and feasibility. It was directed towards improvement in the programmes of work, research management and leadership, and to provide general accountability. Both the research programmes and the post-graduate education programmes of MG3S were evaluated.

3. The Review Committee found the overall performance of the MG3S research and PhD education very good with regard to the four criteria mentioned above. The prospects for social sciences in Wageningen are good and the Committee has high expectations for the future. However, there are also a number of significant challenges and issues which the School needs to consider and address, and to which this report draws attention.

### *Pertaining to MG3S:*

4. The Review Committee found that goals and mission of MG3S are well defined and leadership is effective. Cohesion of social sciences can be improved by further elaboration of the three research themes, a (content-driven) clustering of chair groups, and a merger between MG3S and CERES-Wageningen (which already is envisaged). Other means to improve cohesion are a better internal communication, organizing research seminars and introducing a system for coaching and peer-support. It struck the Review Committee to see that there is no clearly visible unit for gender studies in Wageningen University.

5. The Review committee judged the PhD training programme as 'very good'. Also the assessment of new PhD projects is very good. To enhance the PhD programme, the Review Committee welcomes more teaching collaboration with other renowned institutes abroad, a better supervision structure, and more attention to career perspectives of PhD graduates and to a postdoc policy.

6. The average quality of the research in the chair groups was assessed as 'very good' by the Review Committee. Some parts were 'excellent' and no area of work was below 'good'. The Review Committee made a similar judgment about productivity and relevance, while there was a bit more concern about the vitality and feasibility. The factors that need to be addressed can be found in chapter 4.

### *Pertaining to MG3S and University:*

7. Social sciences in Wageningen can be characterised as contextual, applied, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary, and are of great value in the niches in which they operate. Social sciences are a key ingredient for Wageningen UR with regard to its mission 'to explore the potential of nature, to improve the quality of life', and should play an equally important role in the research agenda setting of the university. It has to be recognised that social sciences and humanities have different epistemologies and research and publication styles than the life sciences.

8. The review committee notifies that the reward system of Wageningen University is mainly focused on scientific output and not so much on social relevance. Furthermore the Review Committee experienced that (young) researchers felt a strain to publish in peer reviewed A-journals while they might be given more time to find their way to the top. The

Review Committee recommends that more attention is given to early-career mentoring of young researchers.

*Pertaining to University:*

9. With regard to the implementation of a tenure track system, the Review committee advises to use comprehensive criteria that pay attention to scholarly quality and societal relevance.

10. At PhD level the PRC has found a good gender, ethnic and nationality diversity which unfortunately is not the case at the level of core research staff. Especially a university with a focus on the global South should pay more attention to this aspect.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Assignment to the Assessment Committee

All publicly funded university research in the Netherlands is evaluated at regular intervals, as agreed by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Netherlands Academy of Sciences (KNAW). The evaluation process, which is applied at the research unit level, consists of an external peer review conducted every six years and a three-year interim review undertaken through self-evaluation.

The evaluation system aims to achieve three objectives:

- *improvement* in the quality of research through an assessment carried out according to international standards of quality and relevance;
- *improvement* in research management and leadership; and
- *accountability* to the higher management levels of the research organisations and to the funding agencies, government and society at large.

At Wageningen University, the Graduate Schools are the organisational entities on which the research evaluation is based. These Schools comprise groups of researchers with an articulated shared mission in research and training, operating under a common management and focusing on four main objectives:

- to co-ordinate and develop post-graduate education;
- to safeguard and stimulate the quality of academic research by PhD students, post-doctoral staff and academic staff;
- to stimulate the development of a coherent university research programme within their mission; and
- to monitor the quality and progress of the research programmes.

This means that these responsibilities of MG3S are being evaluated in this peer review with the overall aim to obtain an accurate view of the performance of MG3S and in particular the position of its chair groups in the (inter)national arenas of colleague research groups (retrospective) and to find ways for further improvement (prospective). Therefore this peer review takes account not only of the quality of the work conducted and the ways that the results are communicated, but also of the institution's broader mission. This includes evaluation of the arrangements and programmes for PhD students, who conduct much of the scientific research programme, and also of the relevance, quality and effectiveness of the work in terms of the institution's wider mission and public accountability.

## 1.2 Assessment procedure

The evaluation procedures followed by the Review Committee were those set out in the NWO/VSNU/KNAW "Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 for public research organizations" as adapted for Wageningen UR (version March 2009).

This Standard Evaluation Protocol entails two main characteristics:

- *Two levels of assessment*: The assessment takes place at two levels of research organisation, i.e. the level of the Graduate School (A-level) and the level of chair groups (B-level);
- *Four main criteria*: The assessment entails four main criteria, i.e. quality, productivity, relevance, and vitality & feasibility.

The evaluation committee was requested to report its findings along the four main criteria. Regarding the institute level the findings should be reported in qualitative terms with a focus on policy and management questions. For the assessment of the chair groups, the result should be cast in both qualitative and quantitative terms. In the text, the most important considerations of the Committee should be clarified, while the conclusion should be summarized in a single term according to a five point scale, from "excellent" meaning world class research to "unsatisfactory" below standards (appendix 1).

The assessment was based on and supported by three main components of evidence:

- a substantial self evaluation report (parts A and B), detailing the operation, management, research activities, outputs, and SWOT analysis of the MG3S Graduate School and the chair groups;
- copies of the selected papers from each chair group and dissertations, to allow the Committee to examine in detail examples of published work;
- visits to facilities and discussions with researchers, postgraduate students, academic staff and research managers about the details and conduct of the programmes of work and the operation of MG3S.

The site visit was undertaken in the period 15 June - 19 June, 2009 and consisted of a number of components, which can be summarised as follows:

- a plenary introduction to Wageningen UR and MG3S by the Rector of Wageningen University;
- a plenary session with an expert of the Wageningen UR Library about the bibliometric analysis;
- sub-committee sessions with individual chair groups;
- sub-committee sessions with PhD students;
- sessions with the following MG3S bodies and staff members:
  - o MG3S Director, Secretary & Theme Coordinators;
  - o MG3S Education Committee
  - o MG3S PhD Council
  - o MG3S Assessment Committee
  - o MG3S Board
- A session with the Directors of the Social Sciences Group and the Environmental Sciences Group
- a debriefing meeting with MG3S Board, staff members and the representative Rector of WU.

The Peer Review Committee comprised 21 peer members (including one external advisor) and a secretary (appendix 2). The PRC was divided into 5 subcommittees which each assessed 3 to 5 chair groups. The chairmen of the subcommittees and the overall chair carried out the assessment of the graduate school.

Despite the busy programme (appendix 3) and the tight schedule the Committee was able to cover and discuss all the interviews in plenary sessions. Consequently the final report with the conclusions and recommendations was formulated by the Committee as a whole and unanimously agreed on by its members. The draft report has been presented to the Director of MG3S to redress factual errors.

### **1.3 Results of the Assessment**

This report summarises the findings, conclusions and recommendations of an international peer review of the Mansholt Graduate School undertaken in June 2009.

The written and oral information permitted a good understanding of the organisation by the Committee. The assessment of MG3S and the chair groups was subsequently based on and weighted according to the rationale, explained in appendix 1. The conclusions, as given in chapters 3 and 4 of this report, follow the structure and the criteria which are formulated in the Terms of Reference, appendix 1. Chapter 3 gives an impression of the performance of the Graduate School MG3S as a whole and Chapter 4 elaborates on the performances of the individual chair groups.

### **1.4 Quality of the information**

The Self Assessment Reports 2003-2008 of the Graduate School and the chair groups, as well as additional information like key publications were well structured.

The SWOT analyses that were included proved to reflect the reality in a transparent and sound way and were therefore very helpful for the discussions. The presentations during the site visit were in general well prepared and at the right level of detail. The interviews were also organised in a good manner. All discussions and interviews were helpful. Changes in the programme which were requested by the PRC were also well organized. The same can be said about the logistics and the facilities which were at the disposal of the PRC

All this makes us believe that during the evaluation, the PRC was able to achieve a full and fair impression of the qualities, strengths and weaknesses of the MG3S Graduate School and Chair Groups which participated in the assessment.

## 2. Mission and position of the Graduate School

### 2.1 Organisational context of the Graduate School

Wageningen UR has been conceived and established as a leading international knowledge institute in the fields of nutrition and health; sustainable agricultural systems; environmental quality; and the processes of social change. Its corporate motto is 'For Quality of Life'. It has been structured to build jointly on the Contract Research Organisations (CRO's) strength in strategic, applied and practical research for industry, government and other stakeholder groups, and on the University's strength in fundamental and strategic research and the education and training of young researchers.

It encompasses five Sciences Groups: Plant Sciences; Animal Sciences; Agrotechnology and Food Sciences; Environmental Sciences; and Social Sciences. To each Sciences Group, a Department of Wageningen University and a number of the relevant Business Units of the Contact Research Organisation (formerly DLO-institutes) are linked. In this way it brings together a wide range of specialist facilities and expertise, on a multi-site basis, but under a management structure for research, operating within the Science Groups and providing an integrating framework for both the University Departments and the CRO. The Social Sciences Group comprises the WU Department of Social Sciences and the DLO-institute LEI (Agricultural Economics Research Institute, based in The Hague)

MG3S is one of the seven Graduate Schools of the University of Wageningen. It was established in 1994 and was first accredited by the KNAW in 1999. Its research area and purpose is social sciences and related fields, encompassing fundamental and strategic research and the training of young researchers. Sixteen chair groups of the Department of Social Sciences participate in MG3S and three chair groups of the Department of Environmental Sciences. All but two chair groups of MG3S take part in this review. The two which do not take part in this review have been assessed recently in the review of another Graduate School (WIMEK). Furthermore, four other chair groups take part in this review which do not belong to MG3S but to a national Graduate School.

Within the area mentioned above, MG3S bridges the organisational structure with the CRO Business Units and with other University Departments. It also has formal cooperative relationships with other Graduate Schools in Wageningen (especially CERES) and with other national and international research organizations. It should be clear however that the initiative for international collaboration lies at the level of individual researchers or the chair groups. MG3S can stimulate and facilitate such initiatives, for example by means of grants for a stay of senior researchers from other universities or by funding international travel of MG3S fellows.

### 2.2 Mission and research themes

MG3S operates under its mission:

*"Mansholt Graduate School of Social sciences (MG3S) conducts high-quality social sciences research and offers postgraduate education related to the specific domains of Wageningen University. The Graduate School promotes disciplinary, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research, focused on complex problems in the three main Wageningen University domains of food and food production, lifestyles, health and livelihood, and environment and natural resources."*

The core of MG3S consists of the research programmes of the Mansholt fellows and their publications, the training of PhD students, and the completion of high-quality PhD theses. These activities not only contribute to scientific progress, but also to understanding and addressing major challenges in society in the three domains, as well as to policy advice.

To assist in the creation of a coherent research programme, the research projects being undertaken in the School have been focused around three themes:

- Theme A: Interpretative institutions: knowledge, culture and meaning
- Theme B: Allocative institutions: market, contracts and business networks
- Theme C: Normative institutions: ethics, law and governance

For each of the themes, three coordinators have been appointed who have to fine-tune new research proposals with the concerned research theme and to initiate multidisciplinary seminars which are compulsory for PhD students. The nine coordinators together form the Research Committee which advises the Director of the Graduate School.

Apart from the research themes, also Strategic Research Areas (SRA) have been defined which are clusters of problem-oriented research, meant to anticipate new scientific or societal developments and to improve the coherence of research. At the moment of the review the SRA's did not play an important role anymore and it is felt that a new instrument in this respect should be developed. It should be noted that research is mainly developed in a bottom-up way and that it is carried out under the responsibility of the chair groups.

### **2.3 Responsibilities, governance and funding**

MG3S's main responsibilities as a Graduate School are :

- to coordinate and develop post-graduate education;
- to safeguard and stimulate the quality of academic research by PhD students, post-doctoral staff and academic staff;
- to stimulate the development of a coherent academic research programme within its mission; and
- to monitor the quality and progress of the research programmes.

Reflecting this role the Graduate School has several distinctive features, and its governance and organisation are subject to a number of interrelated structures and influences operating at different levels.

- Governance responsibilities at the Graduate School level rest with the MG3S Board and the MG3S Scientific Director, acting in an executive capacity on its behalf; advice to the Board includes that from an International Advisory Board consisting of five distinguished scientists from other countries.
- All chair holders together form the Scientific Advisory Board which only has an implicit role since most chair holders participate in one of the MG3S bodies and there is frequent personal contact between MG3S staff and chair groups.
- Theme Coordinators and Research Committee (see 2.2).
- MG3S Assessment Committee consisting of 7 senior researchers of different disciplines (see 2.5).

- the MG3S Education Committee oversees the Mansholt Education Programme and the Training and Supervision Plans of the PhD students. It consists of 3 PhD students, 3 MG3S fellows (including the chair) and the MG3S Education Coordinator who acts as the Secretary.
- A Publication Board consisting of two editorial boards; one for the Mansholt Publication Series and one for the Mansholt Papers.
- A PhD Council which undertakes actions at various levels and which looks after the interest of the PhD students.

Under Dutch law, the Professor holding the Chair in a chair group has the responsibility for the disciplinary development of research and education within the chair group; but in the development of the University's 5-year 'Chair Plan' and in decisions on the scientific aspects of chair appointments/replacements, the advice of the Graduate School is taken into account. (This is a particularly important matter since, under the prevailing arrangements, each chair group notionally attracts resources for 1 full professor, 1 associate professor, 2 assistant professors, 1 technical assistant and a secretary.)

Chair group funding is based on a mixed financial model, with the University/Wageningen UR providing core funding for undergraduate teaching and research activities, and additional research funding being won on a competitive basis from public organisations such as the NWO, the European Union and other bodies, and from contract research. Funding and resources are channelled through the Social Sciences Group, the Department of Social Sciences and the Chair Groups (The Environmental Sciences Group/Department of Environmental Sciences where it concerns the Chair Groups FNP, LUP and SAL)

MG3S receives, compared to the total funding of the chair groups, limited funding which is composed of the following elements:

- 1) a so-called strategic research fund, an annual budget to be used to finance PhDs and/or postdocs in the chair groups participating in MG3S (276 k€ in 2009)
- 2) an annual budget for personnel costs of MG3S Director and Office (236 k€)
- 3) an annual PhD training and education budget (67 k€ in 2009)
- 4) an annual research grant budget (63 k€ in 2008)

## **2.4 MG3S Research organization and input**

Within the period of review sixteen chair groups of the Department of Social Sciences and three of the Department of Environmental Sciences participated in MG3S, providing a research input as presented in Table 2a. It should be noted that the figures in this table are in fte meaning that the total number of persons involved in MG3S is much higher since staff members are also involved in other assignments than research. At the end of 2008 about 120 tenured staff members were involved, 193 PhD students (of which 70 regular PhD students and 59 Sandwich PhD students) and about 30 other non-tenured staff (mainly postdocs). The figure of 193 PhD students does not correspond with the figure of 221 in table 2b since in this table another definition was used ('everybody was counted who was having a PhD position during the year')

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Average 2003- 2008
Tenured staff	32.9	31.4	34.6	33.6	34.0	37.2	33.9
PhD students	62.9	63.0	68.2	61.4	52.1	47.6	59.2
Non-tenured staff	9.9	12.3	21.6	20.9	19.8	13.6	16.4
<b>Total research staff</b>	<b>105.7</b>	<b>106.6</b>	<b>124.3</b>	<b>115.9</b>	<b>105.8</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>109.5</b>

The personnel of the chair groups comprises a combination of tenured academic staff, postdoctoral researchers and non-tenured academic staff, PhD students holding contract based appointments or other types of appointment (such as fellowships from overseas), and support staff. On an fte basis (i.e. taking account of the staff time spent on research) there was an increase in tenured staff mainly caused by the fact that more fellows applied for MG3S membership. The reason why the research input has decreased is a shift from regular PhD students to Sandwich PhD students. Sandwich PhD students are only counted for 25% where it concerns research input while regular students count for 75%. Despite the decrease in research input for PhD students, the number of PhD students present has gone up (see table 2b).

