



## 2008 Key Issue Identification Form

***Instructions:** Each county, program area and specialists as a whole are to identify key issues that their programming activities currently address, or should address. For each issue, craft a 2-3 sentence issue statement that outlines, in brief, what the issue at hand is and why it is important or relevant. The issue statements should be crafted based on objective data, as well as input from Specialists, County Educators, Advisory Councils, and input from other key stakeholders.*

- 1. In a few words, please come up with a title that succinctly defines the issue:**

### **Global Climate Change**

- 2. Please describe the issue in 2-3 sentences** (i.e. craft an issue statement that describes what the issue at hand is and why it is a significant issue):

Numerous scientific studies over the past 20 years indicate that earth's temperatures have been rising at various rates around the globe. Continued temperature increases could have significant implications for many ecosystems and the species within them. Some of these scientific studies on climate change attribute the rise in temperatures to human-induced greenhouse gases being emitted to the atmosphere. However, there is disagreement on this point among the science community

- 3. In 2-3 sentences, please describe what the public value for Extension to address this issue is/would be.** (The term public value refers to not only the value of our outreach activities to community *participants*, but, more importantly, the value of these activities to those who do not *directly* benefit from these activities. The purpose of the Public Value approach is to secure support for activities with strong public value and identify those activities that do not have strong public value. The following is an example of a public value statement that addresses the issue of loss of rural landscape to development and other growth-related pressures.)

The current public perception of global warming is that due to increased greenhouse gas emissions, man is directly responsible for most, if not all, of the temperature increases. Society and government at all levels have accepted as dogma that rising temperatures are man-induced and solutions need to be found quickly. However, the public very rarely is offered results

from scientists holding differing viewpoints from the popular “warming is mostly man-induced” message. In addition, warming, whether man-induced or part of a natural cycle, can have positive impacts as well. These too have not been communicated to society. By objectively presenting all sides of the climate change issue, the public will be better able to decide on what actions, if any, are required to deal with this problem.

**4. Identify and summarize key data that help make the case that this is a key issue** (key data might include demographic trend data, University priorities, issues identified in plans/policies of other agencies and organizations, stakeholder input, etc.).

Numerous scientific studies on climate change/warming from UNH and around the world are available to utilize in presenting objective information on the subject. In particular, the UN sponsored report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the follow-up report by the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change come to vastly different conclusions on warming using the same data.

**5. How does/would addressing this issue tie into UNH Cooperative Extension’s Mission?**

Many scientists, decision-makers and the public believe global climate change may be the most important environmental issue facing society. As unbiased sources of information, UNHCE can be a key player in the discussions, particularly those that relate to policy, regulation and behavior changes.

**6. What Extension programs/activities, if any, currently address this issue? For each, please succinctly describe how the program/activity addresses the issue.**

UNHCE currently has no programs or activities, other than a limited climate change educational module utilized by the UNH Marine Docents in some outreach efforts, related to this issue.

**7. What other organizations/agencies are currently addressing this issue?**

Many federal agencies are supporting global climate change research. However, I'm unaware if any organizations carrying out comprehensive, unbiased education programs for the general public and decision- makers.

**8. If Extension does not currently address this issue, how might we address this issue in the future?** (Consider staff capacity, financial resources, volunteer capacity, and potential partnerships with other agencies/organizations, etc.).

Staff vacancies have been created with the retirements of Frank Mitchell and Rollie Barnaby. I hope to be able to restructure one of these positions to accommodate significant programming time for climate change/warming, at least on a pilot basis for perhaps two years to see how it progresses.

**Please Complete and Email to Lisa Townson by October 23, 2008**

**Form Submitted by: Brian Doyle**

**Date: 11/12/08**

**Representing: Sea Grant Extension & Water Resources**