



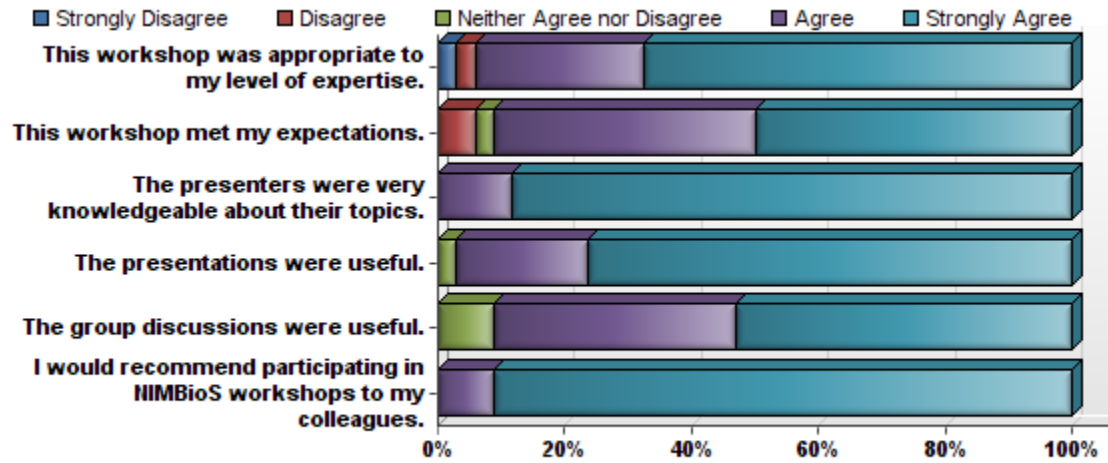
Evaluation Summary Report

Workshop: *Predictive Models for ERA*

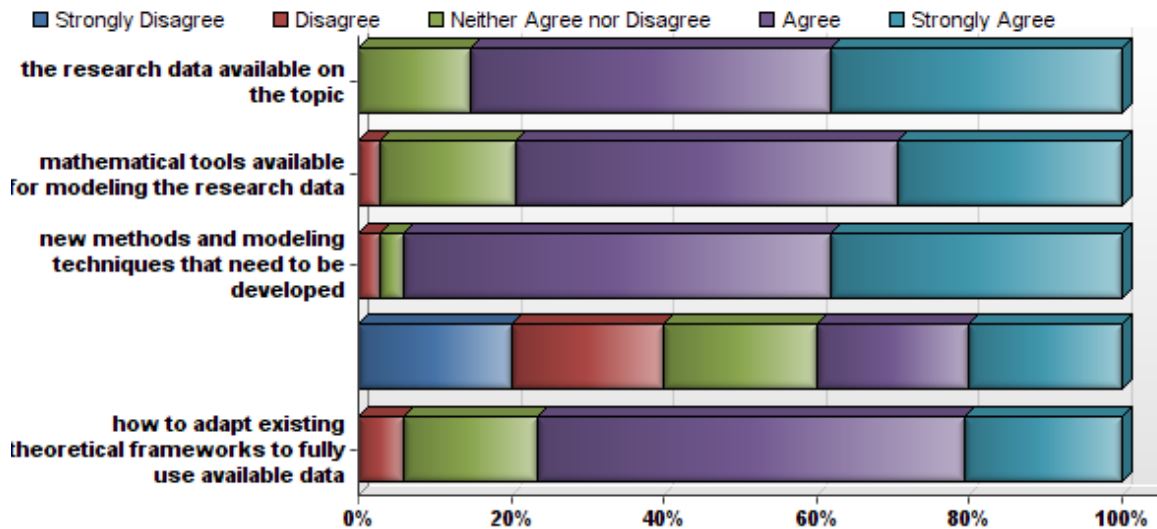
April 28-30, 2014

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Evaluation Manager
National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis
June, 2014

1. Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about this workshop:



2. As a result of participating in this workshop, I have a better understanding of:



3. What do you feel was the most useful aspect of the workshop?

The size of the workshop allowed for a lot of interactions that was further facilitated by the break-out sessions.

