

# Ecological Risk Assessment Specialty Group Biannual Report 2002-2003

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## Summary

The Ecological Risk Assessment Specialty Group (ERASG) focuses on the ecological impact of environmental stressors and is open to all members of the Society for Risk Analysis. Group membership includes about 80 members with interests in ecological modeling, economic valuation of ecological resources, and population-level risk assessment methods.

Major accomplishments in 2002-2003 include:

- Establishing formal officer election procedure and tenure;
- Creation of the web site (<http://www.neptuneandco.com/sra-erasg/>)
- Building a financial base (we have achieved a three-fold increase in net assets)
- Establishing a student best paper award
- Supporting multiple symposia and sessions during SRA annual meetings as well as external workshops
- Conducting joint seminars and sessions with SRA-New England and SETAC

## Formalization of Group Officer Elections

To maintain continuity of leadership in the specialty group, a sequence of chair-elect, chair, and past-chair was started. Group Chairs will serve a term of two years, beginning at the end of the annual business meeting that follows the election and continuing through the second annual business meeting that follows the Chair taking office. During the first year of his/her tenure, the Chair will organize group activities in close collaboration with the Past Chair. During the second year, the Chair-elect will take the place of the Past Chair in working with the Group Chair.

## Establishment of Student Best Paper Award

In 2003, we were unable to make the award due to a delayed response from SRA on the ERASG financial status. Starting in 2004, the ERASG will award a \$500 travel award and a \$100 cash award, including a conference fee waiver, to the author of the best student research paper on the topic of ecological risk assessment that is presented at the SRA Annual Meeting. Students whose abstracts have been accepted will be notified in July and must submit a three- to five-page extended abstract to the ERASG to be considered for the best student paper award. A select number of authors of extended abstracts will be asked to submit a paper to the ERASG by 15 October for final consideration. Abstracts and papers will be blind reviewed by a panel of judges. A prize may not be awarded if the papers received are not of sufficient quality. If circumstances prevent attendance at the Annual Meeting, the author should arrange for the paper to be presented by someone else.

## Continuing Education Workshops at the Annual Meetings

- “Bayesian Analysis and Applications in Risk Assessment” (full day, Baltimore, 2003)
- “Introduction to Bayesian Techniques in Risk Assessment” (half-day, New Orleans, 2002)
- “Advanced Bayesian Techniques in Risk Assessment” (half-day, New Orleans, 2002)

## Symposia at the Annual Meetings

- “Structured and Dependable Decision-Making Processes for Reuse of Contaminated and Disturbed Sites” (Baltimore 2003, half-day, Chairs: I. Linkov and T. Bridges; prepared in collaboration with SETAC),
- “The Role of Risk Analysis in Environmental Security & Emergency Response in the Mediterranean Region” (Baltimore 2003, 90min, Chairs: B. Morel and A. Ramadan)
- “Ecological Soil Screening Levels (Eco-SSLs)” (New Orleans, 2003, half day, Chair: Ron Checkai)
- “Risk analysis for invasive species” (New Orleans, 2002, Mark Powell)

## Sessions at the Annual Meetings

### Baltimore 2003

- “Bioavailability/Uptake for Human or Ecological Receptors”
- “Risk Assessment for Sediments - Model Uncertainties”

- “New Methods in Ecological Risk Assessment”
- “Modeling Approaches in Ecological Risk Assessment”
- “Bioavailability/Uptake for Human or Ecological Receptors” (co-sponsored with the Exposure Assessment Specialty Group)
- Poster Session

#### New Orleans, 2002

- “Ecological Risk Assessment and Management”
- “Modeling at Different Spatial Scales in Risk Assessment”
- “Chemical Bioavailability from Environmental Media and Uptake by Biota”
- “Probabilistic Modeling”
- Poster Session

#### **Activities Jointly Sponsored by ERASG and SRA-New England**

- SRA-NE October Seminar (8 October 2003), “The Spatially Explicit Exposure Module (SEEM): An Expanded Landscape For Wildlife Exposure Assessment Tools,” Charles A. Menzie, Menzie-Cura and Associates, Chelmsford, MA; “Using Landscape Analysis to Estimate Exposure—Estimating PCB Concentrations in Floodplain Soils Using Habitat Constrained Spatial Weighting”, John P. Lortie, President, Woodlot Alternatives, Topsham, Maine.
- Special Seminar in Boston (July 2003) “Fecal Leakage: Modeling Campylobacter in Chicken Processing Using Probabilistic Inversion,” by Dr. Roger Cooke of Delft University (Netherlands).
- Special Seminar in Boston (13 January 2003). Gordon Butte and Sarah Thorne of Decision Partners spoke on “Improving Ecological and Environmental Management Effectiveness with Strategic Risk Communication.” Thomas Gloria of ICF Consulting presented a lecture on “A Taxonomy of Life Cycle Impact Categories: Focus on Ecological Risk.”
- Special Seminar in Boston (25 July 2002). Lawrence A. Kapustka, PhD, President and Senior Ecotoxicologist, of Ecological Planning and Toxicology, Inc., Corvallis, Oregon, presented a talk titled “Ecological Risk Assessments in Terrestrial Systems: Discussion of Habitat Characterization and Food Webs” and Igor Linkov, PhD, Senior Risk Assessor, ICF Consulting, Inc., Lexington, Massachusetts, presented a talk titled “Spatially Explicit Risk- Based Approaches for Assessing Environmental Value and Reuse Options at Contaminated Sites.”

#### **Activities Jointly Sponsored by ERASG and SETAC**

- Symposia on “Structured and Dependable Decision-Making Processes for Reuse of Contaminated and Disturbed Sites” (Baltimore 2003, half-day, Chairs: I. Linkov and T. Bridges; prepared in collaboration with SETAC).
- Session on “Spatially Explicit Risk Assessment: Blending Landscape Ecology with the Ecological Risk Process” at the World Congress on Risk in Brussels, June 2003.

#### **Other Events**

- 2003 Joint mixer and business meeting with the Dose Response Specialty Group.
- 2003 ERASG poster at 2003 SETAC Annual Meeting in Austin, TX.
- ERASG and SRA are cosponsoring a NATO Advanced Study Institute on “Strategic Management of Marine Ecosystems.” It will take place 1-11 October 2003 in Sophia Antipolis (Nice-Cannes area), France.
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- ERASG and SRA supported a NATO Advanced Research Workshop on “Comparative Risk Assessment and Environmental Decision Making,” in Rome (Italy), October 2002.

#### **Financial Statement (Estimates)**

Budget at the end of 2001	<b>\$2,500</b>
Budget at the end of 2003	<b>\$7,500</b>