



SESYNC Feedbacks

News from the National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center

SESYNC Receives \$28.5M Renewal from the National Science Foundation

The National Science Foundation renewed its support for SESYNC at the University of Maryland (UMD) with a new five-year, \$28.5 million grant.

Since its inception, SESYNC has funded 131 research projects and its researchers have authored over 200 peer-reviewed publications. Each year, over a thousand participants take part in research meetings at the center, with nearly one-quarter hailing from outside the United States and one-fourth coming from non-academic organizations.

"SESYNC was founded on the premise that progress toward a sustainable future requires new knowledge that arises from close collaborations across many disciplines and sectors, including the natural and social sciences, nongovernmental organizations, and government agencies," said SESYNC Director Margaret Palmer, who is a Distinguished University Professor of Entomology at UMD. "Such collaborations and the involvement of knowledge users create a research portfolio with the potential to identify solutions and inform decisions."

Over the next five years, the center will:

- Form new communities of scholars who will work with decisionmakers on transdisciplinary research;
- Expand its program to immerse scientists in foundational concepts, theories, and methods outside of their own training;
- Build capacity for young scholars;
- Diversify the socio-environmental synthesis community through joint programming with historically black colleges and universities, including Coppin State University in Baltimore;
- Develop freely available synthesis education videos;
- Increase opportunities for graduate scholars through training and team-based research opportunities; and
- Grow the center's communications capacity to publicize research results more broadly.

With this renewal, the center will continue its pursuit of actionable science at the intersection of social and environmental systems. To learn more about SESYNC's renewal, please [visit our website](#).

Recent Publications



SESYNC's Living with Resistance research team

Research teams supported by SESYNC have recently published journal and commentary articles.

In a commentary published in the September 7 issue of *Nature*, "[Use Antimicrobials Wisely](#)," members of the [Living with Resistance](#) research team provided a socio-environmental perspective for a call to action on antimicrobial resistance ahead of a high-level United Nation's meeting. On September 21, 2016, the UN General Assembly committed to taking a broad, coordinated approach to address the root causes of antimicrobial resistance across multiple sectors, especially human health, animal health, and agriculture.

Other recent publications include:

- "[Climate Variability and Educational Attainment: Evidence from Rural Ethiopia](#)" in *Global Environmental Change*
 - "[Commercial Plant Production and Consumption Still Follow the Latitudinal Gradient in Species Diversity despite Economic Globalization](#)" in *PLOS ONE*
 - "[Reserves and Trade Jointly Determine Exposure to Food Supply Shocks](#)" in *Environmental Research Letters*
 - "[Agroforestry Practices Promote Biodiversity and Natural Resource Diversity in Atlantic Nicaragua](#)" in *PLOS ONE*
 - "[Drought Effects on US Maize and Soybean Production: Spatiotemporal Patterns and Historical Changes](#)" in *Environmental Research Letters*
 - "[A Framework for Mapping and Comparing Behavioural Theories in Models of Social-Ecological Systems](#)" in *Ecological Economics*
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SESYNC Welcomes Sabbatical Fellow, Dr. Lars Olson

SESYNC is pleased to welcome [Dr. Lars Olson](#), University of Maryland Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics, as Sabbatical Fellow through August 2017.

Olson, an accomplished economist, former editor and member of the editorial council of the *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, and departmental chair at the University of Maryland from 2008-2013, has studied a variety of issues in agricultural and resource economics. Studying topics ranging from natural resource allocation over time and under uncertainty to pollution and abatement under technological change, he understands the complexity and necessity of socio-environmental synthesis to advance knowledge and promote better policy.

It is this synthetic perspective that Olson will use as a SESYNC Sabbatical Fellow. While at SESYNC, Olson will work on a variety of projects, including studies on risk factors for invasive pests transmitted through international trade, the value of pest screening and identification services in facilitating trade, and the economics of fisheries management under correlated environmental disturbances, such as those associated with climate change.

Working at the intersections of economics, science, and policy, Olson says he looks forward to the, "intellectually stimulating environment for research and scholarship" that SESYNC provides. "It is very exciting to be surrounded by an exceptional group of distinguished young scholars from different disciplines who are all interested in similar types of problems," says Olson. "I expect I will learn much from my experience at SESYNC."

To read the full news story and learn more about Olson's appointment at SESYNC, please [visit our website](#).

The National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center, funded through an award to the University of Maryland from the National Science Foundation, is a research center dedicated to accelerating data-driven scientific discovery at the interface of human and ecological systems. Visit us online at www.sesync.org and follow us on Twitter @SESYNC.

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