Meeting new people from similar, yet different fields

Networking and face-to-face meetings outside of "official" activities.

Connecting the molecular models with the IBM. Other aspects are like, models are stupid! Organisms are stupid! What? No Genes are stupid.

The overview it presented of the research field.

The discussions and the opportunity to network with many researchers outside my immediate field.

Meeting people with common research interests and professional backgrounds is extremely enriching. I believe that having established a new collaborative network is beneficial as these can help foster future research and improve ongoing research.

Lectures by plenary speakers

Discussion of the different approaches to ecological risk assessment and potential ways to link models and data from different levels of biological organization.

Being able to network with other disciplines and EPA people in a variety of ways.

There were several: learning about current state of the art in the application of models; identifying avenues of future research; meeting colleagues and potential collaborators and learning about other opportunities with NIMBioS.

As someone new to the topic, seeing the various viewpoints and where they coalesce/diverge was very useful in building a framework for my understanding of the current state of the field.

Meeting other people already established in the field.

The framework that made discussions more freeform and less rigid. Since a particular product was not required to be completed (or nearly) at the workshop, it allowed a more relaxed set of discussions. There was not as much pressure to stay on a preconceived track.

- Meeting new people - Initiating new collaborations - Learning about new fields of research and new approaches

Plenary talks

The bringing together of people from diverse, but relevant backgrounds to tackle the issue.

Keynote presentations and casual discussions

It was most useful getting the perspectives of the EPA folks and learning about approaches such as AOP.

Interaction with government scientists.

Getting a good idea of where the major gaps in knowledge are in my field, and ideas on how to go about filling them

The discussion groups were very useful

The ability to meet and communicate face-to-face with people from different disciplines

The getting together of scientists with different backgrounds and interests is a powerful approach to achieve in the close future the inter-disciplinary research that is needed in the field of predictive models

Gaining an awareness of the research going on in the topic and the networking with so many top people researching in this field.

The opportunities for extended discussion - both in the formal Breakout Groups, and informally (over lunch, dinner, etc.)

Establishing connections with people that do research that are highly relevant for my work.

I enjoyed the breakout sessions. They allowed for a good exchange of ideas. I also thought that having a panel at the end was a useful conclusion to the workshop.

Allowing personal, face-to-face interactions.

The mix of disciplines, and the idea that research should lead to practical implementation -- although that still seems a bit distant in this context.

4. What would you change about the workshop?

I didn't like that the breakout group composition stayed the same for the whole meeting. It would have been nice to have mixed up the composition of the breakout groups so we could have discussions with a greater diversity of individuals.

I think on the last day having longer all-group discussions and a shorter break-out discussion would have been a better ratio.

No downpours during a workshop or make ride available for people when the weather is horrible.

Focus on more concrete steps forward, organizing groups/networks

We could have used more mathematicians.

Having a balancing moderator who is not biased to a certain field, for example a sociologist rather than mathematician, molder or strictly biologist to assist in bridging the concepts.

Have more presentations.

I feel that it would have been interesting to mix up the breakout groups. I realize the idea was to get coherent flow of ideas. I also realize it's logistically simpler to have everyone know which group they are in each time. But getting to discuss ideas with all members of the workshop may have been very interesting.

Perhaps I was naive at expecting a much higher level of technical discussion, including the introduction of new models or approaches. This comment, however, should not be interpreted as a disappointment, but perhaps as a recommendation for future focused-workshops

Change the composition of the small groups during every breakout session.

It went quite well, so no real changes necessary.

Slightly shorter breakout groups and slightly longer plenary sessions.

Well, I didn't find the post-breakout session reports all that helpful. At one point, there was the suggestion that each group just mention what they thought was the single most interesting idea and this was an improvement. The final panel discussion also was not very helpful although when a report is generated, it may all come together. Otherwise, it was great!

Not much

Personally, I found the break-out groups a little bit too large in size and that they were rather dominated by a few more established people. I found it difficult to get myself heard in the discussion unless I harshly interrupted somebody else.

More strongly encouraging the participants to look over the background materials provided would have helped the discussions progress further.