The non-tenured staff mainly concern postdocs with temporary appointment, and visiting professors.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Average 1999- 2003
Inflow	41	33	39	28	33	46	36.7
Number of PhD students present	172	177	193	203	209	221	198.3
Dissertations	11	16	23	25	37	22	22.3

## 2.5 Supervision and Training of PhD

In principle a PhD study lasts four years; at least 75% of this time is devoted to the research project leading to the PhD thesis, the remaining 15-25% is directed to an education and training programme designed to meet the skills requirement and professional development of the individual student.

PhD students will be admitted to MG3S after having fulfilled different requirements:

- admitted to the WU PhD programme;
- an approved full PhD project proposal by the Assessment Committee (on scientific quality and feasibility)
- having submitted a tentative Training and Supervision Plan tot the MG3S co-ordinator for approval.

To ensure the quality of the PhD programme MG3S has instituted a number of specific operational and management provisions:

### *Quality control of PhD research*

- Each new PhD project proposal is submitted to the MG3S Assessment Committee which consists of 7 members of various disciplines. They screen the scientific quality and feasibility of the PhD projects and advise the MG3S Director on admission of PhD projects and students. For open rounds external reviewers are consulted, and in case a PhD project has already been reviewed by another (funding) organization, like NWO, the review is omitted. In most cases the review results in an improvement of the project proposal.
- Employed PhD candidates are selected by a normal job application procedure. Students from abroad with a foreign Master degree have to pass an entrance exam and English language test.
- Within eighteen months, a go/no go decision is taken, based on a formal evaluation of the PhD student's performance.
- Students are strongly encouraged to publish their work in refereed journals and to present at international symposia, which further enhance quality awareness and provides feed-back.
- Each year a monitoring form has to be filled in by the PhD student and the supervisor, and the content of this form is discussed by the MG3S Director and the chair group leader concerned. If necessary, measures are taken to ensure progress.
- Both graduated PhDs and drop outs are debriefed at the time that their PhD period terminates.
- The draft PhD thesis must be approved by an independent examination committee appointed by the University before the student is allowed to publicly defend his/her thesis.

### *Education and training of PhD students*

- Most<sup>1</sup> PhD students participate in the MG3S training programme and develop a Training and Supervision Plan (TSP) soon after they start. MG3S aims at training PhD students to conduct high-quality research in the social sciences. The goal of the MG3S training programme is to train PhD students to become qualified scientific researchers who are able to:
  - Conduct research in a systematic and productive way;
  - Work effectively in an international arena;
  - Position their own research in a multidisciplinary context;
  - Translate problems into relevant and sound research proposals;
  - Work independently;
  - Are reliable researchers.
- Within nine months after beginning his/her project, the PhD student submits a personalised training and supervision plan to the MG3S Education Committee following consultation with the daily supervisor and the MG3S Education Coordinator. This plan needs the approval of the MG3SS Education Committee.
- Education and training must comprise a minimum of 30 ECTS credits (1 ECTS credit equals 28 hours of study load).
- A mandatory element is the MG3S Introduction Course.
- The compulsory components of the PhD programme consist of:
  - Individual scientific research within one of the disciplines or interdisciplines covered by MG3S, which results in a dissertation, and

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<sup>1</sup> External PhD students are not required to develop a Training and Supervision Plan.

- An individual tailor-made training programme with the following compulsory components: two conference presentations, one multidisciplinary seminar and the course "Introduction to MG3S".
- If a PhD student already possesses the competences that mandatory courses or mandatory elements of the training programme bring about, a waiver for such activities can be granted. In particular PhD candidates with a lot of working experience can thus engage in the MG3S training programme without unnecessary loss of time.
- A PhD student usually takes courses both within MG3S and outside MG3S, often abroad, and the latter is encouraged. For such external courses and symposia, every PhD student has an individual education budget of € 2500.
- The TSP is monitored by the yearly monitoring form to be filled in by the PhD student and the supervisor
- A few months before graduation, the student submits his/her completed curriculum, which must be approved by the Education Committee before a MG3S education certificate can be issued at the official graduation.

### **3. Performance of the Graduate School**

The Review Committee found the overall performance of the MG3S research and PhD education very good. The prospects for social sciences in Wageningen are very good and the committee has high expectations for the future. There are also a number of challenges and issues which the School needs to consider and address.

#### **3.1 The identity of the institute and the mission statement**

MG3S has clear goals, a clear mission and clear tasks. It has not a very strong identity of its own, according to the PRC. Most, if not all researchers (from PhD students to Professors) identify much more with their chair group than with the Graduate School. Also outside Wageningen University the MG3S does not have a strong identity. The PRC does not see the weak identity as a big problem, considering the matrix organisation of Wageningen University and the clearly defined, but limited number of tasks that are attributed to MG3S. Moreover, the PRC has observed that the researchers of the chair groups attached to MG3S are highly committed to the Graduate School, which is illustrated by the fact that all the bodies of MG3S (Staff, International Advisory Board, Scientific Advisory Board, Research Coordinators, Assessment Committee, Education Committee, Publication Committee, PhD Council) are very active and perform well.

Nevertheless, the PRC finds that there is room for improvement. A stronger identity and a further elaboration of the research themes can lead to more cohesion in the social sciences in Wageningen. The PRC is, after some discussion with the MG3S Board, convinced of the potential value of the new combination of three research themes. It advises that extra effort is needed to make it work as a guiding and coherence-generating scheme for the research programme. Coherence can also be improved by the planned clustering of the chair-groups. Another aspect which can improve cohesion in the social sciences is the envisaged merger with CERES. Both already foreseen changes are warmly welcomed by the PRC.

#### **3.2 Management and leadership**

It is important to understand in which context MG3S operates:

- Intermediate level in-between the Executive Board and the chair groups;
- Responsible for the development of overarching research themes, PhD training and supervision, quality assessment of research groups and PhD proposals.

The organisation of MG3S is well structured in line with these responsibilities. Different bodies have been created to assure that the MG3S tasks will be executed properly. A Scientific Director is appointed by the Executive Board for daily management.

The PRC notes that the management style within MG3S is informal, primarily based on professional authority rather than formal power. Lines between the MG3S bodies and between MG3S and the chair groups are short but with enough checks and balances.

### **3.3 Strategy and policy**

Goals and mission of MG3S are clear and solid. The PRC finds that strategy and policy need some more elaboration, notably where it concerns the Research themes.

The choice for a merger with the Graduate School CERES-Wageningen is welcomed by the PRC. By this merger, suboptimization can be diminished, and a clearer profile of the Social sciences in Wageningen can be realized.

Another strategic choice welcomed by the PRC is the enlargement of the critical mass of chair groups (by a content-driven clustering of chair groups). Advantages may materialize by increasing flexibility within clustered chair groups such as better utilizing synergies, easier coordination, avoiding unnecessary overlap and saving in administrative costs. The composition of new clusters needs further consideration.

Other means to increase the critical mass are improving the internal communication in the Social Sciences Group, organizing even more research seminars, paying more attention to joint agenda-setting and a system for coaching and peer-support. In this way the social sciences will be in a better position to meet the challenge of the Wageningen UR mission.

### **3.4 Research staff**

The quality and commitment of the research staff in the social sciences is considered to be high by the PRC. Output is of high quality and often also has a relevant impact for stakeholders. All chairs hold Performance & Development interviews with individual staff members, and also MG3S has its own quality system to assess research performance.

At PhD level the PRC has found a good gender, ethnic and nationality diversity which unfortunately is not the case at the level of core research staff of most of the chair groups. Especially a university with a focus on the global South should pay more attention to this aspect.

With regard to the introduction of a tenure track system, the PRC endorses the incorporation of broad criteria for academic and scholarly quality and societal relevance. A rigid tenure track system might cause loss of quality at the mid level of the research group.

More attention could be given to early-career mentoring of young research staff. The PRC observes that researchers feel a strong drive to publish in peer reviewed A-journals. The PRC agrees that such a publication policy is necessary, but supports MG3S in making this focus on peer reviewed A-journals part of a broader, comprehensive publication strategy that also recognizes other valuable forms of output. An exclusive focus on peer reviewed A-journals would be too narrow. In some cases, especially with young talent, such a focus may even be counterproductive: young researchers should be given more time to find their way to the top. They also need coaching to learn to write A-level publications.

The PRC did not find a clear postdoc policy. According to the PRC this should be developed, both for outgoing as incoming postdocs. At the same time attention should be given to the aspect of too much inbreeding.

### **3.5 Resources, funding and facilities**

Compared to the total funding of the Social Science Group, MG3S has limited resources. The resources seem to be sufficient for the tasks of the Graduate School and comprise a budget for personnel costs, a strategic research fund, a PhD training and education budget and an annual research grant budget.

The PRC would recommend that MG3S is given extra seed money for strengthening the – MG3S and university – research agenda. The PRC assumes that this will contribute to a stronger role of the social sciences in the research themes of the university. According to the PRC it would be logical for the social sciences to take the lead in at least one of the IP/OP research themes of the university.

Funding and facilities for PhD students are good. PhD students receive a “backpack” budget of 2500 EUR from which travel and some research costs can be paid. This budget is provided by the central level, and the chair groups themselves often contribute additionally to cover costs for travel and research. It is not always clear to the PhD students which costs can be covered by their “backpack budget”. This can be a reason why this budget often is not fully used. The PRC recommends that PhD students follow more courses in other institutes (abroad) and coordination and funding (when it exceeds the backpack budget) of these courses could be done by the Graduate School.

### **3.6 Academic reputation**

The chair groups have clear academic reputations, which are reflected in the scores for the chair groups in the next chapter. The PRC found that most of the chair groups are at the forefront of their particular research area—at global or at least European level. The quality level of publications and theses is considered to be high, and most of the research results have high impact. The graduate school itself is not the research-producing entity and thus cannot be expected to have an academic reputation in that sense.

The PRC recognises the special and authentic place of the social sciences in Wageningen: different from, but crucially complementary to the life sciences. The social and life sciences are both key ingredients for Wageningen UR because of its mission “to explore the potential of nature, to improve the quality of life”, which requires a substantial input from both styles of scholarship and research. To reap the full benefits of this complementarity, it is important to recognize how different both styles of research are. Not only do the social sciences and the humanities have different publication norms and values than the life sciences (in some fields an article is much less valuable than a monograph), but they have different epistemologies as well. The Committee pleads for more symmetry in role and importance of life and social sciences in Wageningen University. This can be realized by the social sciences more often taking the driver’s seat in interdisciplinary research, for instance in the university-wide research themes (IP/OP themes).

The PRC applauds the clear policy of Wageningen University to help the social sciences maintain their own identity rather than bringing them under the administration of the life sciences. In this way the social sciences chair groups can maintain their necessary relations with international social sciences.

In the international scientific community Wageningen social sciences receive much acclaim. Wageningen social sciences have a specific mission and character as applied social sciences within the specific “Wageningen area” and as collaborating with the life sciences. The size of most chair groups is quite small. In universities with large social science faculties,

chair groups of the Wageningen size would be too small to survive. Nevertheless, the PRC supports the current process of clustering and advises that some chair groups increase their critical mass by some content-driven clustering<sup>2</sup>. PRC expects that the clustering will improve synergy and enhance interdisciplinarity. Such clustering should be prepared with much care to avoid some of the mistakes made in the past, when chair groups were merged without considering content..

The PRC concludes that gender issues are too much marginalized in the organisation and research programme. Although gender issues do play a role in various research projects, a concentration of knowledge or a clearly visible unit on this subject is no longer found in Wageningen. The PRC considers such a concentration crucial for a university with a large focus on research questions relevant for the Global South.

### **3.7 Scientific and social relevance**

The PRC found that both the scientific and social relevance of the social science research at Wageningen University are very high. Most of the publications/theses contain a mixture of an academic and an applied approach, with relevance for society. Often stakeholders are involved where it concerns the research set up, both for university/NWO PhD projects as for soft money funded projects.

The PRC noticed that the reward system of Wageningen University is focused mainly on scientific quality and less on social relevance. To make research results socially relevant, other output indicators are necessary than just publication in scientific journals. Unfortunately, these other output indicators are less reflected in the incentives for personnel or for chair groups. The PRC recommends that the university develops a reward system in which social relevance is explicitly accounted for, in addition to scientific quality.

### **3.8 The primary processes,**

#### **3.8.1 Research**

- ***scientific performance (quality and output) of the graduate school***

The PRC concludes that the quality and productivity of the MG3S chair groups is very good. The variation between the chair groups can be found in chapter 4.

Most research is executed in a specified area to which the Wageningen University and Research Centre makes a significant contribution. Most social science research in Wageningen is internationally competitive and sometimes leading. This point should be emphasized: social sciences in Wageningen is relatively small (compared to Faculties of Social Sciences in large general universities), still because of its position it is able to do remarkably well internationally. Key words that describe the specific strengths of Wageningen UR social sciences are “contextual, applied, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary”

The PRC was highly impressed by the key publications and the theses that were reviewed.

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<sup>2</sup> This recommendation only relates to the chair groups in SSG; chair groups in ESG are differently positioned and do not seem to have a critical mass problem.

In the self evaluation, citation analysis is used as one among many tools to indicate the quality of the publications. There is much discussion about the merit of citation analysis for quality measurement and policy making, and the PRC recommends to be careful in using citation analysis as a performance indicator. Such prudence should especially be taken into account when research is done at the crossroads of different disciplines as is the case of social sciences in Wageningen. Citation analysis as a performance indicator also raises methodological questions. It gives an illusion of precision, but has built-in biases.

The PRC endorses the development of criteria for research assessments that reflect the full scope of research and scholarship (range of outputs, impacts and engagements). Both for institutional and personal assessments criteria are needed that reflect the full scope of academic work: research, teaching and service to society.

- ***internal collaboration***

The PRC notices that there is extensive collaboration between the chair groups within MG3S, partly due to the research themes and coordination set up by MG3S. Also the informal ambiance, the involvement of fellows – one way or another – in one of the MG3S bodies contributes to such an internal collaboration.

- ***collaboration with research groups outside the graduate school***

There is also a quite extensive collaboration with chair groups in the life sciences. It is clear to the PRC that interdisciplinary research is one of the strengths of Wageningen University. The PRC noted that social sciences do have more of a supporting role in interdisciplinary research than a role which is based on parity, especially in setting the research agenda. The PRC recommends that Wageningen UR uses its social and life sciences in a more equivalent way, for instance by having one of the strategic WU research projects led by social sciences/scientists.

### **3.8.2 Training and education**

- ***quality control and methodological safeguarding of PhD projects***

The PRC found the assessment of PhD projects before the official start very good. The PRC noted that sandwich students and full time AIOs are subjected to equal requirements. Nevertheless, sandwich students sometimes seem to experience a lesser fit of mutual expectations (with the supervisor) with regard to content, efforts, time schedules and publications. This, however, does not result in higher drop out rates for sandwich PhD students compared to PhD students who conduct all their research in Wageningen.

The go/no go decision which is taken after one year of the PhD project has the appearance of being too lenient. Although the PRC thinks that everybody who starts a PhD project should be able to obtain a 'go' after one year, the procedure for obtaining a 'go' could be tightened.

- ***the objectives and structure of the educational programme,***

The PhD training programme of MG3S is assessed by the PRC as very good (both the objectives and the structure). The PRC would welcome the incorporation of more teaching collaboration with other renowned institutes from abroad, for instance by PhD students going out. MG3S could play a role in facilitating and funding these type of courses.

