

Theme: Global Challenges in Food Security: Interdisciplinary exploration of Theory and Methods in Conservation, Development and Communication

The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) and Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies (WMI) at the University of Nairobi jointly offered this course during March 17–29, 2014, in Nairobi, Kenya.

Objective

The overall objective was to elaborate on themes in the field of research methodology and research design. The aim was also to give opportunities for the participating PhD students to discuss theoretical and methodological issues in relation to their PhD projects. Practical applications were discussed in the context of selected field cases.

Contents and implementation:

The course contained lectures, discussions and seminars and a visit to field cases.

In lectures, key concepts and themes in the interface of natural and social sciences research were discussed, such as social constructionism, systems thinking, reflexivity, gender and development, and methodologies, such as action research and case studies. On completion of the course, participants were better able to position themselves in the landscape of theories and methods and had improved their skills to develop a problematic issue into a research design and methodology choice