More structure to breakout sessions

Nothing! It was perfect.

A more goal-oriented framework, which forces people to organize their thoughts.

It would have been good to have some industry representatives at the workshop

Slightly tighter structure for final morning discussions.

I would have preferred less of a policy focus and more science

In the context of this workshop some end user engagement would have been useful

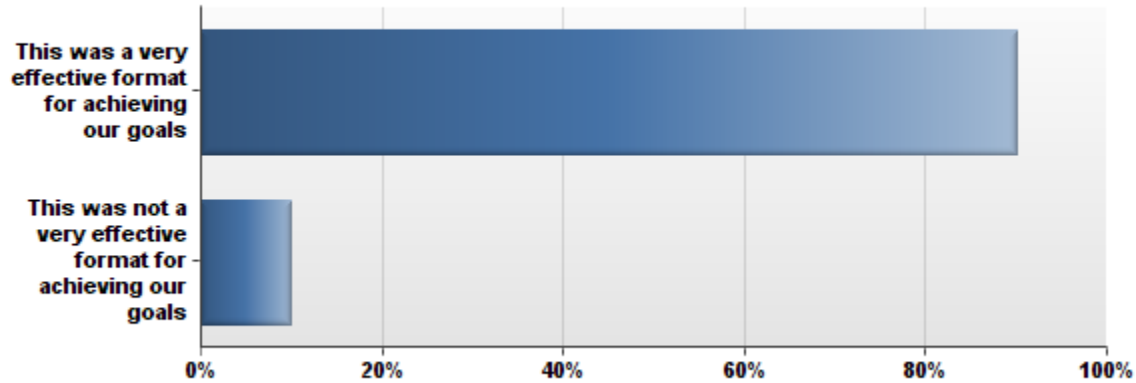
I think that there should be a concrete 'product' produced at the end rather than just recommendations.

More and shorter presentations.

Perhaps more time for discussion.

Not much to change

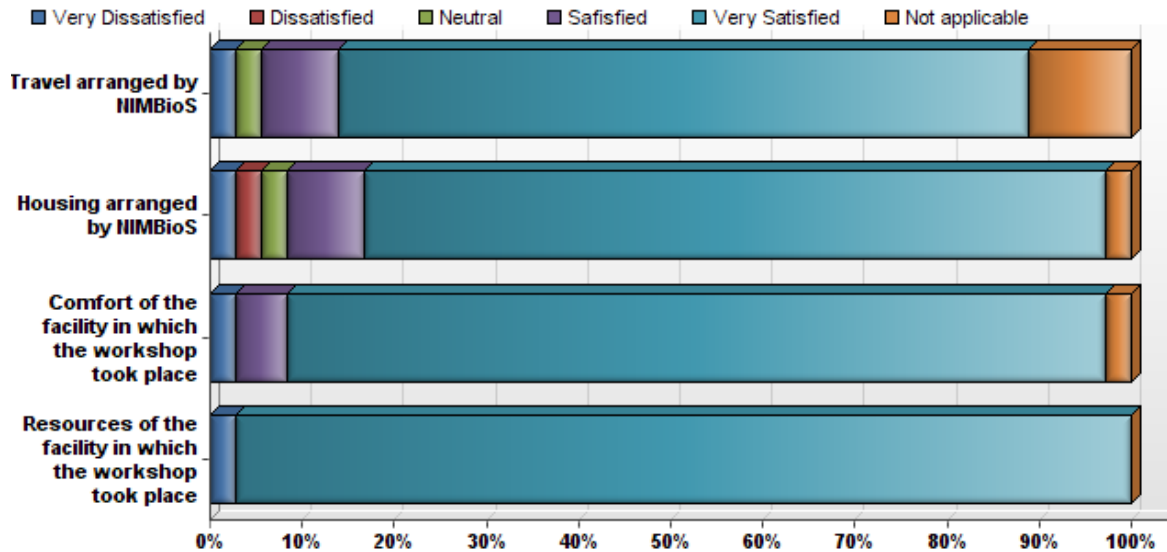
5. How do you feel about the format of the workshop?