- ***training and supervision of PhD students***

The quality of supervision very much depends on individual supervisors. A good structure seems to be lacking in which coaching skills of promoters/supervisors are supported or trained. The PRC recommends more flexibility in the composition of the supervising team to secure more support from outside the chair group in a particular phase of the PhD period. This is especially important for interdisciplinary PhD projects.

The Graduate School could also enhance the functioning of peer groups of PhD students who are in the same phase of their PhD, by means of classes or 'communities of practice'. The experiences of groups of PhD students from large projects (INREF, KNAW and AWLAE) could be helpful in creating such classes.

- ***career perspectives for graduates***

It is desirable that MG3S pay more attention to the post-PhD period during the PhD study of young researchers. This can help in recruiting future staff and in building international networks. Generally it is advisable, though, that researchers do not stay in one university but gain experience in different academic and research environments. Furthermore (more) training for entrepreneurship could be offered for students who consider to start-up a business.

### **3.9 Prospects and expectations for the graduate school**

According to the PRC the prospects for MG3S and its related chair groups are good. Some work needs to be done to maintain and/or improve the position of MG3S and to fulfil the expectations of being an equal partner of the "other sciences" within a university that has an excellent reputation in its field:

- The PRC recommends an on-going reflection on the relation between the Wageningen UR mission and its reward system. For instance, putting a large emphasis on citation analysis as a performance indicator is too narrow when compared to the mission of the university. It does not cover the social impact of research and can be counterproductive to the development of young talent.
- The PRC recommends to further strengthen the identity, visibility and internal coherence of Wageningen UR social sciences. The merger between MG3S and the Wageningen fellows and PhDs of CERES, and the clustering of chair groups are steps in the right direction. Other means to reinforce the critical mass within social sciences are to improve internal communication, organize even more research seminars, pay more attention to joint agenda-setting and introduce, or where already existing further strengthen, a system of coaching and peer-support.
- The PRC recommends that Wageningen UR supports its profile of interdisciplinary and contextual focus over the full spectrum of life and social sciences. Social sciences should be an equal partner to life sciences in this process. Nevertheless, it should be recognised that social sciences are a different kind of ball game with different epistemologies, different styles of research and thus in need of different output performance indicators.

## 4. Performance of the individual Research Programmes (Chairs)

### Agricultural Economics and Rural Policy (AEP)

Current holder:	Prof. Dr Ir A.J. Oskam
Average tenured research input:	2.4 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	2.4 fte

#### Assessment:

Scientific quality	4.0
Productivity	4.5
Relevance	4.0
Vitality and feasibility	3.5

The *Agricultural Economics and Rural Policy Group* succeeds in its mission “to perform advanced economic analyses on agriculture, food, rural areas and their policies”. The research of the group is focused on three research themes: i) the economics of production, trade, processing and consumption of agricultural and food products; ii) agricultural, rural and food policies; and iii) institutional and organisational aspects of agriculture and rural areas.

The scientific quality of the group’s research is very good. The group’s research output regularly appears in the top field journals in agricultural economics and related disciplines; the group is highly visible and makes recognised contributions at the EU and international levels.

The group’s productivity is also very good, and in some respects excellent. In terms of the bibliometric criteria, the group’s output can be considered on or just below world average. However, the output of refereed journal articles is high and has increased in recent years. Future efforts could be directed at increasing the share of top journals within the group’s publications. An important criterion of productivity that is not reflected in the bibliometric analysis is the group’s excellent record of service to the agricultural economics profession. A highlight in this regard is the *European Review of Agricultural Economics*, in recent years regularly among the top impact-factor-ranked journals in this field, which has been edited by members of the group for roughly 20 years. Contributions of this nature are vital for the scientific community; if no one was willing to edit journals, no one could publish in them.

The relevance of the group’s work is very good. The group focuses on research topics that are important from a scientific and socio-economic perspective. In particular the third research focus (institutional aspects of agriculture and rural areas) is important in this regard. However, as the recent ‘food crisis’ has shown, ‘traditional’ agricultural economic analysis of food markets, trade and policy remains important. The group’s outreach efforts (publications for the general public and policy relevant work, for example on the impact of Turkish membership in the EU) deserve special recognition.

The vitality and feasibility of the group are good to very good, but we are concerned that recent retirements of key staff and the upcoming retirement of the Group Chair could lead to a temporary lack of coherent leadership and management capacity. We see potential for increased coordination and cooperation in some areas of research. These include work on rural development/regional issues (with ECH) and work on commodity chains/standards (with DEC). The foreseen clustering of groups into larger units could contribute to solutions in these areas.

## Applied Philosophy Group (APP)

Current holder	Prof. Dr. M.J.J.A.A. Korthals
Average tenured research input:	2.0 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	1.4 fte

### Assessment:

Quality	4.0
Productivity	4.0
Relevance	4.5
Vitality and Feasibility	3.5

Applied Philosophy is a mid-sized group of three full-time professors and several graduate and post-doctoral fellows under the direction of Prof. Korthals. Prof. Korthals and Prof. Keulartz comprise the core of the research group, and provide intellectual leadership in the specialized brand of applied philosophy in the life sciences for which they are well known in The Netherlands and internationally.

The Applied Philosophy Group is oriented toward pragmatic ethics, and uses this approach to consider the ethical and more broadly social implications of research and technological development that bring about changes in agricultural practices and impacts on the environment. The group also conducts research on subjects such as intellectual property rights, policy and regulatory issues arising in new science and technology, and socio-political issues such as global justice and access and benefits sharing. In addition to the methodological foundation in pragmatism, the Applied Philosophy Group deploys social science techniques such as interviews and focus groups to generate empirical bases for philosophical analysis. In this respect the research group is doubly interdisciplinary – first combining applied philosophy with natural science and technology, and second, combining applied philosophy with social science methods.

The research productivity and the quality of the research are high. With respect to the publications captured by the Web of Science, which takes into account roughly a third of the group's peer reviewed publications, the rate of citation is above world average. Given that citation frequency is not a definitive tool for assessing a research group such as applied philosophy, other evidence of impact is needed. This evidence exists in the form of other research output such as the numerous books and book chapters by the group. Furthermore, members of the group publish scientific reports for government, and have impressive and continuous engagement with the public through print media, television and public lectures.

This last point speaks to the relevance of the work of Applied Philosophy. Through their publications and record of international conferences and invited lectures, the group is clearly sought after and is finding an international audience. Relevance and impact can also be established by considering the non-academic uptake of the group's work. Civil society demands increasingly more opportunities to reflect on how food is produced, the treatment of animals, land use changes, and the sharing of resources and benefits. Maintaining social relevance and meeting the public's interest for ethical reflection appears to be a challenge constrained by the size of the research group. Perhaps the reach of the group would be best extended through continued collaborations with colleagues at Wageningen in addition to those already established with Food Science, Nutrition, Communication Science and Law, and collaborations with other applied philosophy groups domestically and internationally. Were the teaching responsibilities of the Applied Philosophy Group extended on a systematic basis, the group's intra-university relevance would increase.

## **Business Economics Group (BEC)**

Current holder:	Prof. Dr Ir A.G.J.M. Oude Lansink
Average tenured research input:	2.8 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	3.3 fte

### **Assessment:**

Scientific quality:	4.0
Productivity:	5.0
Relevance:	4.0
Vitality & feasibility:	4.0

The Business Economics group (BEC) maintains a programme of outstanding productivity and high quality with three areas of emphasis:

- Economics of farms and firms in agro-food chains;
- Economics of animal health, plant health and food safety; and
- Economics of sustainable agriculture.

The group contributes firm-level economic expertise to a large number of collaborative projects with a variety of other Wageningen UR chair groups as well as with respected international researchers.

BEC has developed a leading scientific programme for its area in the EU. Its research findings are routinely diffused in ISI journals in the disciplines of agricultural economics, animal sciences and plant sciences. Having attained an impressive level of productivity and international-calibre quality, the challenge is to develop high-impact research that will be highly cited globally. Given the strengths of the group, such research would likely be at the intersection of economics with agricultural or environmental science fields. Apart from the high impact of its research in the research community, BEC also appears to be successful in meeting the needs of industry and government stakeholders via professional publications and outreach.

Apart from its strength in publication outputs, BEC also has a strong record of training PhD candidates. Course training via the national network for economics (NAKE) (in which the BEC chair professor also teaches) has been an asset. The group would be challenged to maintain this depth of PhD-level training in economics if it had to rely upon Wageningen UR resources alone.

In light of the group's large size and the departures of one associate and one full professor, BEC would greatly benefit from a second professorial chair (such as the one that has gone unfilled since 2008).

## Communication Science (COM)

### Communication Strategies; Communication and innovation studies.

Current Holders:	Prof. Dr. C.M.J. Van Woerkum (Communication Strategies) Prof. Dr. Ir. C. Leeuwis (Communication and innovation studies)
Average tenured research input:	3.8 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	3.9 fte

#### Assessment:

Scientific quality	4.5
Productivity	4.0
Relevance	5.0
Vitality and feasibility	4.5

This section, which comprises two chair groups, occupies a particular and unique 'niche' in the broader field of Communication Studies. In the domain of life sciences the section studies 'every day current interaction practices' among key actors in the field. A common approach is the discursive analysis of these practices using a variety of methodologies: discourse analysis but also participant observation, case studies, phenomenological approaches and sometimes even experiments. The section is among the top 10% in the world in studying communication practices in the life sciences. The research covers practices in the following domains:

- food and health
- rural innovation
- multi-stakeholder contexts
- use of public space.

COM shows an above average publication record as indicated by the bibliometric analysis and other figures. Several researchers published books that are international reference works for both researchers and practitioners. In the past few years, COM successfully implemented an explicit strategy to publish more often in first rate journals, connecting by doing so the study of practitioners to sound theoretical conceptualization and analysis. They overcome the tension between an orientation on 'science' and 'practice' by studying 'actors in the field' in a sound scientific way, leading to a high level of publications. PhD students are explicitly involved in this publication strategy by stimulating them to graduate on refereed journal articles of first rank. The number of completed PhD dissertation is remarkably high.

By asking 'relevant questions' – also theory-based sound theoretical questions – to the practice of practitioners in collaborative settings, they see theory and practice as inherently complementary: e.g. in studying Water Boards, parent-child interaction on food, stakeholder interactions on nature conservation issues, expert-lay interactions in health settings, practitioner-scientist interaction in ecological projects. This section has also a consulting and policy advice impact on a number of international and professional organizations.

However, they can improve their presence in the existing Communication Science community and also in the public debate and the media on a national level.

The internal differentiation of the staff covers a variety of approaches and contexts. The leadership is distributed among the senior staff members. The common focus on discursive practices in a variety of emerging domains of the life sciences enhances the vitality and feasibility of the group for the years ahead.

## Development Economics Group (DEC)

Current Holder: Prof. Dr. E. Bulte  
Average tenured research input: 2.0 fte  
Tenured research input in 2008: 2.5 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality	5.0
Productivity	4.0
Relevance	4.0
Vitality and feasibility	5.0

The Development Economics Group sees its research focused on two cluster topics: institutions and institutional change and its implications for poverty alleviation; and the organisation and development of commodity chains. Within these topics it has addressed a wide range of issues that include most relevant questions of sustainable resource management, land use and environmental change; inter-linkages between economic growth, natural resource endowment, governance, employment and livelihood; governance, corruption and social capital formation; and development policies and financial intermediation. In picking up research questions the group demonstrates imagination, foresight and sound judgement on future relevance.

The group produces scientific work of excellent quality as also shown by the bibliometric indicators. Quality shows a clear upward trend over the last years, and the quality score particularly in 2008 reflects publications in world leading journals. Methodologically it focuses on applied econometrics, it combines disciplinary depth with multi-disciplinary work, is nationally unique in its field, internationally highly recognized, well connected and working at the frontier in its field.

Output and productivity has been very good, particularly in the later years with impressive improvements in recent years. Given the age structure of the group there are good prospects of further advancing on this route.

The group addresses highly relevant and innovative topics. At the same time we would encourage the group to give higher visibility to the poverty aspect in its work, including specifically issues germane to marginalized areas and groups, such as minorities and indigenous people.

The group is driven by highly dynamic leadership supported by very competent, young researchers. It gives highest priority to PhDs and actively engages in young researcher training that can be called exemplary.

Overall the group demonstrates a very dynamic, cooperative spirit with highly relevant, innovative and imaginative research work moving at the frontier of research. If it continues on the path of recent years it can well move into the group of leading development research institutions worldwide. We would encourage the group, in addition to continuing its successful drive for refereed journal publications, to also make its knowledge available to the political decision makers and professional development community.

## Economics of Consumers and Households Group (ECH)

Current Holder	Prof. Dr. G. Antonides
Average tenured research input:	2.6 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	1.8 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality	3.5
Productivity	3.5
Relevance	3.5
Vitality and feasibility	2.5

### Introduction

The ECH chair group has developed a strong research and teaching niche with respect to behavioural economics as this relates to consumer and household decision-making and behaviours. It also contains a one person 'group' in regional economics with a unique focus on landscape economics. Currently there is a fair amount of collaboration between this chair group and others outside of the economics cluster as well as some between the ECH chair group and the Development and Agricultural Economics chair groups. Moreover, there is significant overlap between aspects of the ECH group and the Development and Agricultural Economics groups. The ECH chair group has much potential to deliver in the realm of behavioural and landscape economics and to have significant effects internationally. However, this chair group's performance is below potential; but its potential can be realized with reconfiguration and re-vitalization. One should note that it suffers from what appears to be an artificial clustering of the economics of consumers and households and regional economics.

**Quality** - There is much innovative potential, but international recognition is lacking. It would be helpful if the core objectives of the consumer and household part of this group were made more precise and to then introduce research themes, which can change over time. Although not mentioned, a lab in experimental economics would be a useful research and teaching tool and place the group in a more competitive position with other behavioural units in Europe. This lab would also stand to benefit the Agricultural and Development Economics groups given their interest in household and producer behaviour.

**Productivity** - At first appearances output is relatively low based on the available data. This is the case even if one moves beyond the narrow confines of Web of Science. However, this changes once one takes into consideration output per faculty member. In this case, output in terms of refereed publications, chapters, and PhDs is similar to that of the two other chair groups we reviewed. Output is also of high quality (if one reads the selected articles and PhD posters).

**Relevance** - Scientific and socio-economic impact is quite good but. there is no evidence of an increasing trend in impact.

**Vitality and Feasibility** - This group suffers from being an artificial clustering of two quite different groups: Economics of Households and Consumers and Regional Economics. Given its high potential for research this group has not fully managed to generate the output (however measured) that it should be able to generate, nor take advantage of the potential synergies between itself and the chair groups of Agricultural and Development Economics. The latter aspect is no doubt affected by structural (current clustering) considerations.

## **Conclusion**

The ECH chair group has established a very unique market niche giving it a clear comparative advantage in the Netherlands if not in Europe. However, its performance falls somewhat below potential. It would benefit from one or two extra staff members in behavioural economics and the establishment of a lab in experimental economics. Moreover, re-clustering so that the Economics of Consumers and the Household and Landscape Economics sub-groups can focus and build upon their unique strength would be helpful. If the ECH chair group could also incorporate firm decision-making, this would strengthen the group's research capacity and significance. It would also be important not to incentivize the group to orient its output on Web of Science. This is a much too narrow indicator of output and impact and would distort and bias incentives in a highly unscientific manner.

## Education and Competence Studies Group (ECS)

Current holder	Prof. Dr M. Mulder
Average tenured research input:	3.8 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	3.5 fte

<b>Assessment:</b>	Scientific quality	4.0
	Productivity	4.0
	Relevance	4.0
	Vitality and feasibility	4.0

The Education and Competence Studies Group (ECS), although only launched as a new group in 2004, has made a significant contribution to the debates on competence and qualifications. The group has specialized in competence development in the subject matter fields of Wageningen University, for example sustainable development and environment, as well as developing fundamental research in theoretical aspects of competence.

