

## Section 3. Capacity for Collaboration with Society

### Justification

To assess the UoA's capacity for collaboration is well in line with SLU's mission:

*SLU develops the understanding and sustainable use and management of biological natural resources. This is achieved by research, education and environmental monitoring and assessment, **in collaboration with the surrounding community.***

Collaboration with society is one of the five core areas of focus in SLU's Strategy for 2017 -2020. One important reason for this is that the collaborative process in itself contributes to scientific development – meetings and dialogue with individuals outside one's own field of expertise can challenge established conceptions and result in novel perspectives on the questions at hand. Ideally the collaborations can result in new research questions, mutual learning, and assure that the relevant questions are asked. Almost by definition, successful collaboration that is, will in different ways be characterized by benefit from the interaction, to all involved stakeholders.

A capacity to collaborate with society includes ability to work with groups of people of differing competences or perspectives, to achieve a common goal that would be unattainable if attempted alone. Therefore, the assessment of Capacity for Collaboration with Society focuses on the relational process, the dialogue, and the mutual learning, as opposed to the outcome. The latter is covered in the evaluation of Impact of Research.

Another important reason for doing this assessment is that the government as well as funding agencies are increasingly expressing the need for collaboration between academia and society, and are allocating funding based on this. To assess our capacity for collaboration is a means for the university to be "one step ahead".

### Purpose

On a University-wide level, the purpose of assessing Capacity for Collaboration is to identify our strengths and challenges as a foundation for future strategic initiatives to develop this capacity, ultimately with the aim of enhancing scientific development and societal impact.

On the level of the UoA, the self-assessment process is in itself an opportunity to reflect and learn, and not least to promote awareness on how the collaborative process can contribute to the scientific development.

### Implementation

The assessment will be based on the UoA's self-reflection on past and on-going external collaborations regarding how it has developed one's own and the partner's activities. This descriptive reflection will be supplemented with case-studies to give examples of actual external collaborations. One case-study should describe examples where collaboration has worked well, and one case-study should describe an example of a collaboration that did not go as planned – including reflections about what affected the collaborative processes.

### Evaluation

The assessment of Capacity for Collaboration with Society will not result in an evaluation score. The evaluation panels will instead perform a context dependent qualitative assessment for each UoA, and give constructive feedback about the described approach to external collaboration.