6. The workshop format would have been more effective if:

No comments

7. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the workshop accommodations:



8. Comments about accommodations:

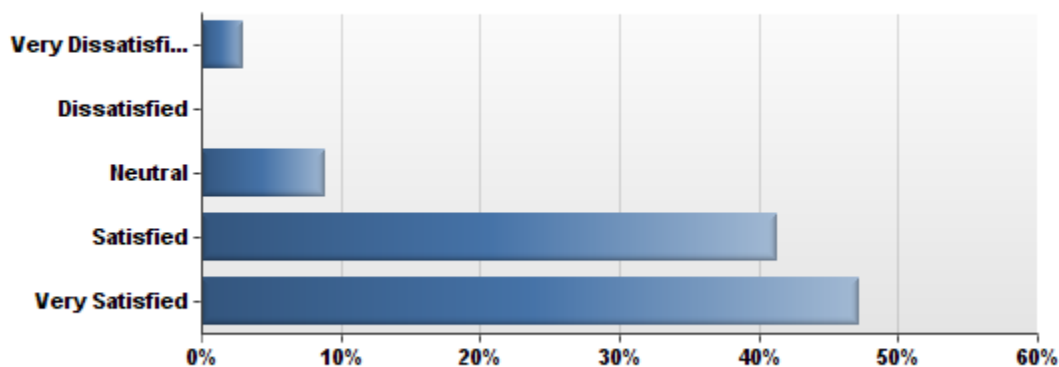
I happened to be in a room with a loud air-conditioner that inhibited me from sleeping. I'm not sure there is anything that can be done about that.

Generally everything was great. We were short one breakout room and one of the groups had to use the breakfast/lunch room which was not ideal. However, by switching which group got this room we managed fine.

Really enjoyed the Sheraton, great hotel.

One word: OUTSTANDING.

9. How satisfied were you with the opportunities provided during workshop presentations and discussions to ask questions and/or make comments?



10. Please indicate any suggestions you have for facilitating communication among participants during the workshop:

Mixing up composition of breakout groups.

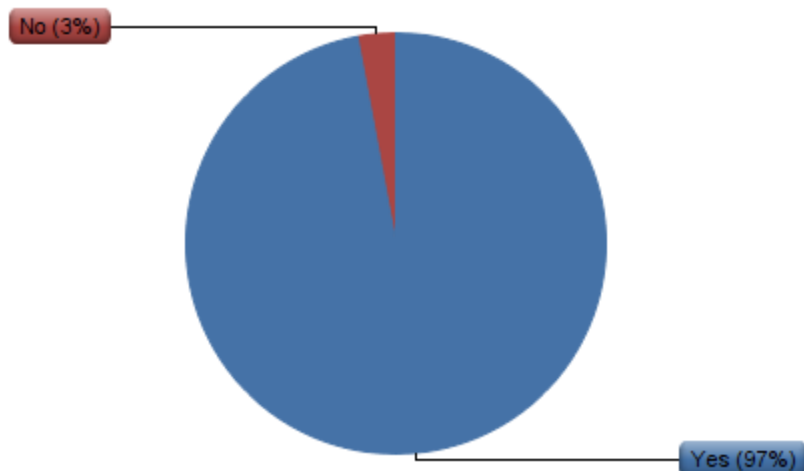
I suggest the plenary speaker to lead the plenary discussion at the end of the workshop and let the questions emanate from their topics presented

It is useful for the younger investigators to have more senior faculty explain the methods and their tools.

Using the microphone for questions and discussion was very helpful as some of the participants would not have been heard without it.

Increased use of eg twitter might have been helpful - a live twitter wall for example

11. Do you feel participating in the workshop helped you better understand the research going on in disciplines other than your own on the workshop's topic?



12. Comments:

It has assisted me to develop an understanding on how should there be a need to link the IBM and the Ecosystem models.

My background is organismal and population level work. I feel I learned a great deal about sub organismal modeling

Eye-opening hearing how differently many of us approach the same basic issues under quite different regulatory frameworks.

The presentations, discussion and informal conversations were immensely helpful in galvanizing my thinking regarding the application of mathematical models in predictive ecotoxicology and risk assessment.