As reported in the ECS self-assessment and the interview, the group has taken deliberate action with respect to its publication strategy. Realizing that innovative publications are likely to appear in niche journals but not in ISI journals, the group decided to target both types of journals, and 'translate' between them. The quality of the results achieved in the past few years is impressive. The publications include a broad range of papers in academic journals, including a good proportion with ISI status and on the international journal ranking lists such as the list recently produced by Mingers and Harzing. It is difficult to achieve this level of publication in a specialist area, especially when the specialism is a hybrid of a sub-set of education, management and further restricted to the specialist Wageningen UR domain.

In terms of productivity, ECS has achieved a remarkable acceleration in less than five years. Their productivity now appears to be strong and continuous, largely focusing on peer reviewed journals, but not to the exclusion of books (e.g. Wals) and other publications. There does not appear to be any productivity trade-off between fundamental research and more applied research.

Relevance is easy to identify in the work of the ECS. Real-world relevance may even partly explain the difficulty of placing papers in this area in first division journals. Certainly their research is relevant to current debates in policy and practice, and is having an impact on these levels, which is the ultimate test. Their recent work has helped clarify concepts of competence, which has dogged attempts to make the European Qualifications Framework fully operational, and they have raised important questions for education in this respect.

In terms of vitality and feasibility, it is clear that an experienced researcher leading a young and energetic team will continue to yield results. Over the past few years, ECS has clearly developed into an effective team with an impressive work pace that they seem certain to be able to sustain over the coming years. Indeed, given the time it takes to establish effective working relationships and the fact that team members were recruited over a period of time, ECS is probably only just beginning to reveal its potential and certainly we can anticipate a continued growth in the quantity and quality of publications without any sacrificing of innovation or relevance.

In summary, ECS is functioning at a high level in the EU, competing with the leading competence research groups in Bremen, Toulouse and Aix-en-Provence. They are gaining international prominence in the world of agricultural and environmental education managing to balance leadership in this niche area whilst maintaining a serious presence in more transversal areas. This is well demonstrated by the track record of its members and the trajectory established in the group's strategy.

## Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group (FNP)

Current holder:	Prof. B. J. M. Arts
Average tenured research input:	1.7 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	2.1 fte

<b>Assessment</b>	Scientific quality	3.5
	Productivity	3.5
	Relevance	3.0
	Vitality and feasibility	3.5

The Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group (FNP) is ably and energetically chaired by Professor B. J. M. Arts. It is beginning to carve a strong, new, internationally visible niche for itself, its students, and its research. Combining its current and historical strengths, the group members are focusing their research on the social dimensions of forestry and natural resource use. To take full advantage of the synergies across their research, FNP has developed and is beginning to deploy a practice-based approach to understanding policy, implementation, behaviour, and outcomes. Simultaneously, the group is intensifying its focus on publishing in higher-impact journals.

The group currently has 1 professor, 1 associate professor, 5 assistant professors, and 10 PhD students in addition to research staff. Although the FNP group is stable and has a long history, the current focus and research trajectory of the group is best traced back to 2006 when the current chair assumed his duties. In the past six years, the group has generated more than 160 academic publications with a marked appreciation in the number of refereed articles and total publications in the latter half of the assessment period (approximately two-thirds of the total count). Indeed, the average number of refereed journal articles for the FNP group is the highest among the reviewed chair groups for our panel: more than 6 per core FTE. This is a highly respectable number of refereed publications by international standards.

New NWO- supported research initiatives: 1) Contested Democracy, and 2) BIODIVERSA attest to the strength of the group's emerging research ideas. The group has also built important international connections with universities, research institutions, and policy bodies – these should be further strengthened.

There is substantial evidence in favour of the group's youth, intellectual vitality, and feasibility. These include the relatively low age of its staff members, the consensual emergence of a focus on social science and governance aspects of forests, and the new unifying approach – practice based – that group members crafted as the theme around which to make intellectual contributions. These developments, as also the positive social interactions within the group – for example through its research lounges – bode well for the future social and intellectual relevance of the group.

Indeed, the group has positioned itself well in terms of its relevance. The emerging and increasing importance of social aspects of forestry in global debates on climate change, land-use related emissions, livelihoods, and adaptation are other reasons the group's work will find strong positive reception. However, group members will need to pay more concerted attention to some of these new themes – especially climate change, to take full advantage of the embodied potential in the group.

The group members and leadership are well aware of these issues and of the need to further enhance the visibility of their research and publications. This can be achieved more speedily by greater emphasis on publications in major social science journals, attending to the explosion of work on climate change, and taking better advantage of the practice-based approach they have developed to guide their research and intellectual labour.

## Irrigation and Water Engineering Group (IWE)

Current Holder:	Prof. Dr. L.F. Vincent
Average tenured research input:	2.8 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	3.5 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality	4.0
Productivity	4.5
Relevance	5.0
Vitality and feasibility	5.0

This group has grown and evolved over its history, and is now focused upon the overarching aim: 'Making Water Work'. It pursues this mission through 3 principal themes: Water Rights, Irrigation and Livelihoods; Irrigation and Water Management Policies and Politics; Water Productivity, Irrigation Technologies and Agro-ecology. It sees these three themes as respectively addressing the crosscutting normative issues of equity; democracy and sustainability. The ethos of the group is captured in the phrase 'reflexive engineers', and the inclusion of 'Engineering' in the title of the group contains the strong signal of interdisciplinarity between engineering, natural sciences and the social science preoccupations of the Group's staff members. Over time the Group has shifted incrementally from a strong focus upon practice and advisory work towards a more academic interdisciplinary perspective, though retaining a concern for influencing governance and policy. Conceptually it pursues a sociotechnical agenda, supported by empirically based research. It conducts this research through its own direct staff resources (including 3 contract PhD students), its sandwich students (9 in the evaluation period, of which 3 completed), collaboration with Wageningen UR colleagues, and wider research networks across a range of 'water actors' in addition to scientific colleagues. Its research contains both 'pure' case study and examination of material from interventions. Geographically its main research focus is the Andean, South Asian and Southern Africa regions, with very limited attention to The Netherlands, though some Masters projects are generating some interesting comparative possibilities via the notion of 'Dynamic Deltas'.

A particular feature of this group is that its work has evolved 'up the hydrological chain' from micro-level irrigation systems analysis around the technology, productivity, social arrangements interface towards more river basin and watershed management of larger scale water systems which includes drinking water and other uses as well as irrigation. This evolution brings it into wider interdisciplinary collaboration embracing natural sciences on the one hand and governance on the other. It also opens up major possibilities in the context of the climate change agenda. With climate change, there may be a case for a primary focus upon sustainability, recognising that equity and democracy are in effect sub-themes or preconditions for sustainability. Alongside climate change, future agendas will embrace the impact of high food prices on the technical and social aspects of water management, especially in the context of increasing competition and the needs for rationing and regulation.

Another feature of the group has been a longstanding commitment to gender issues. With the dissolution of the Gender Studies Group, special financing was provided for 3 Associate Professors distributed across 3 Chair Groups, including IWE. But now there are only 2 in Wageningen UR, as one has not been replaced, and the special financing is due to disappear. The Assoc. Prof in IWE will be absorbed into its main budget because the gender work is intrinsic and the group can afford the absorption. But there remains concern about the overall approach of Wageningen UR to gender dimensions, especially in the context of climate change effects.

IWE has been de facto clustered within the Environmental Sciences Group for the last 7 years, so present Wageningen UR reforms will not destabilise the Group's central 'interface' position between sciences, engineering and social sciences. Indeed the Review team sees it as a paradigm case of interdisciplinary collaborative research in an agricultural university in a post-agricultural, post-rural world.

The group's publishing strategy is well thought out and is expressed in its productivity table 4, but it shares some cross-cutting issues with other groups in CERES/MGS: inappropriate bibliometrics to a mission of relevant knowledge internationally; impact publications not captured by the ISI Web of Science; a set of available journal outlets not ranked highly by ISI/WoS; and a duty to publish overseas in accessible formats (including reports) and in languages other than English. Some of these issues are incompatible with tenure track requirements. Bimodal publishing strategies are favoured, but the issue of incentives, rewards and risks, especially to younger staff, remain.

The group is undoubtedly a leader in its field, having an interdisciplinary comparative advantage over the numerous 'water oriented' departments elsewhere in the world. But it is encouraged to raise its visibility—perhaps through the preparation of articles about its distinctiveness and comparative advantage, using its self-evaluation document as a starting point, but focusing upon the case for constructivist epistemology which operates from an assumption that neither technological nor social parameters are ever fixed and stable. In raising its visibility, it might deploy the 'reflexive engineer' tag more obviously and connect its future more closely to climate change. It is to be praised for managing a constructive balance between its education, research and applied policy potential.

## Law and Governance Group (LAW)

Current holder:	Prof. mr. Dr B.M.J. van der Meulen
Average tenured research input:	2.1 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	2.1 fte

### Assessment

Quality	3.5
Productivity	3.5
Relevance	3.5
Viability/feasibility	3.0

The Law and Government Group is the linear successor of two groups. One, under Prof. Brussaard, was legal in character and focused on agricultural and environmental law in the Netherlands and Europe. The other, under Prof. F. von Benda-Beckmann, was social-scientific (in particular, legal-anthropological) in character and focused on law and legal pluralism in connection with processes of legal change in rural areas of developing countries. Both research themes enjoyed national and international reputations, and the group under Von Benda-Beckmann was in the field of legal anthropology/legal pluralism one of the most highly regarded and internationally influential centres in the world.

The research programme of the new group seeks to build on these strong traditions, with the necessary adjustments to a changed environment. It consists of two themes. One is predominantly legal and focuses on food law, a subject that, largely due to the work of the group, has come to be seen as a distinct discipline within law. The other is social-scientific, focused on the governance of the use of natural resources from the local to the global level, under circumstances of legal pluralism, as well as conflict and violence. This latter theme has a strong empirical-theoretical basis, in the development of which the members of the group have in the past been at the international forefront.

The research of the group is internationally competitive and several members of the group have made significant contributions to the international literature during the review period. The book *Food Law* deserves special mention in this regard. However, the quality of research output seems rather uneven over the members of the group, with only some publishing important articles in leading journals and monographs with highly demanding publishers.

The group's productivity is considerably better than the data in their Self-Evaluation Report suggest. If one takes account of the academic culture of legal scholarship and includes non-refereed journals and books, the average productivity per fte core research staff is 4.3 journal articles and 5.2 book chapters, approximately double what Table 4 shows. And if one takes account of the fact that a substantial book such as *Food Law* should be accorded the weight of at least 5 articles, the average productivity would be considerably higher. In short, while the group's productivity should improve, it is considerably stronger than the quantitative data suggest. The relatively large number of PhDs currently being supervised is an indicator for a considerable productivity increase that can be expected in the near future.

The relevance – in the sense of policy impact – of the group's work is quite high. Participation in the production and evaluation of legislation (presumably not reflected in the group's productivity, although of considerable scientific and policy importance), board memberships of national and international scholarly organizations, editorial boards and book (series), and so forth are for several members of the group important ways of engaging in and communicating the results of their scientific work.

As far as vitality and feasibility are concerned, it should be noted that the group has obviously experienced problems adjusting to the departure of two leading figures in the recent past, and the merger of two previous groups. Nevertheless, on the whole they make a strong impression and their research potential seems considerably greater than their current delivery. Their central research themes are of obvious importance in the context of the general scientific ambitions of the WU. In particular, the decision to make food law a key research theme seems a sound one, likely to bear considerable fruit in the coming years; the intention to pursue this theme in a more interdisciplinary way, including a social-scientific component, deserves support.

On the other hand, the small size of the group and the fragmentation of research apparently characteristic of the current situation in the social sciences at Wageningen, pose a constant threat to the continuity of research themes, and in general make the group vulnerable. Since there are several other groups working on questions concerning the implementation of law, governance, and the like, it seems that a larger group with a correspondingly greater stability might be a good idea.

## **Logistics, Decision and Information Sciences (LDI)**

Information Technology (INF), Operations Research and Logistics (ORL)

Current holders:	Prof. A.J.M. Beulens (INF) Prof. Dr J.G.A.J. van der Vorst (ORL)
Average tenured research input:	INF: 1.1 fte; ORL: 1.1 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	INF: 0.9 fte; ORL: 1.2 fte

<b>Assessment:</b>	Scientific quality	4.0
	Productivity	4.0
	Relevance	4.0
	Vitality/Feasibility	4.0

The Logistics, Decision and Information Sciences section is the result from a recent merger of the Chair Groups Information Technology, and Operations Research and Logistics which merger was undertaken at the beginning of 2008 with the intention of creating sufficient critical mass in research. Also, the chair in Operations Research and Logistics has been newly appointed in January 2005. The focus of the evaluation is therefore on the potential of the newly created section.

The appointment of the new chair in ORL has considerably enhanced the international visibility of the group, which will be further improved by the merger. The research programme sharpens the profile of the group. The key stakeholders profiting from the group's work are companies operating in the domains central to Wageningen UR. The research programme contributes to the solution of managerial problems by providing appropriate approaches and (software) tools. It is promising and prepares the ground for an improved collaboration between members of the two previous groups. There have been a number of joint conference proceedings publications and some joint journal papers. The agenda for the Knowledge Management theme, for which the former INF chair group is largely responsible, needs more coherence. On the other hand, the section might consider exploiting opportunities in core topics such as Enterprise Resource Planning or Advanced Planning Systems as they apply to Wageningen UR areas of study.

The arrival of the new chair in ORL has led to a reorientation of this previously teaching-oriented group which can be clearly observed in the development of the research output. Albeit the total number of publications and PhDs of the merged section is still small, it is high in relation to the input for research. The input side is currently strengthened by some new recruitments and the recent and upcoming completion of PhD theses of previously teaching-focused staff. The high re-organization burden on the Chair Operations Research and Logistics has led to a reduced share of time devoted to research. However, the chair's involvement in the section's research is fundamental in sustaining the section's culture change, particularly since a productive associate professor has accepted a 5 year research appointment abroad.

The impact of publications from the previous ORL Group is high; the impact of the previous Information Technology group is on world average. Research from both groups has resulted in software tools used to support decision making in industry and other institutions. However, the high industrial relevance of the work has thus far not been exploited to generate very significant external funding. Especially, 2<sup>nd</sup> level funding has been absent.

With the merger of two previously independent chairs, the section has demonstrated its ability to react to research challenges. The section has also been successful in recruiting international PhD students and junior staff from outside Wageningen UR. The competences of the latter are complementary and useful in implementing the research programme. Regarding the width of the field covered by the section, a swift replacement of the Information Technology Chair after the imminent retirement of the current chairholder will be crucial for its future research performance.

## Land Use Planning (LUP)

Current holder:	Prof. Dr A.J.J. Van der Valk
Average tenured research input:	1.8 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	2.1 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality	4.0
Productivity	4.0
Relevance	4.0
Vitality and feasibility	3.5

The Land Use Planning Group is the result of a merger between the former Wageningen planning group (Planologie) and a fraction of the agricultural engineering group (Cultuurtechniek) in the middle of the 1990's. Both of these groups had a strong professional focus. A previous VSNU research assessment pointed to a low PhD output and a low level of internationally recognized publications.

