



Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Draft 2.3

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Methodology to develop ISEE’s Strategic Plan.....	4
3. Vision and Mission.....	6
4. SWOT.....	7
5. Strategic priorities, objectives and priority actions.....	9
5.1. Finances.....	9
5.2. Membership.....	10
5.3. Communication and website.....	10
5.4. Capacity building and education.....	11
5.5. Policy.....	12
3. Communication.....	16
Appendix 1 – Initial SWOT form.....	17
Appendix 2 – Initial SWOT contributions.....	18
Appendix 3 – SWOT survey results.....	20

1. Introduction

Strategic planning is a process which reflects on ISEE's present and future, the determining factors that surround it, its internal situation, resources, etc. The purpose is to analyze guidelines with which to organize its management so that maximum quality and efficiency can be obtained, responding to the social needs of the areas in which ISEE works. Thus, it is an essential tool for the society's management, for the taking of decisions, and in general for addressing the present and future challenges and opportunities it faces. It is an active and dynamic tool that contains the main lines that must be part of the society's day-to-day management, consisting of objectives, strategies, action lines and/or initiatives. The Strategic Plan that will be developed should guide ISEE's decisions and future in the upcoming years.

The Strategic Plan must:

- a) Affirm our commitment to all our members
- b) Identify and define our priority areas for action in different areas, together with our main strategies and operational plans
- c) Identify indicators to adequately monitor performance, guide management decisions and design evaluation processes
- d) Have a specific time frame
- e) Have been developed and agreed through a participative process in the Society.

2. Methodology to develop ISEE’s Strategic Plan

The methodology used to develop the ISEE’s Strategic Plan follows three standard phases in strategic planning:

- 'Situation' – evaluates the current situation
- 'Target' – defines our goals and/or objectives
- 'Path' - maps a possible route to the goals/objectives.

The achievement of a successful development of a Strategic Plan depends on three fundamental principles:

- Participation of the members of the society in the process
- Leadership from the Council of ISEE
- Realistic approach regarding the process and objectives

The Strategic Plan should define the Vision, Mission, strategic priorities, key objectives and action plan. The development of ISEE’s Strategic Plan took into account the particularities of scientific societies compared to research and teaching centers in that there are clearly fewer resources and commitment in ISEE. To this extent a realistic approach had to be followed both for the process for developing the SP and also on the plan as such that should be achievable by ISEE.

The strategic plan has been developed in three different stages:

1. Definition of the vision and mission

Participants: M Kogevinas, F Laden, V Vieira, A Peters, D Baker, P Hystad, D Albertson

Draft 2.1 of ISEE Strategic Plan 2010-2016, 16 January 2016

2. SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis is a tool for auditing an organization and its environment. It is the first stage of planning and helps marketers focus on the key issues.

2.1 Initial SWOT

Participants: M Kogevinas, F Laden, V Vieira, A Peters, D Baker, P Hystad, D Albertson

Feb-Mar 2016

2.2. SWOT survey

The survey was performed to receive feedback on the initial SWOT (42 items) from a larger group and to identify the most important items.

Participants: Current and 2015 ISEE council members, chairs of ISEE committees and chapters, other members of ISEE's listserv, and people who volunteered to participate in the new communications, web and membership committees during the Sao Paulo meeting.

May 2016

2.3 SWOT summary blog

Results of the SWOT analysis have been made available to the ISEE membership for comments through a blog: <http://www.isee-europe.com/isee-swot-survey>

July-August 2016

3. Definition of strategic priorities and priority actions

The aim of this phase was to identify the strategic priorities for the next 4 years and to define priority actions.

July - November 2016

4. Review by the ISEE council

On November 1, 2016 a draft of ISEE's Strategic Plan was sent to all council members for feedback. Comments and suggestions of the council members that were received in November 2016 have been individually assessed and, if applicable, have been integrated in the priority actions.