It helped me catch up on areas that have been hard to keep up with.

I feel that I am very well informed now about the state of knowledge and the current gaps in knowledge.

Informed me about ERA, which is not something I had much contact with previously and helped me understand how modelling approaches might be helpful to ERA

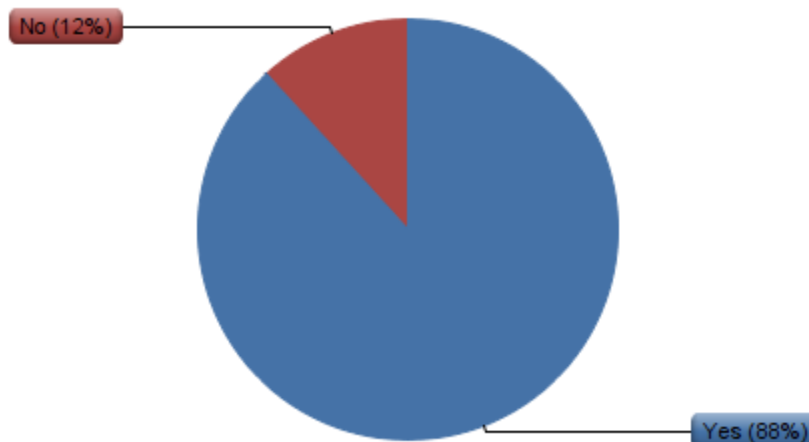
I had no knowledge of the mathematical side of this topic before coming to the workshop

I was able to get a better understanding of DEB models.

Attendance at the workshop helped clarify concepts and identify areas of mutual understanding & growth for collaboration.

Good mix of disciplines from applied math to biology.

13. Do you feel the workshop made adequate progress toward finding a common language across disciplines for research on the workshop's topic?



14. Comments:

The majority of expertise was at a biochemical level, and had few representatives from population, community, and ecosystem levels.

There is the need though to involve other practitioners like the Industry and regulators in order to bridge science and practice, fill gaps and solve challenges practitioners are facing.

Yes, although I think that the workshop was really the start of a dialogue that included identifying paths forward that would include finding a common language, etc.

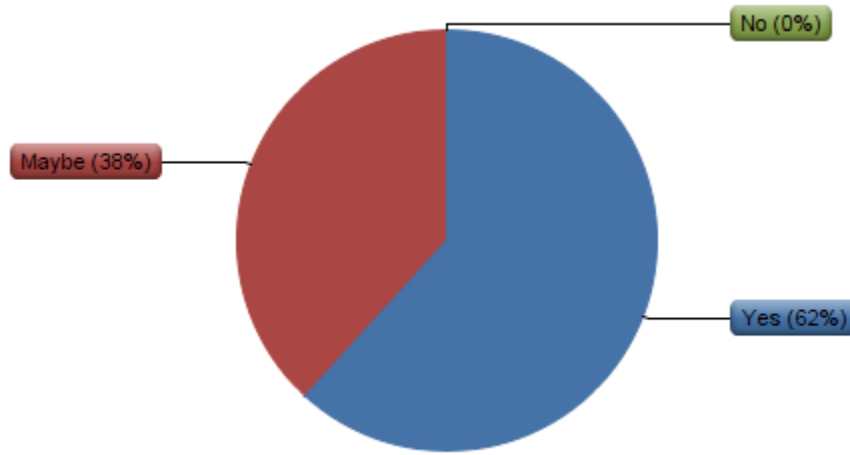
It made progress despite the efforts of some to keep going in circles.

I think the workshop was too short to accomplish this goal. We were just beginning to get to that point by the end.

The discussions were very helpful in this regard.

I would say yes with some qualifications. Certainly, we made some progress on this front, but I think there are probably lingering communication barriers (some of which are not apparent to many participants). In my experience, it takes quite a bit of extensive communication before researchers in disparate disciplines really understand what each other are saying.

15. Do you feel that the exchange of ideas that took place during the workshop will influence your future research?



16. Comments:

Some of us are planning to write a paper together

Especially at the application of the integrated ecosystem management models.