The new Land Use Planning Group perceives planning as linking scientific knowledge to actions in the public domain. Planning is both social practice and a supportive scientific enterprise. The metropolitan landscape is seen as their primary domain replacing the old opposites of town and country. The group made strong efforts to develop unifying concepts for land use planning thus exploring the field and limits of multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research. They established their own identity in The Netherlands as the only place for "Green" planning. Moreover, they bridge the gap between the more social planning and design by collaborating intensively with landscape architecture. The number of publications in journals covered by the Web of Science increased considerably and the citation impact is above world average. To enhance the visibility in the international planning community the Committee recommends a focus on the journals in which the debate is taking place. The composition of the staff raises some concern (Dutch, male, age structure). The opportunity arising from staff retiring should be used to change the actual composition of the staff.

The strategies for strengthening research resulted in a steady improvement of all scores compared to the previous assessment. As it is not clear from the self evaluation report what the content is of contract research (short term versus long term; local, regional, national, international), the Committee expresses some concern on the distribution of funds (high percentage of contract funds). The Committee suggests to focus more on the prestigious NWO funding. The Committee also expresses its concern on the low number of PhDs.

## Marketing and Consumer Behaviour Group (MCB)

Current holder:	Prof. Dr Ir J.C.M. van Trijp
Average tenured research input:	3.7 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	3.0 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality:	5.0
Productivity:	4.0
Relevance:	4.0
Vitality and feasibility:	3.5

The Marketing and Consumer Behaviour Group (MCB) focuses on a research programme based on three interrelated pillars (marketing, consumer behaviour and societal values). In this way the Group makes excellent research mostly on the interfaces of the three pillars. Especially the research on Consumer Social Responsibility is highly advanced, taking into consideration new technological developments, consumer risk perception and new methodology for data collection (e.g. choice experiments, observational measures and eye movement analysis).

The Marketing sub-programme is leading to research on the marketing supply chains in developing countries. However, the level of staff input has decreased in a field with high impact. The Societal Values sub-programme has been developed on the basis of PhD-student research and is on a good level.

The MCB group has a high international recognition and innovative potential resulting in a very good citation impact. The current scientific and production output is mostly based on the Consumer Behaviour sub-programme.

The relevance of research is very high from the scientific point of view. The contract-funded research input and output also proves the high socio-economic impact of research. A major success factor is to keep the Consumer Behaviour sub-programme at high level. The scientists have a broad and effective collaborative network and high level of peer recognition.

Currently, the Marketing sub-programme is less productive in academic publications. The socio-impact of the Marketing sub-programme is becoming weaker due to loss of staff. With regard to future vitality and feasibility the group is at a turning point. Capable professors are leaving and are replaced by young researchers, who have yet to reach a high research level. Also other staff members in the field of marketing have to upgrade their performance. In the near future, steps will be taken to keep the vitality of marketing research. We would like to encourage and support the efforts to publish in high impact journals.

As nearly all the current staff members are trained in Wageningen, new appointments could provide an opportunity to diversify the scientific base of MCB.

## **Business Administration/ Management Studies (MST)**

Current Holder : Prof. Dr S.W.F. Omta  
Average tenured research input: 2.8 fte  
Tenured research input in 2008: 3.0 fte

<b>Assessment:</b>	Scientific quality:	3.5
	Productivity:	4.0
	Relevance:	4.0
	Vitality and feasibility:	4.0

The Management Studies Group is a group that considers itself as emerging from a period in which individuals mostly worked alone and the group lacked the coherence that would support effective synergism. While they recognize that more can be done, there have been great improvements in group focus and in collaborations both within the group and across unit and university boundaries. The vision of the group is to be a leader in chain and network science, with a special focus on innovation and internationalization. As several other chair groups, they focus on supply chains and networks (particularly food supply chains/networks). They are distinguished from other chair groups in their emphasis on strategic (e.g., governance) and innovation/entrepreneurship issues in supply chains and networks.

The group's researchers are embedded both in the world of (chain and network) science and the world of professional practice. The group has taken concrete steps to contribute to each world and to span the gap between them. The chair recognized the need for an outlet for research papers in the field and launched the Journal of Chain and Network Science (JCNS) to meet this need. The researchers are active in professional groups and Dutch and EU government advisory panels and standard-setting efforts. They have established a biennial conference on chain and network science, with over two hundred attendees, that attracts both academic and industry participants from Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America.

The group's value is recognized by the government and industry, as evidenced by its continued success in attracting level 3 funding. This can be expected to continue.

The group is not as productive in the ISI-dominated bibliometric assessment as it might be. Although one can argue that the group's successes in bridging the worlds of science and practice is not amenable to measures such as bibliometrics, the group is encouraged to seek available opportunities to publish the results of its work in ISI journals as well as increase the visibility and stature of JCNS.

The Review Committee commends the group on their effectiveness in admitting a diverse group of PhD students from around the world. This enables them to maintain a flow of fresh ideas and to avoid the risk of "inbreeding" if they were to admit (and later appoint) only students from the Netherlands or from Dutch universities. By observing the students during their programme of study and research, the group has been able to be selective in retaining the best ones for realizing their vision.

A weakness of the group, acknowledged in their self evaluation report, is the relatively high age of the senior staff members. This presented a challenge of workload to the research staff and was a threat to the future viability and feasibility of the group. This challenge and threat have been met by the group's obtaining the resources to appoint two of their current students, both of whom will defend their theses in 2009, as assistant professors.

Several factors lead to a high assessment of the group's future viability and feasibility: the new appointees (addressing the concern of age and succession of leadership), the effectiveness in attracting outside resources from contracts and NWO to augment the investments by WU, and the promising future of the journal and biennial conferences. Although not without risk, these factors suggest a promising future for the group.

## Public Administration and Policy (PAP)

Current holder:	Prof. Dr C.J.A.M. Termeer
Average tenured research input:	0.9 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	1.6 fte

### Assessment

Scientific quality	3.0
Productivity	3.0
Relevance	3.5
Vitality and feasibility	4.0

The Public Administration and Policy Group is headed by a leader with tremendous energy and drive, with a very clear vision on how to position the group both nationally and internationally, both with respect to their theoretical-disciplinary focus and with respect to their natural resources-institutional position.

The group started toward the end of 2005, and has 1 professor; 3 assistant professors, 1 researcher, and 8 PhD students. It is seeking to position its work at the interface of three intellectual streams: policy sciences, organizational studies, and organizational psychology. We note that public administration (P.A.) as a field typically draws on the first two, and thus engaging organizational psychology as an explicit third pillar is already innovative. The focus is also innovative, in this regard, with respect to other P.A. programmes in The Netherlands. In other universities, the P.A. programmes have typically focused either on the policy side or on the organizational side, or the department is split between the two. This group is taking strong steps in seeking to combine policy and organizational studies. Furthermore, their focus on 'reflexive action research' also distinguishes them from other P.A. programmes, internationally as well as nationally.

The Peer Review subcommittee felt, unanimously, that this group was going through review prematurely with respect to their 'life cycle,' so to speak: the group has effectively existed for only three years (the group leader took up the chair towards the end of 2005), and this means that the group has not had the full 6 years to develop a portfolio for evaluation. Three years is too short time to be expected to achieve international excellence or to be judged on the relevance of their work.

Nonetheless, what they present for review shows a very strong performance. Indeed, they have performed in all areas at or above the average of the other groups we reviewed. The group presented a list of peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, books, non-refereed book chapters, scientific reports, and conference papers for 2009 (i.e., not work included in the self evaluation report, which ended with 2008 work) that is impressive (e.g., 8 scientific articles in less than the first 6 months of the year!). If they keep up this current trajectory, we can anticipate that their next review will see them at the top of the performance scale and they might receive a 4 or more at the end of the review period.

Concerning the idea of clustering, we see that the group leader has taken the initiative in creating the Wageningen Centre for Governance, which has the potential to bring together several groups concerned with this topic. She has already been in negotiation with a handful of such groups, apparently with success. We find that this effort should be supported – and that an effort to impose another form of cluster in competition with this one would potentially weaken the existing Centre, as well as the energy that is bringing it into existence.

With respect to quality, then, we find the group having a clear and interesting research programme and a good international network. Concerning productivity, in addition to the comments above, we note their clear-cut writing and publishing strategy:

1. to work with recent graduates to publish articles from their thesis chapters;
2. to write papers for conference presentation at both discipline-based and life science associations;
3. to target journals that are discipline-based, interdisciplinary, and life science based.

The group has organized monthly meetings that are based on members' papers; this can only help to encourage and facilitate those papers making their way through the peer review and other publishing processes. We think the group leader has exactly the right attitude in encouraging her staff to be professionally active first – that is, to publish in journals that are central to the focus of their research – and to attend to the journal's ISI-ranking second.

The group is building a "group book" to articulate their own programme, which will no doubt serve as a catalyst for the expression of their own thinking about what they are doing. We see this as an important strategy for continuing vitality of the group. Moreover, recent arrivals in the group are clearly positioning themselves to take the group beyond its current evaluation, both in time and in ratings.

Lastly, we note that the group has expressed some difficulty with getting their own courses into the curriculum, and that this has a serious effect on their ability to attract students, especially at the Master's level. This limits their ability to develop their research trajectories, and it also has implications for their ability to 'grow' their own PhD students out of BA and Master's student pools. We recommend that the university take steps to help them along these paths.

## Rural Development Sociology Group (RDS)

Current Holder:	Prof. Dr L. E. Visser
Average tenured research input:	2.6 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	2.6 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality	4.0
Productivity	4.0
Relevance	5.0
Vitality and feasibility	4.0

The Rural Development Sociology Group is enthusiastic, normatively-driven, and ambitious both as a contributor to Graduate School CERES and intellectually. Members of the group are among the inheritors of what is known internationally as the Wageningen School of Rural Sociology. This involves the development and exploration of what has come to be known as the Actor-Oriented approach. This approach highlights multiple ways in which people strive to cope with situations in which they find themselves. The group also comprises the Disaster Studies Group, which, as the name implies, examines the impacts of and responses to disasters. Both approaches fit well with Wageningen University's overall mission.

The group provides a very substantial and important service to the Global South by virtue of (1) training very large numbers of PhDs from Asia, Africa, and especially Latin America, (2) maintaining long term ties to its graduates, thereby opening new avenues of research both for those graduates and for the members of the chair group itself, and (3) maintaining and building collaborative networks between universities, NGOs, and policymakers in those nations and scientific institutions in the North. These networks have been strengthened by the publication of a wide range of materials in the languages of the networked nations. However, as is to be expected, there are costs to be paid in providing such training. In particular, RDS students tend to come from various technical fields. As such, they take longer to complete their PhDs and do not always enter into academic positions.

The viability of the group is evidenced in the large numbers of visiting professorships received by its members, large numbers of visitors hosted, frequent service on editorial boards of leading journals, service on numerous advisory boards, and organization of many conferences.

Of particular interest is the intellectual viability of the group. The group is self-consciously driven by a recognition of its novel epistemological stance and its relation to various current theoretical perspectives in sociology, e.g., Actor Network Theory. Given the recent interest and concerns within the context of the EU and globally with what is variously called 'converging technologies' and 'knowledge society,' this approach might be developed further.

## Rural History Group (RHI)

Current holder	Prof. Dr P. Kooij
Average tenured research input:	1.2 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	1.2 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality	3.0
Productivity	4.0
Relevance	3.0
Vitality and feasibility	3.0

The Rural History Group has successfully actualised the teaching and research programme during the last decade. The focus of research is on

1. long-term regional development in a comparative perspective in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century
2. consumption and modernisation 1500-2000
3. historic development of western agriculture in a farming system approach 1500-2000
4. infrastructure of Dutch farming 1800-2000.

This research is relevant in the Wageningen context because it provides a historic dimension to the Wageningen research and gives insight in the structural problems that are present on the backstage of the ongoing process of modernisation of the countryside in Western Europe en elsewhere in the world.

The publication strategy of the group is not in line with the Wageningen tradition. Therefore, the group is hardly visible outside their own niche. That is not only because of the use of the Web of Science, although the *European Reference Index for the Humanities* (ERIH) seems to present better results. Nevertheless, the group has a high potential to contribute to a number of research themes of the Wageningen domain. In order to effectuate that contribution the publication strategy of the group has to change. That change in strategy has to be part of the discussion about the succession of the current chair holder.

The productivity of the group is high, but the relevance hampered by the invisibility of the results in the Wageningen context.

The score for vitality and feasibility is an expression of the belief that the group has the potential to substantially contribute to a number of research themes related to the Wageningen spearheads. The use of that potential, however, can only be effective when the publication strategy is changed. The strategic alignment of the Rural History Group with the Environmental Policy Group will also be helpful to bring the publication strategy of the group in line with the Wageningen tradition as soon as possible and to strengthen the position of the group in teaching.

## Rural Sociology Group (RSO)

Current Holder:	Prof. Dr Ir J.S.C. Wiskerke
Average tenured research input:	2.3 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	2.6 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality	4.0
Productivity	4.0
Relevance	4.5
Vitality and feasibility	3.5

The Rural Sociology Group is enthusiastic and ambitious both as a contributor to MG3S and intellectually. Members of the group are among the inheritors of what is known internationally as the Wageningen School of Rural Sociology. This involves the development and exploration of what has come to be known as the Actor-Oriented approach. This approach stresses the myriad ways in which people strive to cope with, mitigate, and improve the situations in which they find themselves.

RSO's work is highly relevant to contemporary debates within Europe and globally. Its members have participated in and/or led eight European projects during the review period, even as they have maintained a balanced portfolio including smaller grants from more local sources. However, while RSO used to be solely focused on Europe, it has now moved beyond Europe to include, for example, the USA, as well as a comparative study of Europe, China, and Brazil. Its members focus on social transformation in agrarian and metropolitan contexts and on food chains. Moreover, with the disappearance of sharp rural/urban distinctions, RSO has begun to look at different patterns of urbanisation, and new activities and identities around 'rurality'. RSO also looks at cities and food policy, with urbanites as social actors managing food security. There is a strong emphasis upon regional analysis of food systems and policies.

The RSO Group is keen to be multidisciplinary, and to collaborate with other sciences. It is well-linked with other WU departments through both teaching and research. Moreover, RSO tries and succeeds in being relevant for different audiences, policy makers and practitioners, and not just the scientific community.

The RSO Group is quite ambitious: It wishes to add foci on new social movements, regional/rural food governance, urban and peri-urban foodscapes, human-animal relations, and green care. These ambitions can be achieved partly through collaboration with others and with good networking, e.g. established relations with Cardiff. At the same time, barring significant increases in staffing, it is unlikely that all these avenues of research can be developed.

RSO supports the proposed merger of chair groups to reduce diseconomies of small size for essential administrative tasks. A merged group could include Rural Sociology, Rural Development Sociology, Sociology of Consumers and Households (which also includes the subunit of Health and Society), Environmental Policy and Rural History.

The quest for publications in scientific journals cited in the Web of Science is downgrading other forms of professional output, and thus affecting impact, influence and outreach. However, changing PhD output from monograph to articles is not always appropriate. That said, RSO staff are aware of the need to find new, innovative ways of communicating with policy and practice stakeholders—blogs, youtube, etc.

## Socio-Spatial Analysis Group (SAL)

Current holder:	Vacant (Acting Head Dr H.J. de Haan)
Average tenured research input:	2.3 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	3.1 fte

<b>Assessment</b>	Scientific quality	4.0
	Productivity	3.5
	Relevance	4.0
	Vitality and feasibility	4.0

SAL aims to produce improvements in the living environment and its relations to spatial qualities and values through a better balance of functional, ecological and socio-cultural needs. A range of social science and humanities academic disciplines and their respective traditions are evidenced through 3 thematic fields: 1) Sustainable Tourism and Critical Tourism Studies; 2) Historical Geography and Heritage; 3) Leisure, Public Space and Landscape.

