

Title: Systemic Theories of Change and Pathways for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation

Hosts: Chris Barrett AEM, Alex Travis CVM

Date: March 13, 2014 12:00 – 1:00PM

Dr. Yiheyis Maru, Systems Research Scientist, CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences, Desert Knowledge Business and Innovation Centre will be visiting Cornell as part of his sabbatical from Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

Yiheyis started his career as a qualified veterinarian (DVM) in Ethiopia and did his post graduate studies (post Grad. Dip., PhD) in systems thinking and natural and rural systems management at the University of Queensland (Australia). He has a research and development work background for sustainable livelihoods improvement in rangeland regions. Prior to joining CSIRO in 2002, Yiheyis had extensive experience in conducting applied systems research and leading sustainable livelihood improvement and environmental rehabilitation programs in drylands of Ethiopia. Since he joined CSIRO, he has been undertaking systems and resilience research to understand and inform sustainable pathways out of chronic indigenous development challenges and new vulnerabilities in remote and regional Australia as well as from persistent food insecurities in Sub-Saharan Africa. He is currently leading a Systemic Theories of Change/Impact pathways learning theme as part of a Food Systems Innovation -a partnership initiative among CSIRO, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research and Australian International Food Security Centre. He is also involved in research projects including: in an integrated bio-social sciences research on African Swine Fever for improved biosecurity measure as part of Australian Government funded African Food Security Initiative (AFSI); Enabling Adaptation Pathways to Climate Change and Building Resilient Torres Strait Futures in remote Australia.

He had a first part sabbatical time with researchers in Europe (the UK and Wageningen in the Netherlands, in particular) and will be at Cornell for his second part. While at Cornell he hopes to build his professional network and launch some collaborations to promote the use of advanced and applied systems and resilience approaches in research for food security and development in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asian countries.

Yiheyis would like to share with and learn from others around his two current core research activities 1) on how to develop systemic theories of change/impact pathways of interventions for food security and 2) on a linked vulnerability-Resilience framework to inform adaptation pathways for marginalized remote communities¹

¹ Maru, Y. T., Stafford Smith, M., Sparrow, A., Pinho, P. F., & Dube, O. P. (2014). A linked vulnerability and resilience framework for adaptation pathways in remote disadvantaged communities. *Global Environmental Change*.
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959378013002379>