I'm currently still organizing the research ideas for my postdoc. I think the discussion that took place during the workshop will have a great influence on the modeling I do during my postdoc

It should.

Without a doubt. Although the workshop was focused heavily on "how to" implement certain mathematical tools, it was helpful in pointing to those tools and in identifying new avenues of research.

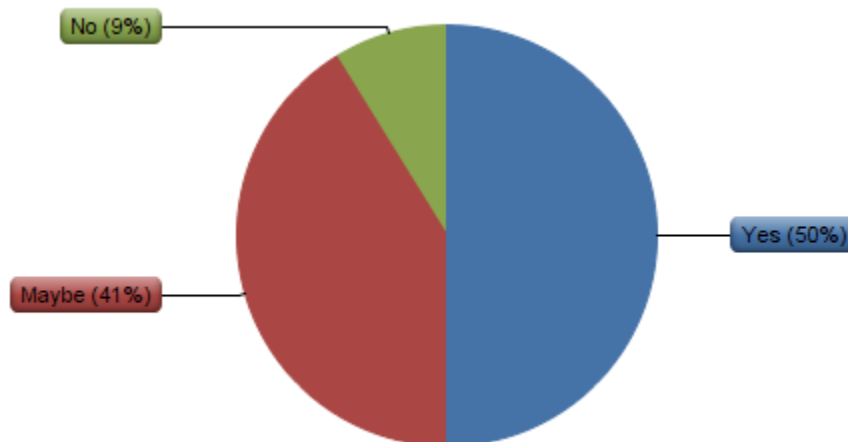
The workshop has made me want to shift some of my research in directions discussed at the workshop.

I would certainly be interested in participating in the type of research that is going to be needed

I came away with many ideas.

As a more applied researcher/practitioner, I did find some of the tools/approaches to be beyond what can typically be done in a more practical setting. But certainly the stage is set for research.

17. Did you develop plans for collaborative research with other workshop participants with whom you had not previously collaborated?



18. Comments:

I was offered a chance to collaborate on some research, but it came about during discussions at meals, not from the topic of the workshop specifically.

I will say that the participants and the NIMBioS staff were amazing! I met a lot of people and hatched some great ideas for future work.

I'm new to the field of ERA and still need to find my way around and specify a research program. Although I haven't planned a specific collaboration at the workshop, it was very useful to get an overview of the state-of-art, the major challenges, and meet many leaders in the field. The latter will certainly help me in the future.

Nothing firm, but some possibilities.

Still a work in progress, but a promising start has been made.

19. Please use this space for any additional comments:

I was impressed with the organization and vision of the institute.

Great job! Keep up the good work.

This is an extremely well run organization! I have organized several workshops before, and having NIMBioS take over all of the practical logistics (travel, accommodation, meals, etc.) was a huge load off and allowed me to focus on the scientific content of the event.

The workshop was so important. Needed is the follow-up of the discussions by using different means like social networks, emails, blogs and even follow-up workshops. I would also advise results and implementation of the recommendations be shared by the group members. There be any research that has addressed any of the raised questions,

please let the group be posted in order to avoid duplications. In case there are some research studies on the modelling that requires graduate/ international students please let me be posted. The journey was long from dar es salaam to Knoxville but the workshop was far worthy.

A follow-up workshop where some of the partial goals formulated by this workshop are presented would be very useful, especially for junior researchers.

I was extremely pleased with my experience and I'm hopeful that I can and will participate in efforts resulting from this initial workshop. I applaud the organizers for an outstanding job and I also commend NIMBioS for their outstanding professionalism!

Keep up the great work. Hope to be involved more in the future. This is a wonderful resource.

I thank NIMBioS for their providing us with such an opportunity to build new contacts with experts and update our knowledge in different disciplines: there are only a few institutes like NIMBioS which support these multidisciplinary workshops, which are very useful and fruitful. I also thank the NIMBioS staff in Knoxville TN for their warm welcome and help on a day to day basis.

I am first semester PhD student coming from Risk Assessment consulting work. I'm trying to see how I can move risk assessment forward with my dissertation research - I will be keeping in mind the modeling aspects and direction of risk assessment when defining my research program

Thank you