The chair group should be congratulated for the significant progress made since 1999 across all three thematic fields under the leadership of Professor Jaap Lengkeek (now Emeritus Professor). An overall assessment of '4' indicates that SAL conducts research that is internationally competitive and members of the group have made significant contributions to several fields over the review period. Furthermore, its contributions to Sustainable Tourism and Critical Tourism Studies are more correctly classified as '5', world leading. An effective publications strategy produces a balanced portfolio of monographs, edited books and peer reviewed articles in addition to unpublished scientific reports. Research quality is evidenced through several publications appearing in A-grade peer reviewed articles that command an impressive citation rating. Highly visible international activity has clearly positioned Wageningen as a leading international institution in Tourism Studies.

Productivity was somewhat uneven across the SAL team. In part, this can be explained by the different academic traditions reflected in the group and by the use of blunt quantitative measures of productivity. For example, a high quality monograph in Heritage Studies should carry a different weighting from a single article but at present this is not the case. The Committee suggests that a monograph should be equivalent to at least 5 journal articles. In order to maintain and improve its productivity rates over the next review period the SAL chair group should aim to increase the frequency of publication in A-rated peer reviewed journals.

The Relevance of the group's work, particularly in the field of Sustainable Tourism in Africa, is noteworthy. Improvements against this criterion could be achieved if those researchers working across the proposed theme in Landscape, Health and Leisure could be encouraged to develop a coherent strategy, and take collective ownership, for placing Wageningen at the forefront of this interdisciplinary area in relevant subject and professional communities in both Europe and North America.

The chair group scores well on Vitality and Feasibility. Within the university, SAL collaborates effectively with several of the groups in the Landscape Centre. These developments should be encouraged and strengthened over the next few years. The group has an extensive pool of international collaborators and provides leadership in important transnational networks in a range of fields. These are fully exploited to underpin innovative Masters level teaching.

The university is in the final stages of appointing a new Chair. There is, within SAL, a model for achieving world leading research, and the group and its new Chair are encouraged to adapt it for all of its future research themes.

## Sociology of Consumers and Households (SCH)

Current Holder: Prof. Dr A. Niehof  
Average tenured research input: 2.2 fte  
Tenured research input in 2008: 3.1 fte

<b>Assessment:</b>	Scientific quality	3.5
	Productivity	3.0
	Relevance	4.0
	Vitality and feasibility	3.0

The group introduces itself as interdisciplinary. This is reasonable given their interest in research on consumers and households. Households have emergent properties that enable them to develop strategies and take actions in a variety of situations as well as to process conflicting interests by both members and outside actors. Their approach emphasizes social and cultural issues, while also necessitating consideration of economic and technological facts and processes. The household focus promotes an examination and understanding of phenomena and processes as integrated wholes. The group has a long and varied history. The latest structural change was in the middle of this reviewing period (2005) when the Public Health and Society group (PH&S) joined SCH bringing new resources and challenges.

The position of SCH Group within the entire university ought to be at the very centre but it often finds itself at the margins. The new 'Wageningen approach' launched by the University makes the longstanding work of this group far more relevant and challenging. All three key elements; food, living environment and people (incl. health, lifestyles and livelihood) are clearly present and integrated in most research of this group. The emphasis on everyday activities and the dynamics makes the study of interactions among diverse levels (individual, household, community, society) a necessity.

The mission as stated by the group and the approaches demonstrated by the group's research are relevant and internationally important. The considerable diversity in titles and research topics makes it possible to be present at many forums; however, at the same time it brings fragmentation and it has not allowed a critical mass to appear. There is a large number of PhD students for a small group, and several excellent publications with increasing numbers.

During the review period a considerable portion of achievements were connected to the AWLAE project under the leadership of Anke Niehof. The project has hosted 19 women PhD students from African countries and has been innovative with respect to new modes of educating and supervising students. During the review period 10 students defended their theses, most of them under AWLAE project. There are co-supervisors from other social science chair groups but also from other groups such as those affiliated with environmental sciences. However, the present project is nearing its end, and the question remains how to transfer this knowledge base and employ these well functioning networks for future purposes. Some new initiatives and/or arrangements are needed. Furthermore, the present situation has resulted in quite heavy workloads for several staff persons. These problems should be addressed in a focused manner so as to direct the human potential present in the chair group in innovative ways resulting in new funded projects.

The SCH Group has a unique focus on households, consumers, and everyday activities, but it shares many common interests with several other groups. This brings various challenges for future restructuring. The knowledge base established by the group is flexible and could be directed in diverse directions. Because most research topics on which the group wants to focus are complex in nature, a bigger core unit might bring extra value. In the present situation there are many promises of which the group is well aware, such as building on public health issues, the reframing of the university, and increasing societal needs for new solutions based on consumer- and user-oriented approaches in product development, housing and care services, and managing households. This university could provide an excellent research environment for activities built around these issues.

## Technology and Agrarian Development (TAD)

Current holder:	Prof. Dr P. Richards
Average tenured research input:	1.3 fte
Tenured research input in 2008:	2.0 fte

### Assessment:

Scientific quality	4.0
Productivity	5.0
Relevance	5.0
Vitality and feasibility	3.5

The Technology and Agrarian Development (TAD) Group has become very active and successful during the review period. This chair group offers a valuable interdisciplinary and integrative approach that bridges the social sciences and natural sciences. Their approach is focused on agrarian technologies and techniques in the context of agrarian, societal, and scientific transformations. It involves a well-suited mixture of scientific research, policy-outreach, and action research.

General interests of the group are in:

- epistemology and methodology of integrative research emphasizing technique and practice;
- institutional Features of Changes in Food Provision and Agriculture;
- technological Change in Situations of Crisis, Conflict, and Extremity.

The TAD Group has specific interests in:

- fundamental insights into the role of technology in social-environmental relations;
- pesticide risk;
- commodity chains in agriculture;
- participatory plant breeding and seed networks;
- history of technology from a spatial-environmental perspective.

The group is motivated by a view of technology at the centre of social and material-environmental life in agrarian transformations. It combines a strong empirical emphasis with development and careful testing of situated theory. The group has developed a scientifically important methodology (“technography”), which is an empirically grounded thick-description ethnographic approach that is integrated into the conceptual field of explaining social and environmental change in agrarian development. The group’s approach is also distinctive in that it forges symmetrical combinations of selected elements of social science and natural science. The close articulation to the natural sciences---from entomology and soils to plant pathology and breeding---is a defining feature and essential attribute of this group.

The group is highly productive by all measures given its currently small-medium size. They have produced an exceptionally large number of PhDs (including many from the Global South), especially given the small size of the group. Equally impressive is the sharp increase in the productivity curve of this group, meaning that productivity was accomplished in the context of institutional growth that was recent and rapid.

Viability of the group is challenged by the impending retirement of the Chair, who has been particularly active and productive in providing leadership. Experienced Assistant Professors offer the potential of solid middle-level research staff in the near future. Successful transition will require a fully appointed senior Chair to lead this productive group that is integral to the University’s mission. For this reason, we have given a relatively low score on the ‘vitality and feasibility’ dimension; this should be not be seen as a critique of the group, but as flag to administrators so that something quite important is not lost by virtue of inaction.

## Appendix 1

### Excerpt Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003 – 2009 *For public research organisations*

*(adapted for Wageningen University, version December 2008)*

#### 1. Objectives of the evaluation system

Improvement and accountability are the main objectives of this system of quality assessment. Public accountability is both a requirement for publicly funded research and an inherent element in the improvement cycle in which this scheme of evaluation plays a dominant role.

With regard to the objective of *improvement*, the system is directed toward both the research and research training, and its management. Evaluators are explicitly asked to judge not only the performance of an institute's research and researchers, but also its leadership, strategy and policy, and research organisation. If applicable, the quality questions also may refer to the socio-economic impact of research and to multi- and interdisciplinary research.

The evaluation system is a combination of *retrospective and prospective analysis*. The relationship between retro- and prospective evaluation is to some extent the result of acquired confidence for the future based on insight in the past. In other words: discussions about the future require knowledge of the past. The emphasis will be on the prospective analysis.

*Public accountability* is a requirement in the case of publicly funded research. The evaluation committee will report their findings to the board of the responsible research organisation. The responsible board will make policy decisions for the institute at hand based on the evaluation report and discussion with the institute. Together, the evaluation report and the decision of the board form the results of the evaluation. These results will be reported to the Minister of Education and Sciences as part of existing procedures in which the responsible research organisations report to the minister periodically (yearly) about evaluations conducted under their auspices. As such the results of the evaluation have a public character.

The system aims at operating with the least possible burden for the researchers: a self-evaluation once every three years, an external evaluation once every six years. On the basis of a yearly monitoring system, the institutes maintain data needed for these evaluations in a systematic way. Researchers who work in different environments can use the same data as input for different evaluations. The three research organisations aim at a national research information system, accessible through the Internet, to store all relevant data. This protocol prescribes which data are to be provided. In 2002 such a national information system is not yet available.

## 2. Assessment criteria

The assessment criteria for an institute as a whole and those for the chair groups are similar, but differ in scope and depth. The institute assessment puts emphasis on strategy and organisational aspects, whereas the chair groups assessments focus on the results and quality of the scientific research and on the future.

Together the criteria represent a comprehensive picture of the performance of an institute or research group in any given field, and of its future potential. It has to be noted though that the elaboration of these criteria may differ for different fields. Because publication traditions and contextual relations vary among different fields, articles in high ranking journals, for example, are much more telling and accepted as indicator in some fields than in other. This goes for the distinction at large between scientific areas (natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, medical sciences, agricultural sciences, technical sciences) as for sub fields in these areas. Having said that, the main criteria are elaborated as a guideline for the evaluators.

The main criteria to be used in the evaluation are:

- Quality (international recognition and innovative potential)
- Productivity (scientific output)
- Relevance (scientific and socio-economic impact)
- Vitality and feasibility (flexibility, management, and leadership)
- 

The evaluation committee presents its judgements on these criteria according to a five-point scale: excellent, very good, good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory.

### Extended description of the five point scale

**Excellent.** Work that is at the forefront internationally, and which most likely will have an important and substantial impact in the field. Institute is considered an international leader.

**Very Good.** Work that is internationally competitive and is expected to make a significant contribution; nationally speaking at the forefront in the field. Institute is considered international player, national leader.

**Good.** Work that competitive at the national level and will probably make a valuable contribution in the international field. Institute is considered internationally visible and a national player.

**Satisfactory.** Work that is solid but not exciting, will add to our understanding and is in principle worthy of support. It is considered of less priority than work in the above categories. Institute is nationally visible.

**Unsatisfactory.** Work that is neither solid nor exciting, flawed in the scientific and or technical approach, repetitions of other work, etc. Work not worthy of pursuing.

The judgements of the evaluators will refer to the evaluation unit as a whole, and to relevant parts of the institute (chair groups). In cases where the evaluation committee's judgement is not unanimous, different views of members of the panel should be stated explicitly.

The main criteria should always be reviewed in relation to the mission of the institute or group, especially if this mission restricts the institute or group to operate only for/in a national scientific community: They may be interpreted in the following way.

Quality is to be seen as a measure of excellence and excitement. It refers to the eminence of a group's research activities, its abilities to perform at the highest level and its achievements in the international scientific community. It rests on the proficiency and rigour of research concepts and conduct; it shows in the success of the group at the forefront of scientific development. As a rule, experts in the field – the peers – judge this. They rely on their own knowledge and expertise, on discussions with the group leaders and other members, and on various kinds of systematic information. When an institute provides high quality state of the art facilities to the research community this can be considered as a measure of excellence.

Productivity refers to the total output of the group; that is, the variegated ways in which results of research and knowledge development are publicised. Usually, quantitative indicators measure this. In most cases this will be bibliometrics, which are indicators concerned with publications and citations of publications. In some cases technometrics (largely concerned with patents and citations of patents); or sociometrics (concerned with socio-economic performance or embedment of research) can be applied. The output needs to be reviewed in relation to the input in terms of human resources.

It is important to remember that quantitative approaches have gained credibility in the physical and life sciences, but remain problematic in the social sciences and humanities where different publication traditions exist and publication patterns may vary widely between disciplines. The limitations of the ISI Citation Indexes, which are sometimes relied upon, must also be kept in mind. (ISI databases do not cover the full range of journals, they are weak in emerging areas, impact scores differ between disciplines and even sub-disciplines).

Furthermore, new tools for mapping and analysing productivity are emerging to take account of changes in publication behaviour. As more and more results of research become available through the Internet, these tools become increasingly appropriate and valuable. The research organisations will follow these developments closely and consider the introduction of such new tools into the evaluation process once they have proven their credibility and can provide significant added value to the evaluation process.

Relevance is a criterion that covers both the scientific and the technical and socio-economic impact of the work. Here in particular research choices are assessed in relation to developments in the international scientific community or, in the case of technical and socio-economic impact, in relation to important developments or questions in society at large. Both qualitative and quantitative methods can be used here.

Vitality and feasibility. This dual criterion refers to the internal and external dynamics of the group in relation to the choices made and the success rate of projects. On the one hand, this criterion measures the flexibility of a group, which appears in its ability to close research lines that have no future and to initiate new venture projects. On the other hand, it measures the capacity of the management to run projects in a professional way. Assessment of policy decisions is at stake, as well as assessment of project management, including cost-benefit analysis.

The questions to be answered with these assessments concern both the research institute and the chair groups. These questions are:

For past performance:

1. What are the quality and relevance of the institute?
2. What is the quality of the leadership, management, strategy and chair groups of the institute, its (human) resources, organisation and infrastructure and how can they be improved?
3. To what extent has the institute / chair group achieved its mission and goals formulated for the period under review?

For future plans:

1. Are the overall mission and goals of the institute and its chair groups well chosen and phrased in view of the actual developments in the relevant research field(s)?
2. What are the scientific qualities and relevance of the institute's research plans and to what extent are these plans in line with the overall mission of the institute; i.e. is there sufficient coherence in the research portfolio of the institute?
3. What is the quality of the leadership, management and strategy of the institute, its (human) resources, organisation and infrastructure and how can they be improved?
4. Which of these aspects has room for improvement and how could that be accomplished?

The evaluation committee may be asked to answer additional questions from the board of the research organisation. These may refer to specific tasks of the institute not directly related to its research, specific situations such as major changes in the organisation or mission of the institute, or specific demands of stakeholders who help fund the institute in a substantial way.

The assessment of the PhD programme which will only be executed on the level of the institute (e.g. graduate school) is included as an essential element in the review of the institute. Furthermore, the number and quality of the PhD theses are criteria in the assessment of the quality of the chair groups.

Subcriteria for the review of PhD programmes are:

- Objectives and outcomes of the programme,
- Educational components of the programme;
- Training and supervision;
- Selection and progress monitoring;
- Internal quality assurance
- Institutional embedding
- Internal en external cooperation

## Appendix 2

### Brief Curriculum Vitae of the Review Committee Members

**Prof. Wiebe E. Bijker** (General Chair)  
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Wiebe E. Bijker is professor of Technology & Society at the University of Maastricht. He was trained as an engineer in applied physics (Technical University of Delft), studied philosophy (University of Groningen), and holds a PhD in the sociology and history of technology (University of Twente). Bijker is Director of Studies of the research master MSc-degree programme Cultures of Arts, Science, and Technology (CAST).

Bijker was President of the Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), and was director and chairman of the board of the Netherlands Research School on Science, Technology and Modern Culture (WTMC). He is founding co-editor of the monograph series Inside Technology of MIT Press. Bijker helped to create, and was the first scientific coordinator of, the European master's degree program on Society, Science and Technology (ESST), carried out by some 18 universities in 10 European countries. Bijker has served on advisory committees of NWO's humanities and social science programmes, and is referee for the Economic & Social Research Council, le Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada, the Academy of Finland, the Leverhulme Trust, the National Science Foundation, and for numerous book publishers and journals. He participated in, and chaired, Royal Academy committees resulting in the creation of the Virtual Knowledge Studio in 2006. In 2007 he evaluated for the Directorate General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with Dr. Jack Spaapen, the NWO-WOTRO programme "Research for Development 2002-2006". Bijker is member of the Health Council of the Netherlands.

