



EVALUATION REPORT

for

6TH BAY OF FUNDY WORKSHOP

September 29th - October 2nd, 2004

Annapolis Basin Conference Centre
Cornwallis Park, Nova Scotia

November 12th, 2004

Evaluation Report for the 6th Bay of Fundy Workshop

EVALUATION SUMMARY

The 6th Bay of Fundy Workshop was held from September 29th to October 2nd at the Annapolis Basin Conference Centre in Cornwallis Park, Nova Scotia. This report presents an evaluation of various aspects of the workshop as viewed by the participants.

Evaluation method

A workshop evaluation form (copy on page 4) was included in each registration kit. A total of 37 completed forms were returned at from a total registration of about 160 people, representing a 23% rate of return. It is assumed for the purpose of this evaluation review that the views expressed on these forms are generally representative of those of all the workshop participants.

The responses to the category ratings (ranging from 1 for very unsatisfied to 5 for very satisfied) for different components of the workshop in table A of the evaluation form are tallied in the table on page 5 (Workshop Evaluation Tally Sheet). The figures in the final three columns of this table are grouped to reflect percentages of participants who were unsatisfied (ranks 1+2), neutral (rank 3) or satisfied (ranks 4+5) with each of the respective workshop components.

The responses to questions B to G on the evaluation form are all included on pages 6 to 11. No answers or comments were excluded, including duplicates. To make them more comprehensible and useful for workshop organizers and the conference centre personnel the general narrative comments from section G of the evaluation form were grouped into the following categories:

- *Program -papers/posters/plenary sessions/displays*
- *General comments on overall workshop*
- *Meals/reception/barbecue/banquet etc.*
- *Venues and conference facility*
- *Accommodations*

Evaluation Synopsis

Most participants appear to have been satisfied with the overall organization and implementation of the workshop. In the final line of Table A on the evaluation form where participants were asked to give their overall workshop rating 97% of the respondents selected either 4 or 5 on the five point satisfaction scale. Most of the individual workshop elements in the same table had ratings greater than 70% for the combined 4 and 5 satisfaction rankings.

There were two notable exceptions. The round tables were rated at 4 and 5 by only 67% of respondents while only 36% gave a similar rating for the accommodations. The reasons for these low ratings are clear from the comments submitted. The major problem with the round tables was that they were shoehorned into the very end of the workshop, with too little time allotted for adequate discussion of the broad topics presented. The duration was unfortunately dictated by the ferry schedule. It was suggested that such round tables might be more useful if they were held nearer the beginning of the workshop to allow informal discussions to continue during the workshop. Many people felt that they were just beginning some really worthwhile discussion of the topics when everything came to a grinding halt. The accommodations rated rather poorly in

the survey. The facilities are barracks style facilities of a former military base that are slowly being renovated after being taken over by the conference centre. The decor, the temperature (too hot and/or cold), noisiness and air quality were some of the complaints offered by respondents. The Conference Centre management is aware of the problems and are working to gradually enhance the facilities as funds permit. The prices for the accommodations were extremely reasonable.

Interestingly, the majority of respondents (53%) were attending their first BoFEP Bay of Fundy Workshop. This is probably related to the fact that we had more students and representatives of community groups than at earlier workshops. This may also account for the fact that for the response to question C (suggestions for theme for next workshop) many respondents were in favour of topics involving “community” involvement in science and conservation.

The plenary presentations were generally very well received (89% selected ranks 4 or 5). The oral paper sessions were also favourably rated (95% selected ranks 4 or 5), although there were a few complaints related to air quality, positioning of projectors, seating comfort and number of papers withdrawn. The session chairs appear to have done a good job of keeping their sessions on time and synchronized. Concern was expressed about having concurrent paper sessions at these workshops. An attempt was made this time to have only 3 concurrent sessions. Even so, it was felt that too many people missed some excellent presentations (the Cobscook Bay Session was particularly noted). Participants tend to go to the sessions closest to their general area of expertise. However, we should be encouraging them to learn about the work of other disciplines in the Fundy region and think about how it relates to what they are doing. It is recommended that every effort be made to present as many papers in “plenary” sessions at future workshops.

