Social Science Working Group Scope of Work

<u>Purpose:</u>
Social science is an important component in ecological forecasting to both improve the prediction of the forecasts as well as to increase the understandability and usefulness of the forecasts for decision-making. By social science, we encompass a range of human-focused disciplines, including, but not limited to, decision science, geography, economics, and others. The Social Science Working Group is focused on: developing methods, interdisciplinary collaboration on improving ecological forecasting models, co-production with stakeholders who may or will use ecological forecasts, developing and testing new ecological forecasting decision support products, and improving the tools and processes that advance the use of forecasts in environmental decisions. This document provides an overview of the priorities of the Social Science Working Group. It is a living document that will be updated as tasks become redundant and new efforts are developed.

<u>Scope of Work and Terms:</u>
1. Ongoing:
   ○ Create and maintain a **working statement** for where the entry points are for social science in ecological forecasting, including opportunities for new social science research and areas where existing social science theory can contribute. This will be linked to the blog series and working group description on www.ecoforecast.org.
   ○ Initiate, discuss, and develop **new ideas in the social sciences** that draw from emerging challenges in ecological forecasting
   ○ **Collaborate** with the Theory and Cyberinfrastructure working groups to provide social and decision-sciences perspective in developing forecast standards
2. Short Term Goals (next 6 months)
   ○ Build a **community of scholars** and practitioners who are interested in advancing the predictability and use of ecological forecasts in environmental management decisions
   ○ Develop a series of **blog posts** that share decision and social sciences perspectives on opportunities and existing scholarship to advance the field of ecological forecasting
   ○ Scope collaboration opportunities for **proposals** and other research endeavors with colleagues in other EFI working groups so that social science perspectives are incorporated before models are built and not just viewed as a dissemination exercise after they are constructed or prototyped
   ○ Coordinate with the Partners Working Group to maintain a **log or database** of examples of existing decision support systems and tools for ecological forecasts.
   ○ Advise, participate, and engage in the first EFI RCN meeting in May 2020.
3. Medium Term Goals (next 1-2 years)
   ○ Strengthen **collaborations and partnerships** to more broadly encompass the decision and social science advancements necessary as ecological forecasting approaches become more main-streamed
   ○ Develop an **article** that serves as a primer for the opportunities and use of social science in ecological forecasting

- ○ Collaborate on proposals
- ○ Encourage federal ecological forecasting **RFPs** to adopt the interdisciplinary approaches that are advocated by the EFI community to facilitate collaboration and development of this field
4. Long Term Goals (5 years+)
   - ○ Expand the role of social science in ecological forecasting to more broadly encompass the decision and social science advancements necessary as ecological forecasting approaches become more main-streamed
   - ○ Ambitious goal of expanding the way social sciences interact with forecasts from/ within coupled human and natural systems (e.g.through the integration of models with different epistemological foundations).

Membership:

- Membership is open to all EFI members expressing interest in this activity. New members can join on a rolling basis.
- Members currently include:
  - o Jaime Ashander (RFF) - Co-chair
  - o Kira Sullivan Wiley (BU) - Co-chair
  - o Michael Dietze (BU)
  - o Melissa Kenney (U of MN)
  - o Mike Gerst (U Maryland)
  - o Rich Fulford (EPA)
  - o Kathy Gerst (USA NPN/U AZ)
  - o Carl Boettiger (UC Berkeley)
  - o Jody Peters (ND)
  - o Güray Hatipoğlu (Middle East Technical University)
  - o Chris Jones (NCSU Center for Geospatial Analytics)
  - o Nathaniel Springer (IonE U of MN)
  - o Deepak Ray (U of MN)
- To join Slack channel - email eco4cast.initiative@gmail.com

Meeting Frequency and Attendance:

- Meetings are held on a monthly basis and are announced on the Slack channel

Decision-Making Process:

Decisions will be reached by informal consensus or majority (50%) voting (in person or digital) after discussion during the working group teleconferences, and documented in meeting notes available through the EFI webpage. Decisions requiring additional input can be raised to the EFI leadership as appropriate.

Terms of the Charter:

- It is anticipated that this working group will continue as long as needed with affirmation of the working group members.
- The terms of reference will be revisited by the WG members to determine whether to continue or disband the working group.

<u>Rules of behavior</u>

Adhere to EFI's higher-level rules: code of conduct https://ecoforecast.org/efi-code-of-conduct/