In November 2006 Bijker received the John Desmond Bernal Prize: awarded jointly by the Society for Social Studies of Science and the Thomson Scientific.

Bijker's research focuses on the relation between technology, society, and science. Since the 1990's political and normative issues have been central. These issues are being studied in a variety of empirical domains: science & technology for developing nations, democratisation of science and technology, ICT, gender and technology, public health policies, public participation experiments, architecture and planning. His most recent work relates to issues of vulnerability in a technological culture—including the fundamental need for some vulnerability in an innovating society.

Founded in the 1970's the Maastricht University is the youngest university in the Netherlands. It offers a broad spectrum of degree programmes at Bachelor's, Master's and PhD level. It encompasses 8 faculties and hosts more than 12,000 students and more than 3,000 staff. The university is European founder of the so called problem-oriented learning, an educational model in which students are challenged to develop their talents and interests by studying research related problems in collaboration with other students.

## **1. Cluster Economics**

**Prof. F. Heidhues** (Group Chair)  
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Franz Heidhues is Prof.(em.) of development economics at the Hohenheim University, Department of Agricultural Economics and Social sciences in the Tropics and Subtropics and member of the University's Center for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture, in Stuttgart, Germany. He teaches and conducts research on poverty, rural development and natural resource management; food and nutrition security; and rural finance, primarily in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. He coordinated and directed the University's DFG funded Special Research Program (Sonderforschungsbereich) 564 "Sustainable Land Use and Rural Development in Mountainous Regions of Southeast Asia".

Before joining the University Hohenheim Franz Heidhues worked from 1969 to 1982 at the World Bank in Washington, D.C. in the fields of macro-economic country studies and agricultural sector reviews, project preparation, appraisal and implementation supervision of agricultural and rural development projects and in management functions.

He studied economics at the universities of Muenster and Munich. He completed his Diploma in Economics in 1964 and obtained his PhD in International Economics in 1969. from the University of Muenster, Germany.

Prof. Heidhues is member of the scientific advisory council to the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

Hohenheim University is one of the eight universities with an agricultural faculty in Germany; it also has a socio-economics and a natural science faculty. Apart from its competence in agricultural sciences, the University has developed special expertise in research and teaching for tropical and subtropical regions. These activities are coordinated and supported by its Center for Tropical Agriculture. The University employs about 110 professors and about 880 scientific staff (including PhD candidates). Close to 7000 students are registered at the University.

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Having been a former visiting scholar at Cambridge, Christchurch, Cornell, Duke, Hebrew, Stirling, and Stanford Universities, Morris Altman is the newly appointed Head of School, Economics and Finance, at Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand. Prior to this Morris was a Professor of Economics at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, where he served as Head of the Department of Economics since 1994. He was elected and served as President of the Society for Advancement of Behavioral Economics (SABE) from 2003 to

2006, the most important and largest international organization of Behavioral Economists. He is currently the President-elect of the Association for Social Economics (ASE) and will serve as President in 2009. Besides being Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Socio-Economics*, he has published over seventy refereed papers on behavioral economics, economic history and empirical macroeconomics and three books in economic theory and public policy and has made well over 100 international presentations on these subjects.

Located in Wellington, New Zealand, Victoria University was established in 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Victoria University Wellington, located in New Zealand's capital city, is comprised of a thriving community of 25,000 people, hosting about 22,000 students. VUW is a major centre for education and research in Australasia. The university has seven Faculties: Architecture and Design, Humanities and Social sciences, Law, Science, Engineering, Education, and Commerce and Administration. The School of Economics and Finance, comprising over 30 academic staff, is housed in the Faculty of Commerce and Administration, and offers well-rounded and respected undergraduate and graduate programs. The faculty members of the School are leaders in their fields and publish on a wide variety of topics covering the spectrum of theoretical, quantitative, financial and historical economics.

**Prof. Stephan von Cramon-Taubadel**  
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Von Cramon-Taubadel is Professor of Agricultural Policy at the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development at the Georg-August-University Göttingen. He completed his BSc and MSc in Agricultural Economics in Canada (respectively Montréal and Winnipeg) whereafter he obtained his PhD in 1992 in Germany (Kiel University) and his Dr. habil. qualification in 1998 at the same university.

Other current positions which von Cramon-Taubadel hold are Co-leader of the German Economic Team in Belarus and Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Institute of Agricultural Development in Central and Eastern Europe (IAMO) in Halle (Germany). Former positions are Editor-in-chief of *Agricultural Economics*, the official journal of the International Association of Agricultural Economists and member of the German Advisory Group on Economic Reforms in Ukraine. Von Cramon-Taubadel has worked as a consultant for numerous organizations like the Commission of the European Union, OECD, FAO, GTZ and the World Bank.

The Georg-August-University of Göttingen was founded in 1737 with an inherent commitment to the critical spirit of the Enlightenment. Throughout the course of its history, the "Georgia Augusta" has succeeded in attracting and retaining world-class researchers whose groundbreaking basic research led to the establishment of the University's international reputation, both in the natural sciences and in the arts, and who remain influential in the shaping of the University profile to this day; the name of Göttingen is associated with more than 40 Nobel Prize winners who have lived and worked here.

Today the University has organized the disciplines into 13 Faculties. The Faculty of Agricultural Sciences offers a full range of BSc, MSc and PhD degree programs in Animal, Plant and Environmental Sciences, as well as Agricultural Economics.

## **2. Cluster Marketing, Management, Information Technology**

**Prof. Jacques Viaene** (Group Chair)  
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Jacques Viaene is professor of Agricultural Economics at the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering of the University of Ghent and Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics at the moment.

Jacques qualified with an agricultural engineer diploma in 1968. He completed his MSc in Economics in 1974 and obtained his PhD in Agricultural Economics in 1974. In his professional employment he is occupied with teaching and research at the University in agricultural marketing, price analysis, agricultural economics and agricultural extension. He is also quite engaged in capacity building for these disciplines in a number of developing countries and project leader of many research projects and studies about agro-marketing in Belgium, EU, East and Central European Countries.

Besides his professional day to day occupation he is President of the Belgian Association of Poultry, Eggs and Rabbits. He wrote over 200 publications and papers about agricultural marketing and agricultural economics and is honoured with several decorations.

Ghent University is one of the major universities in the Dutch-speaking region. Over 130 faculty departments, divided over 11 faculties, offer high-quality courses in every one of their scientific disciplines, each inspired by innovative research. Ghent University yearly attracts over 30,000 students, with a foreign student population of over 2,200 EU and non-EU citizens. Ghent University offers a broad range of study programmes in all academic and scientific branches.

**Prof. Martin Grunow**  
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Martin Grunow is professor in Operations Management, Head of the Operations Management group and leader of the theme "Catering and convenience, freshness and supply chains" in the FoodDTU Center at the Technical University of Denmark. Earlier, he worked at the Technical University Berlin and at Degussa AG's R&D department (a large German producer of fine chemicals). His research interests are in production and logistics management with a focus on supply chain management in the process industries. He has coauthored more than 80 publications amongst others in International Journal of Production Economics, International Journal of Production Research, European Journal of Operational Research, CIRP Annals, and OR Spectrum. For the latter journal, he also acts as an editor (since 2001).

The Technical University of Denmark (DTU) is one of the largest technical research and educational institutions in Northern Europe with 7,000 students and 4,500 employees. This leading university combines research with education, innovation and services to the

authorities. As of January 1, 2007, DTU has merged with the Danish Institute for Food and Veterinary Research, Risø National Laboratory, the Danish Institute for Fisheries Research, the Danish National Space Centre and the Danish Transport Research Institute. The Department of Management Engineering has about 180 academic staff and offers a range of courses and programmes within manufacturing, product design, production technology, strategy, economics, management, organization, sociotechnical design, entrepreneurship and sustainability. The main research areas are innovation, product development, production management, sustainability, construction management and operations research.

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Dr. Robert M. Mason is Professor and Associate Dean for Research at the Information School of the University of Washington. He earned an SB and SM in electrical engineering from MIT and a PhD in industrial and systems engineering from Georgia Tech. He previously was on the faculties of the College of Business at Florida State University and the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University. Prior to devoting full time to academia, he operated two consulting companies and worked in industry. His current research interests focus on the philosophy and ethics of technology management and the cultural aspects of knowledge creation and management. He is a former president of the International Association for the Management of Technology (IAMOT) and serves as a senior editor for Technovation.

Founded in 1861, the University of Washington is one of the oldest state-supported institutions of higher education on the West Coast and is one of the preeminent research universities in the world. The University offers over 250 degrees within 150 departments programs across 18 colleges and schools and ranks 41 out of 130 Tier 1 National Universities (US News and World Report). The University of Washington receives more federal research funding than any other public university in the country, and the 2nd most federal research funding of all universities in the country.

Information Schools (iSchools) are interdisciplinary schools that focus on the relationship among information, technology, and people. The iSchools are often outgrowths (or mergers) of previous academic units such as library science, computer science, and management information systems.

The University of Washington Information School is the newest of 17 Colleges at the University of Washington with 700 students in 4 degree programs; it is the fourth-rated library and information program in the 2008 U.S. News and World Report national rankings and the number-one rated Law Librarianship program (U.S. News and World Report). Faculty members have backgrounds from the physical and social sciences, ranging from fields such as physics, computer science and engineering, library science, political science, philosophy, and law.

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Scott Swinton is Professor in the Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics at Michigan State University.

Prof. Swinton's research and teaching cover the economics of agricultural and ecosystem management, technology evaluation, and environmental policy. His research focuses on enhancing the provision of ecosystem services from agriculture, including activities in the United States, Africa and Latin America. He collaborates closely with biological scientists, including the Long-term Ecological Research project in agro-ecology and the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center. Prof. Swinton has authored over 50 articles in refereed journals and edited five books and journal special issues. He has served on the editorial boards of four journals, currently including the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. He has advised 12 Ph.D. and 14 M.S. students, in addition to participating in advisory committees of over 50 other graduate students. Three of his advisees have received thesis awards from the American Agricultural Economics Association. Prof. Swinton earned his Ph.D. (Agricultural and Applied Economics) from University of Minnesota, his M.S. (Agricultural Economics) from Cornell University, and his B.A. (Political Science and Economics) from Swarthmore College.

Michigan State University is one of world's top 100 research universities. Founded in 1855 as a "land grant" university, its historic focus is on linking research with public outreach and teaching to raise living standards. Its 17 colleges cater to the needs of 46,000 students, including 10,000 graduate students and 4,500 non-US students.

### **3. Cluster Sociology, Rural Development Studies**

**Prof. Lawrence Busch (Group Chair)**

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Lawrence studied at Hofstra and Cornell Universities receiving a PhD in Development Sociology from Cornell University in 1974. Upon graduation he became an Assistant Professor at the University of Kentucky and rose to the rank of Professor there. In 1988-1989 he spent a year working for what is now the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement in Paris. In 1990 he moved to Michigan State University where he was named University Distinguished Professor in 1997. At MSU he also directed the Partnerships for Food Industry Development Project (2001-2004) and the Institute for Food and Agricultural Standards (1998-2008). In 2008 he was offered and accepted the post of Chair at the Centre for Economic and Social Aspects of Genomics (CESAGEN) at Lancaster University. He is now appointed at both institutions.

Lawrence is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a Chevalier de l'Ordre de Mérite Agricole, and past president of both the Rural Sociological Society and the Food, Agriculture, and Human Values Society. His current work focuses on how (formal) standards shape everyday lives, including those of biological scientists as well as citizens and consumers. Lawrence is author or editor of eleven books and about 200 other publications.

Michigan State University is a comprehensive public Land Grant University founded in 1855. Founded as an agricultural university, it currently has about 46,000 students and awards degrees in a wide range of arts, humanities, social and natural science, and professional disciplines at all levels through the doctorate.

Lancaster University, granted its charter in 1964, is now among the top ten universities in the United Kingdom, with a student body of approximately 16,500. It maintains a college-based educational system with 8 undergraduate and one graduate college. It also has a highly rated research program.

Both institutions are internationally oriented, with large numbers of foreign students and many faculty engaged in international research.

**Prof. Kaija Turkki**

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Kaija is Professor in Home Economics at the Department of Home Economics and Craft Science, and Vice Dean in Social Issues at the Faculty of Behavioural Sciences in the University of Helsinki.

Kaija obtained her PhD in household technology on the study of the use of the microwave oven and its effects on food management and kitchen planning in 1985. Consequently she focused her interests further on new technology emphasizing the importance of interaction between a human, household activities and the society. After

being appointed as a Professor in 1988 she initiated the restructuring of the of the Master's Degree programme in home economic teacher education and established a new major home economics at the University of Helsinki. Kaija has been a IFHE Member form th early 80's and joined the Research Committee in1990 and is currently EC Member for Europe until 2010. Additionally she participated in several international editorial boards and advisory committees and platforms, which aim for research innovation and stimulation of societal discussion. She published frequently on home economics focusing on new approaches to the study of everyday life. Her present project is 'Home Economics in transition – Education for Sustainable Everyday Living'.

The present University of Helsinki was founded in Turku on 26 March 1640 as a Swedish national university. It is Finland's largest university and offers a broad range of study programmes. The university encompasses 11 Faculties and hosts almost 40,000 students. The university is a leading multidisciplinary university invited tot the League of European Research Universities (LERU), an association of the best research-intensive universities in Europe.

**Prof. Geof. D. Wood**  
**University of Bath**  
**Faculty of Humanities and Social sciences**  
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After fieldwork in Africa in the late 60s, Wood conducted extensive research in North India, Bangladesh and Pakistan over 3 decades, with additional work in Nepal, Afghanistan, Thailand, Venezuela and Peru. Applied work has included policy analysis and action-research with governments, NGOs and international agencies. Previous research themes: rural development and class formation; irrigation; social development and empowerment; microfinance; urban livelihoods; and public institutional performance. From 1999, he co-directed the 'Welfare Regimes' research project at Bath. Currently focussed upon insecurity, welfare regimes, well-being and strategies of de-clientelisation (thus linking the security and liberty themes).

Member of the ESRC funded 'Well-Being in Developing Countries' research programme at University of Bath (2002-07). Advisor to Socio-Economic Security Programme, ILO, Geneva. Member of Development Studies, RAE Panel. Member of the World Bank Social Development Indicators Group. Advisor to DFID-Bangladesh on Reducing Extreme Poverty. Has advised large NGOs, especially in Bangladesh over the last 25 years. Served on the OXFAM Asia Committee. Now a Board member for INTRAC. Advisor to the Rural Support Programme Network in Pakistan, as well as the Aga Khan Development Network. Member of the Expert Group Panel, Economic and Social Affairs Division of the UN, for 2007 World Social Situation Report. Supported by grants from: ESRC, Ford Foundation, DFID, World Bank, SIDA, CIDA, Aga Khan Foundation.

The University of Bath has a strong Engineering and Science profile, with an applied mission. Its humanities, management and social sciences departments represent about 25% of the University's activity. The University is in the top 20 Higher Education Institutions in the UK on research criteria alone, and is positioned higher when teaching and learning factors are included. Its work interfaces strongly with industry and commerce, but also significantly with policy and practice in the public sector. It is among the 12 only Universities in the UK supported by the government for its Knowledge Transfer Partnerships with the public and private sector.

**Prof. K.S. Zimmerer**  
**The Pennsylvania State University**  
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Karl Zimmerer is professor in Geography at the Pennsylvania State University and Head of the Department of Geography at this University.