The poster presentations were generally well received and the quality of many of the presentations was noted. (89% selected rank 4 or 5). The displays were generally well received. (82% selected ranks 4 or 5)

The meals generally received a good rating (77% selected ranks 4 or 5), particularly the workshop banquet (94% selected ranks 4 or 5). The barbecue received a slightly lower rating (73% selected ranks of 4 or 5), more because of the delay in starting to serve than the quality or quantity of the food. This delay was largely the fault of the workshop organizers rather than the catering staff. Some concerns were expressed about the availability of appropriate vegetarian meals. Again, this is probably attributable to the workshop organizers who did not adequately identify the various vegetarian options on the registration forms and thus did not pass the appropriate information to the catering staff. The entertainment provided at the opening reception and at the barbecue was greatly appreciated and the public presentation on whales following the banquet was very well received.

In terms of the location of the next workshop, many respondents suggested St. Andrews, probably because this was the location favoured at the AGM. Other suggested locations were Saint John, Sackville, near Fundy National Park, Parrsboro and Grand Manan Island.

I am pleased to report that the general consensus is that, in spite of the complaints noted above, the 6th Workshop was a great success and a worthwhile experience for most participants. Thanks to everyone from the BoFEP workshop organizing committees, the Annapolis Basin Conference Centre, The Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre and the Western Valley Development Authority who worked so hard to achieve this welcome result.

6th Bay of Fundy Workshop

WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

To assist BoFEP in the planning for future workshops we'd appreciate it if you could take a few moments to complete this form and leave it at the registration desk.

A. Please indicate (X) your level of satisfaction with each of the following workshop elements. (skip any that do not apply).

[1 = very unsatisfied 5 = very satisfied]

Workshop element	1	2	3	4	5
Plenary presentations					
Paper presentations					
Posters					
Round table session					
Displays					
Reception					
Barbecue					
Banquet					
Public evening					
Meals					
Accommodations					
Workshop venues					
Overall workshop rating					

B. How many BoFEP Workshops (including this one) have you attended? _____

C. Suggestions for overall theme for next (2006) workshop: _____

D. Suggestions for paper sessions for next (2006) workshop: _____

E. Suggestions for location of next (2006) workshop: _____

F. Would you/your organization consider hosting the 2006 workshop: Yes ___ Maybe ___ No ___

G. **Additional Comments** (continue overpage if necessary):

Name(Optional): _____

WORKSHOP EVALUATION TALLY SHEET
Responses to Table A on Workshop Evaluation Sheet

Workshop element	Number of responses per rank category					responses	Percentage summary (in grouped rank categories)		
	1	2	3	4	5		1+2	3	4+5
Plenary presentations	1		3	8	25	37	3%	8%	89%
Paper presentations		1	1	15	20	37	3%	3%	95%
Posters		1	3	14	18	36	3%	8%	89%
Round table session		1	3	4	4	12	8%	25%	67%
Displays		1	5	14	14	34	3%	15%	82%
Reception		1	2	15	9	27	4%	7%	89%
Barbecue		3	6	14	10	33	9%	18%	73%
Banquet	1	1		10	20	32	6%	-	94%
Public evening	1		4	11	12	28	4%	14%	82%
Meals	1	2	5	14	13	35	9%	14%	77%
Accommodations		4	12	9	3	28	14%	43%	36%
Workshop venues		1	8	11	13	33	3%	24%	73%
Overall workshop rating		1		18	15	34	3%	-	97%

BOFEP 6TH BAY OF FUNDY WORKSHOP
SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORMS

Responses to Questions B to G on Evaluation Form [based on 37 forms returned]

B. How many BoFEP Workshops (including this one) have you attended?

1 = 20 (53%)

2 = 12 (32%)

3 = 3 (8%)

4 = 3 (8%)

C. Suggestions for overall theme for next workshop (2006)

- Local communities in the ecosystem (related to what Mr. Bull was suggesting)
- Some US-Canada environmental integration theme (US group was left out at this meeting - embarrassing).
- Bay of Fundy and its watershed
- What are our barriers to moving forward and how do we overcome them?
- BoF as part of the Gulf of Maine System.
- “Partnering together for solutions” - something like that!
- Bridging the gap between the environmental and economic communities.
- Community Engagement, valuing the Community - something like this.
- Interactions: biology, communities, users (or industry)
- Cooperation and collaboration - multifaceted.
- How does specific scientific research relate to the overall health of the Bay.
- Theme on community monitoring efforts or try to kick-start some efforts (scientists working with communities)
- Interconnecting our knowledge
- Working groups: what’s next (10-15 years)? Emerging issues/technologies/ thinking outside the box.
- Gulf of Maine - Bay of Fundy Interactions.

