Snnet Seminar, 24th May 2010, Innovation Campus, University of Wollongong

Environmentally Aware Research and Practice

The second Snnet seminar for 2010 focussed on the Green Theme identified at the 2009 Snnet conference as a core element of many Snnet researchers across the network. This event followed the formation of a new sub-network of Snnet on this theme. This subnet has already met to plan its future under the name Environmentally Aware Research Network (EARN). The coordinators of the Units and Centres who make up EARN were the speakers for the seminar which was attended by a mix of university and local community members. A variety of topics and perspectives on environmental challenges were posed by the speakers and this prompted lively discussion between the speakers and the audience. Before and after the formal presentations active networking took place between attendees forging new links between the University and community groups on critical issues concerning the environmental future of the region and the planet.

Speakers and EARN leaders are:

Lisa Miller is the Environmental Manager of the University and she appropriately began the evening with an informative description of the Environmental Initiatives at the University of Wollongong.

This was followed by Associate Professor Amnon Levy, from the School of Economics, Faculty of Commerce, who present results of his work on the Dynamics of the Environment and Human Population. He addressed the frightening question of whether environmental degradation will lead to the extinction of the human race.

The third speaker was Associate Professor Mary Kaidonis, from the School of Accounting and Finance, Faculty of Commerce and Head of their Carbon Research Team. Her timely topic was Accounting for Carbon and she gave an informed perspective on the ETS and Carbon Taxes.

The last two speakers are directors of the Carbon-Centered Computing Initiative (CCCI) who are working on two complementary projects. Professor Aditya Ghose, from the School of Computer Science and Software Engineering, provided an update on the construction of The Carbon Wiki which aims to “crowd source” a comprehensive collection of measures of Carbon emissions for all elementary human activities and business processes. Professor Trevor Spedding, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, then described The Carbon Dashboard which could sit on top of the Carbon Wiki and provide a free Web-based service to small businesses allowing them to track and model their total carbon footprint.

Master of Ceremonies was Associate Professor Helen Hasan from the Faculty of Commerce, Co-Director of Snnet and EARN and Co-Director of CCCI.