Karl qualified with a Masters Geography at the University of California and obtained his PhD in Geography at the same University in 1988. He was on the Geography and Environmental Studies faculties at the University of North Carolina (1988-1990) and at the University of Wisconsin Madison (1990-2007). He was promoted to full Professor in 1993 and served as the Chair of the Geography Department. In 2007 he moved to the Pennsylvania State University to become Head of the Department of Geography. He has been very successful in acquiring research grants and obtained numerous prestigious honors, awards and fellowships. He has written more than 60 scientific publications, published 4 books, and participated in several editorial boards.

Penn State is one of four “state-related” universities in Pennsylvania that have the character of public universities and receive substantial state appropriations. It has 23 additional locations across Pennsylvania, that all adhere to a common overall mission and set of core values and strategic goals. It offers degree programmes at Bachelor’s, Master’s and PhD levels in virtually every field. Penn State has awarded more than a half-million degrees, and has been Pennsylvania’s largest source of baccalaureate degrees at least since the 1930s. The Department of Geography encompasses physical geography, human geography, nature/society, and GIS as areas of study.

#### **4. Cluster Applied Social sciences**

**Prof. René Bouwen (Group Chair)**

**University of Leuven**

**WOPP (research group on Work, Organizational and Personnel Psychology)**

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René Bouwen (1941) studied Psychology at the University of Leuven (1965). He received a Ph.D. from the University of Leuven in 1973 with a dissertation in the field of economic psychology: "Future Expectations and Economic Behavior". From 1971 till 1978, he was lecturer at the Higher Institute of Economics, presently University of Hasselt. He became assistant professor in organizational behavior and group dynamics at the University of Leuven in 1978 and has been full professor since 1990.

He is doing research on organizational innovation, change and culture, group development and group effectiveness and conflict management. He published several articles on research in non-profit organizations in change projects (a.o. in developing countries: Ecuador, Thailand, Philippines) and management development from a social constructionist perspective. He is giving special attention to post-graduate training for group- and organizational consultants.

Since October 1, 2006 he is emeritus professor in organizational psychology. Societal changes and multi-party collaboration in sustainability projects (water, climate, nature conservation, inter-organizational consortia) constitute his major actual interest, combined with a Appreciative Inquiry approach and a relational-constructionist perspective.

The University of Leuven, founded in 1425, is among the oldest catholic universities in Europe. Together with the French language sister university in Louvain-La-Neuve, they are hosting on April 26-28, 2009 the Bologna meeting of 48 European ministers of Education. More than 30.000 students, among them 3.887 foreign students, are enrolled in a wide range of faculties and institutes, ranging from internationally renowned theology and philosophy programs to a nanotechnology research institute of more than thousand researchers. Biotechnology is a major research field also and there is a growing interest for interdisciplinary research between human and social sciences and earth sciences, informatics and bioengineering to engage in sustainability research programs.

**Prof.dr.em. Guus J. Borger**

**Universiteit van Amsterdam / Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam**

**Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences / Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences**

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Guus J. Borger (1942) is professor emeritus of Historical Geography at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of the Universiteit van Amsterdam and at the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He studied Human Geography at the Universiteit van Amsterdam and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and obtained his PhD in Geography in 1975 at the Universiteit van Amsterdam.

Over the last four decades he has been studying the interaction between man and nature. The main focus of his research has been on the coastal zone along the southern shore of the North Sea during the last millennia. Sea level rise, climate change and human interventions

as for example reclaiming peat lands, building of dikes and digging of peat for the extraction of salt have been recurring themes in his research.

A second line in his scientific activities is focusing on the history of landscape and occupation. This line is related to the actual discussion on planning processes on behalf of the conservation of the regional diversity in heritage, landscape and villages. It has been his objective to integrate information from different disciplines in the legal framework of physical planning processes.

Up to his retirement he was working at the research institute for Global Issues and Development Studies of the Department of Human Geography and Physical Planning of the University of Amsterdam. Since 2003 he is supervising an educational program on the integration of information from the Earth Sciences in physical planning procedures at the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

**Prof. David Castle**  
**University of Ottawa**  
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Prof. David Castle is Canada Research Chair in Science and Society at the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Law (Common Law Section) of the University of Ottawa and an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy.

Castle completed his PhD in 1998 and began his academic career in 2000. His teaching has focused on philosophy of science and the environment, social implications of new technology, especially biotechnology and genetics, and science and society. His research interests focus on the interaction between science and society, and include such topics as democratic engagement, regulation and governance, and intellectual property and knowledge management. He has published dozens of peer-reviewed articles and book chapters and several books on the social dimensions of science, technology and innovation. Castle has held several major research awards, and has considerable experience in research management, and project management. In addition, Castle has consulted widely to government on issues including the impact of federal technology transfer policies and programs, open source and other alternative patent strategies for the health R&D sector, and methods and justification for including non-scientific considerations in the regulation of new biotechnology. He has also consulted to industry on corporate ethics.

The University of Ottawa is a research-intensive university in the national capital and is North America's premier bilingual (French and English) university. The University ranks fifth in research intensity among Canada's top 50 universities. It is truly international, with 800 professors and 35,000 students from over 150 countries. The ten faculties offer 360 undergraduate and 110 graduate programs

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## **5. Cluster Policy and Landscape**

**Prof. Louis Albrechts** (Group Chair)  
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Louis Albrechts is professor emeritus of strategic spatial planning at the department of architecture, urbanism and planning at the University of Leuven, Belgium. He has master degrees in urban and regional planning, social studies, the study of developing countries and a PhD in urban and regional planning from the university of Leuven. He has been full professor at the university of Leuven since 1987 and was visiting professor at universities of Poznan, Pecs, Lille, Newcastle upon Tyne and visiting research fellow at the University of West Australia, Perth.

Louis Albrechts is corresponding member of the 'German Academy for Research and Planning', founder and editor of European Planning Studies, member of the editorial board of several international journals and chair of the first and second World planning Schools Congress. He was also president of the Association of European School of Planning. Louis Albrechts was in charge of some 150 research projects financed by local, regional, national and international institutions. He was also in charge of the strategic plan for Flanders (1992-1996) and did the scientific coordination for, the transport plan Flanders '1999-2000). Louis Albrechts was recently involved in the peer review of several programs in Delft, Amsterdam, Nijmegen, Utrecht, Groningen. His current research focuses on the practice and nature of strategic spatial planning, diversity and creativity in planning, public involvement in planning and bridging the gap between planning and implementation. Louis Albrechts is author/editor of 13 books, some 50 book chapters in international books and 51 articles in leading international journals with blind peer review.

The University of Leuven is the oldest (15<sup>th</sup> century) and the largest university in Belgium and offers a wide range of scientific programs and is home to internationally renowned research institutes.

**Professor Arun Agrawal**  
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Arun Agrawal is Professor at the School of Natural Resources and Environment at the University of Michigan.

Arun completed his Ph.D. in Political Science from Duke University in 1992. He completed his M.A. in Political Science from Duke University in 1988, a M.B.A. from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad, India in 1985 (Specialization in Development Administration and Public Policy) and his B.A. in History from Delhi University, India, in 1983. Arun's research and teaching emphases are on the politics of international development and environmental conservation, with a focus on institutional change, property rights, poverty, and biodiversity.

He has written extensively on 1) indigenous knowledge, 2) community-based conservation, 3) common property, 4) population and resources, and 5) environmental identities. Recent interests include the decentralization of environmental policy (especially forestry and wildlife), and the emergence of environment as a subject of human concern.

The University of Michigan is internationally renowned for research and education, offering more than 200 degree programs. The student body consists of over 26,000 undergraduate students and 14,900 graduate and professional students from all 50 states and 120 countries.

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David studied at Surrey and Loughborough universities and gained industrial experience in the private and government sectors. He was awarded a PhD from Texas A and M University in 1987 and returned to a lectureship in the UK in the early ninety's. In 2003 he was promoted to a personal chair of the University of Wales, mainly for his work in the development of the interdisciplinary study of tourism in UK higher education. He has taken a particular interest in the global development of doctoral level tourism studies as supervisor and external examiner to candidates in the UK and mainland Europe.

He holds a number of concurrent positions. He is Professor Emeritus in the Welsh Centre for Tourism Research of the University of Wales, Associate Director of the UK Higher Education Academy HLST Subject Network and a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Westminster, London. He works as a freelance research-active academic who has extensive UK experience of teaching and research leadership. He is an author and reviewer for several publishing houses and external assessor of research quality for universities and research bodies.

The University of Wales is a federal university. Founded in 1893, the University of Wales is the degree-awarding body for the vast majority of higher education students in Wales, as well as for many at other higher education institutions in the United Kingdom and overseas. The University confers around 15,000 initial degrees and more than 4,000 higher degrees each year, and is the second largest degree-awarding body in the UK.

**Prof. John Griffiths**  
**Rijksuniversiteit Groningen**  
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John Griffiths held the Chair in Sociology of Law in Department of Legal Theory of the Faculty of Law of the University of Groningen from 1977 to his retirement in 2005. He studied philosophy (University of California, Berkeley) and law (Yale Law School), clerked

for Justice Fortas of the US Supreme Court, and taught law at, successively, Yale, the University of Ghana, and New York University, before accepting his current appointment. He has participated in and supervised empirical research on subjects such as administrative appeals, the distribution of legal services, conflicts over visitation rights, law and the preservation of the tropical forest, and in recent years the regulation of euthanasia and other socially problematic medical behaviour. He has supervised dissertations dealing with questions of philosophy, sociology and anthropology of law. His theoretical writing has dealt primarily with legal pluralism (he was for many years editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Legal Pluralism*), litigation theory, and the social effects of (legal) rules.

The University of Groningen is the second oldest university in the Netherlands. It has a large international network and an excellent reputation for academic teaching with a modern, student-oriented approach. It offers degree programmes at Bachelor's, Master's and PhD levels in virtually every field. It encompasses 9 faculties and hosts almost 25,000 students.

**Prof. Dvora Yanow**  
**Strategic Chair in Meaning and Method**  
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Dvora Yanow holds the Strategic Chair in Meaning and Method in the Faculty of Social sciences at the VU University in Amsterdam.

She holds a BA in Politics from Brandeis University, an Ed.M. in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and a PhD (1982) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in "Planning, Policy, and Organizational Studies". Before joining the VU in 2005, she was Professor at the California State University-Hayward/East Bay (since 1997) in the Department of Public Affairs and Administration. Through her academic career to date she has held several Visiting Professor positions, including in China and Europe, and has been an active member or head of several advisory and editorial boards and councils.

Her fields of research interest include interpretive methodologies and research methods (such as policy and organizational ethnography), interpretive policy analysis, ways of knowing, and reflective practice. She is the co-editor of five books and author of three and numerous articles.

The VU University is one of the larger universities in the Netherlands with a broad range of study programs. It encompasses 13 Faculties and is linked to the VU Medical Centre. The Department of Culture, Organization, and Management (COM) focuses on the cultural dimensions of management and organization. Attention is given to processes within and between organizations, both on national and international levels. Special points of interest are cultural change processes, diversity management, and intervention strategies.

**Drs. E.W. de Munck (Secretary)**  
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Eric de Munck is staff member of the Executive Board of Wageningen UR in the function of policy advisor in the Department for Research & Education. He has a BSc degree in Physics and an MSc degree in Business Administration. In the 90's he worked in the field of international cooperation, and was involved in several programmes executed in West Africa (where he also lived for 5 years). Before joining the Department for Research & Education (in 2004), he worked successively for the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and for the European consortium of schools and universities in the field of Agriculture and Life Sciences (ICA).

Wageningen UR is a collaboration between Wageningen University, Van Hall Larenstein School of Higher Professional Education and the former (DLO-) research institutes from the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture. It provides education and generates knowledge in the field of life sciences and natural resources. Wageningen UR aims to make a real contribution to our quality of life. This combination of knowledge and experience enables Wageningen UR with its 5,600 staff and more than 8,500 students to contribute actively to solving scientific, social and commercial problems in the field of life sciences and natural resources.

## Appendix 3

### General Outline Programme Peer Review Social sciences

#### Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup>

18h00 Dinner for whoever has arrived (Restaurant EatCetera)

#### Monday June 15<sup>th</sup>

*(all meetings took place in the Forum building)*

9h00-12h00 Informal meetings  
 12h00-13h30 Lunch  
 13h30-15h40 Meeting overall Chair and Chairs subcommittees  
 15h41-16h00 Tea and Coffee break  
 16h00-17h00 Presentation Wouter Gerritsma (library Wageningen UR) on bibliometric analysis  
 17h00-17h30 Drinks  
 17h30-18h15 Presentation Prof. Dr. Martin Kropff, Rector Wageningen University  
 18h15-20h00 Dinner

#### Tuesday June 16<sup>th</sup> (peer review chair groups)

*(if not stated otherwise, all meetings took place in the Leeuwenborch building)*

9h00-10h30 Internal meetings subcommittees  
 11h00-12h30 Meetings with chair groups (see table below)  
 12h30-13h30 Lunch  
 13h30-15h00 Meeting with chair groups (see table below)  
 15h30-17h00 Meeting with chair groups (see table below)  
 17h30-20h00 Dinner with directors/staff graduate schools MG3S and CERES and directors SSG and ESG (Restaurant Het Gesprek)

	Cluster Economics	Cluster Marketing, Management, Information Technology	Cluster Sociology, Rural Development Studies	Cluster Applied Social Sciences	Cluster Policy and Landscape
11h00-12h30	AEP	BEC	RSO	ECS	LUP
13h30-15h00	DEC	LDI	SCH	CIS/COM	SAL
15h30-17h00	ECH	MCB	RDS + DIS	APP	FNP

### **Wednesday June 17<sup>th</sup> (peer review chair groups)**

*(if not stated otherwise, all meetings took place in the Leeuwenborch building)*

9h00-10h30	Meetings with chair groups or internal meetings subcommittees (see table below)
11h00-12h30	Meeting with chair groups or PhD presentations (see table below)
12h30-13h30	Lunch with PhD presentations
13h30-15h00	PhD presentations or Internal meetings subcommittees (see table below)
15h30-17h00	Internal meetings subcommittees
18h00-20h00	Dinner (Restaurant EatCetera)
20h00-22h00	Internal meetings subcommittees (WICC)

	Cluster Economics	Cluster Marketing, Management, Information Technology	Cluster Sociology, Rural Development Studies	Cluster Applied Social Sciences	Cluster Policy and Landscape
9h00-10h30	Internal meeting	MST	TAD	RHI	LAW
11h00-12h30	PhD presentations	PhD presentations	IWE	PhD presentations	PAP
13h30-15h00	Internal meeting	Internal meeting	PhD presentations	Internal meeting	PhD presentations

### **Thursday June 18<sup>th</sup> (peer review graduate school MG3S)**

*(if not stated otherwise, all meetings took place in the Leeuwenborch building)*

8h30-10h00	Internal meeting Peer Review Committee MG3S
10h00-11h30	Meeting with MG3S Director, Secretary & Theme Co-ordinators
11h30-12h30	Meeting with MG3S Education Committee
12h30-14h00	Lunch
14h00-15h00	Meeting with MG3S PhD Council
15h00-16h00	Meeting with MG3S Assessment Committee
16h00-17h30	Individual appointments for staff members and/or PhD students with members of the Peer Review Committee MG3S
18h00-20h00	Dinner with Directors SSG and ESG (Hotel de Wereld)

### **Friday June 19<sup>th</sup> (peer review graduate school MG3S)**

*(if not stated otherwise, all meetings took place in the Leeuwenborch building)*

9h00-10h30	Meeting with MG3S Board
10h30-14h30	Internal meeting Peer Review Committee MG3S
14h30-15h30	Confidential meeting with representative Rector WU, MG3S Board and Peer Review Co-ordination Team
15h30-16h30	Presentation preliminary conclusions
16h30	Closure with drinks