D. Suggestions for paper sessions for next (2006) workshop

- I recognize that all aspects are important in the management of an ecosystem but I find it increasingly difficult to discuss the merits/demerits from scientific vs economical vs socialistic values. Perhaps structuring the meeting somewhat differently might help: 1st day on science; 2nd day on social “science”; 3rd day on management.
- Habitat movement within the Bay (inner).
- How does productivity of salt marshes compare.
- Nature and numbers for the Bay of Fundy (comprehensive budgets of materials biological chemical prepared for the Bay)
- more fish, migration, habitat assemblages, pollution effects
- Tourism/ecotourism; environmental history related topic, sustainable energy, aboriginal issues
- Need more on aquaculture
- Learning the jargon, language, goals, assumptions etc. of major sectoral groups.
- Knowledge of the community: workshop would merge presentations from academic researchers and research/stories/knowledge from communities - show how they can complement one another.

- If possible hearing a little more from industry
- Getting information to the “little guy”; capacity building in rural communities.
- How does specific scientific research relate to the overall health of the Bay
- Working groups - in which everyone signs up and discuss and set up actions - would increase participation of WG.
- Indicators; community monitoring methods and results; biodiversity; invasive species
- Habitat change
- How do you assess “productivity”
- Working groups: what’s next (10-15 years)? Emerging issues/technologies/ thinking outside the box.
- Maybe one session on each of the three issues that are the focus of the Summit (contamination; land use; fisheries) - surely by then we may have some monitoring results?
- Should be a paper on harvesting blood worms in Minas Basin

E. Suggestions for location for next (2006) workshop:

- UNB - not in term time; (if Huntsman/St. Andrews cannot pull it off.)
- I like the St. Andrews idea.
- St. Andrews
- St. Andrews (BoFEP needs to make better connections with USA counterparts)
- Sackville, NB
- Saint John, NB
- Already decided.
- Somewhere in New Brunswick, maybe around Fundy National Park
- Parrsboro - Geological Museum?
- Grand Manan
- Parrsboro
- Grand Manan Island, or some of the other islands with facilities.
- St. Andrews
- Region of St. Andrews, NB
- St. Andrews or Sackville, NB
- St. Andrews

G. Additional comments:

1. Program -papers/posters/plenary sessions/displays

- Judging of the students’ papers was not easy comparing science/technology, social structures etc. Some posters were little more than ads; some oral papers little more than methods of management. I should simply recognize that I’m getting old and out-dated. I enjoyed the meeting and the people but felt uncomfortable with what we are trying to do. Please forgive the bias.
- Plenary presentations fantastic
- public evening - would be nice to see even more community members.
- Work on increasing student involvement - judging papers and posters is very good idea.
- Make better use of time - not too much time between events (waiting)... although there should be some opportunity to talk.
- field trips - time more flexible - at end of conference?

- Focussed sessions should have a better profile and not be matched against competing themes.
- The poster display area was excellent as were the quality of the posters.
- Presentations were good on the whole; however, I have never witnessed as many papers withdrawn, either just before the meeting or during it, at any other meeting of this type. This interrupts flow and gives a poor impression to students about commitment and responsibility. I hope that it is your policy that papers withdrawn are not included in the published proceedings. I see this as the only form of accountability that you can enforce.
- pre-conference - registration information was sent out well in advance; it was obvious the organizing committee was on top of things. Response to e-mails was done in a very timely manner (very appreciated). A suggestion is that an e-mail be sent when the registration form is received by BoFEP.
- The move to increase student involvement in the workshop is to be commended. I appreciated the positive receptivity to being part of this.
- As the workshop grows you should continue to move beyond just “science” related topics to become a truly interdisciplinary workshop.
- Plenary presentations - very pleased - but I chose 2 numbers (3 and 4 on rating scale) because an hour talk first thing in the morning was a bit long for some of the speakers.
- Some posters were more about proselytizing than about science and technology and should have been in the display area!
- Public evening is a good idea but did much public attend? Would be nice to use forum of BoFEP meeting to educate/involve public. Maybe arrange a speaker(s) to go to local high school and talk about what and why of BoFEP and invite them and their families to come and learn more.
- Do an open public session each evening of the workshop.
- Paper sessions were well run and on schedule -many conferences don't manage that, so it was appreciated.
- Breaks were long, which is OK... perhaps use that time to schedule a group beach walk or similar event e.g. 30-45 mins.
- panel discussions for next workshop?
- Consider longer workshop, to reduce concurrent sessions
- More time for round table sessions! management topic was too diverse, especially for time available.
- Round table sessions too short.
- reception - I loved the welcoming ceremony.
- The round table sessions should be longer because there is so much good stuff to share-maybe it would be better to put it on the last afternoon before the banquet so it can be longer discussion and you don't lose so many conference participants. So maybe the conference could be three full days, which would also help cut down on the overlap between paper sessions because you have an extra half day.
- This was my first BoFEP meeting, and I have learned a lot about many issues facing the Bay of Fundy. My only criticism is that the poster session was not well attended.
- Thank you for facilitating student participation (e.g. low registration fee, awards etc.) and encouraging broad audience (e.g. public councilors, government, academic and ngos)
- No round tables - have “mini facilitated discussion” at end of presentation session to “debate” and discuss in a more formal manner.

- Try to avoid concurrent sessions - by removing round tables would allow for more presentations that more people could attend.
- The powerpoint projector should have been better situated to take advantage of the full screen. Projecting half the screen limited the quality of the visuals.
- Round tables - there was inadequate time to arrive at recommendations for management of the Bay.
- Integrate round table sessions - people were divided in discussions according to interests e.g. community round tables were separated from contaminant round table but a topic that came up in contaminant session was to involve community. Perhaps it would have been useful if both contaminant and community people mixed and discussed the same questions e.g. what are the contaminants/environmental quality issues of concern to the communities - how may the people studying contaminants address this concern or best ways they can get communities involved.
- Pleneries- Moira Brown' s was excellent. The content of Heather MacLeod ' s was good but her delivery was not. Far too much time was devoted to the plenaries. This time could have been given to the paper sessions to reduce/avoid the need for concurrent sessions. I would recommend one keynote session next time, given in the evening so that precious daytime is not taken up.
- The reason for my "lowish" overall rating of the workshop is my view that concurrent sessions are counter-productive and should be banned from all but the biggest of meetings. For a meeting the size BoFEP 2004, there was absolutely no reason for concurrent sessions. All talks should have been in-plenary so that everyone was exposed to the impressive breadth of work conducted in the BoP. Instead, the concurrent sessions resulted in rooms half -full of people listening to topics with which they were already, largely familiar. A classic example of the damage done by concurrent sessions was the poor attendance at the CobscookBay session, which was excellent, and which dealt with ecosystem-level topics valuable to all attendees. I was particularly embarrassed by the lack of attendance at this session because the papers were presented by our American colleagues, thus giving the wrong impression that we Canadians are an un-collegial lot. Here is how you make time to allow for all papers to be in-plenary:
 - i. Reduce the number of keynote talks to one and have it presented in the evening.
 - ii. Start paper sessions at 0800 or 0830 instead of 1020 and run them until 1700.
 - iii. Reduce the number of papers presented to first-come-first served, or by review committee, based on the slots available.
 - iv. If needed go to 15 minute slots (12' + 3' for questions).

I CAN'T EMPHASISE THIS POINT ENOUGH. PLEASE DO NOT HAVE CONCURRENT SESSIONS IN BoFEP 2006.

2. General comments on overall workshop

- Overall workshop - great job.
- Excellent organization and coordination led to seemingly flawless workshop
- I definitely will return to another BoFEP workshop.
- Excellent small, focused workshop.
- Great to see the student participation
- My thanks to the program and support staff for a job well done.
- Excellent experience!

- Still need to get some high school teachers at workshop.
- Very happy to have been part of this, good mix of people attended.
- A good event - well done.
- Overall - fantastic conference; great experience; looking forward to the next one!
- Spent some time on first day to meet and learn about new people/groups - I fear we stay too much in our own “groups” of friends.
- A great atmosphere for collaboration, discussion and learning - very well organized and attended. Thanks a lot!
- Excellent organization of event
- Very well organized. I would even say perfectly organized. I really enjoyed my stay in Cornwallis and all the little extras that you guys added (such as opening ceremony and music at the barbecue.)
- Excellent!! Ran smoothly, venue was fantastic (beautiful setting). MCs were fun, participation was outstanding. Quality of the paper presentations was excellent.
- I always come home energized after BoFEP and previously FESC meetings.
- Overall, I wanted to say that I enjoyed my first full BoFEP workshop and I compliment the organizers.

3. Meals/reception/barbecue/banquet etc.

- There should be enough food for everyone at every meal, and a vegetarian option should always be part of the menu of hot food.
- Food - nutrition break should have nutritious options, such as fruit, muffins, crackers and cheese etc.... coffee and tea are not nutritious.
- Would love to see attempt to have at least some organic and/or locally grown food served. Also composting and recycling if possible.
- Meals - local sustainably harvested seafood would be great for the banquet.
- Water glasses for speakers in small rooms would be good.
- Barbecue - started a little too late.
- Banquet/meals - vegetarian food needs to be real vegetarian (e. g. tofu) not fish.
- I was quite discouraged when I arrived to find that nothing was prepared and nobody seemed aware of my dietary restrictions. I noted it on the registration form and even e-mailed the organizer well in advance. I am a vegan (no animal ingredients, meat, fish, eggs, dairy and derivatives thereof). Usually at conferences or other similar functions a separate meal is prepared for me so that I am not relegated to eating the salad or the few appropriate bits and pieces of what was prepared for everyone else (and so that I don't have to ask about everything). The kitchen staff was concerned and tried to accommodate me but was not sure what was appropriate. I'm sure they would have been better prepared if they were told ahead of time. I'm not upset about it but just wanted you to be aware, especially for people who might have food allergies. The kitchen staff was great though I tried very hard to be accommodating although except for the banquet I was mainly just able to eat small bits of the meals. Other than that the workshop was great and I found it informative and enjoyable.
- An opportunity was missed at the reception, cash bars, and banquet to serve local wine from the Grand Pre winery or from *lost*; both are in Nova Scotia and both produce excellent products. Instead, cheap Canadian plonk was served.

4. Venues and conference facility

- Workshop venues- marvelous
- The facilities are very well suited for this type of workshop.
- My first time in this beautiful, historic area. I can see why the French settlers chose this spot!
- The screens used for the presentations were not adequate. They should be large so that the audience can better see.
- Really liked Champlain Hall.
- Kespuwick Hall seats were terrible and in fact intolerable for anyone with a back problem. The building had something in the air that made people cough. This was very noticeable in several sessions.

5. Accommodations

- Room 128 Conestoga Lodge has a water leak coming from under the floor tiles (2 tiles out from the heater).
- I have only one comment regarding the accommodations - room service tags for the doors would be nice. I know that some people would rather not have room service, especially if only there for a couple of days. Otherwise, I enjoyed the old barracks! Gorgeous conference centre!)
- Conestoga residence - heat could not be shut down (even with thermostat at 0!). bed creaked badly.
- Conference centre very good (only complaint is that rooms were hot)
- Facilities - Overall I was happy with it. Place was clean and not expensive. Some paint using warmer colours would help rid it of the institution feel it presently has.
- Accommodations - too cold, then too hot.
- Accommodations too far from hall and paper presentations. Noisy, especially early in the morning, and smelly due to nearby industrial activities. If weather had been bad (rain) or in winter then moving between different venues would have been difficult.
- Kespuwick Hall may have mold problems - several people reacted to building by coughing and slight asthmatic reactions. Champlain Hall was quite nice however.
- Get cleaners in accommodations to use non-smelly cleaners.
- Several people noted that if wood paneling were painted white, accommodations would not seem so depressing.
- Accommodations would have been OK if we knew ahead of time their conditions. (e.g. on web site of centre - "suite with shared bath" implies something a little more comfortable than army cots and cold) and were charged accordingly.
- Rooms were Spartan but OK. Although the building (Conestoga) was smoke-free someone had been smoking in my room prior to my visit and the room reeked.