November 2016

5. Communication

Strategic planning is a tool for achieving organizational objectives. To ensure successful implementation of the Strategic Plan of ISEE, it is important that it is understood and accepted by everybody who is involved in its execution. This document describes how this has been accomplished.

3. Vision and Mission

The **Vision** defines where ISEE wants to be in the future and reflects on our optimistic view of ISEE’s future. The vision refers to what we want to be, what we want to become:

“A worldwide scientific association in environmental epidemiology with impact in research, training and policy”.

The **Mission** defines where ISEE is going now. It describes our purpose, why ISEE exists, and what ISEE does. The mission of ISEE is defined in the bylaws:

“To foster epidemiological studies on the effects of environmental exposures in people, stimulate communication between health professionals, promote methodological advances, and strengthen environmental health policy”.

4. SWOT

An initial SWOT was developed by a small committee chaired by Ulrike Gehring (Appendix 1 and 2). This initial SWOT included many options for each of the SWOT components and was sent to a total of 86 people who were asked to prioritize the different items. They included council members, chairs of committees and chapters, listserv members, Sao Paulo volunteers.

N = 53 responses were received from 49 different IP-addresses. In case of 2 responses from the same address, the first non-empty record (2 of the 4 had 1 empty record) was kept. 4 of the 49 remaining records were empty, leaving a total of N = 45 records for analysis. Frequency distributions and of the responses and mean responses to the SWOT survey are presented Appendix 3. The results of the SWOT analysis have been made available to the ISEE membership for comments through a blog hosted on the website of the ISEE Europe Chapter (<http://www.isee-europe.com/isee-swot-survey>) and during the General Membership Assembly at the ISEE 2016 conference in Rome.

A summary of the SWOT with some additions from the results of the Membership Survey (performed by Molly Kile (not included in this document) is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of SWOT and membership survey results.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • membership, good blend of senior and junior researchers • international representation • active Students and New Researchers Network (SNRN) • annual conference • recognition as the premiere society in environmental epidemiology worldwide • coverage of most of the important areas in environmental epidemiology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small number of actively engaged members • absence in large geographic areas of the world • website and lack of modern means of communication • limited (educational) activities outside the annual conference • limited financial resources
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large potential member base • expansion of the SNRN • environmental health/epidemiological transition in developing countries • climate change and environment recognized as major worldwide problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political priority/support not being translated to research funds • General reduction of research funds

5. Strategic priorities, objectives and priority actions

The SWOT analysis has helped to crystallize a number of key strategic priorities and objectives for the upcoming years. When planning the strategic objectives, we strived to find a good match between external demands and opportunities, the internal values of ISEE and ISEE's resources.

The strategic priorities are defined by the mission of ISEE and include four distinct, although interconnected, areas:

- Finances
- Membership
- Communication and website
- Capacity building including education
- Policy

For each of the four priority areas, objectives and priority actions related to these objectives have been defined as described below by the respective committees as of October 2016:

- Finances: Manolis Kogevinas (chair), Veronica Vieira
- Membership: Veronica Vieira (chair)
- Communication and website: Molly Kile (chair), Greg Wellenius, Marc Weisskopf, Mireille Toledano
- Capacity building and education: Berna van Wendel de Joode (chair)
- Policy: Michal Krzyzanowski, Yasushi Honda

5.1. Finances

Objectives

1. Increase Society revenue from ISEE membership
2. Increase revenue from other sources
3. Assure sustainable support to ISEE activities

Actions

To accomplish objective 1:

- 1.1 Implement change in electronic only subscription to Epidemiology
- 1.2 Facilitate payments by members (automatic renewals, card payments, 3-yr preferential registrations) to improve active member retention
- 1.3 Promote active follow-up of members to improve active member retention

To accomplish objective 2:

- 2.1 Promote personal donations from members and the public at large
- 2.2 Identify and pursue other potential sources of revenue including from paid advertisement (on website and posting of job ads), sponsorship, and annual meetings
- 2.3 Evaluate possibilities for funding from state/federal or NGOs

To accomplish objective 3:

- 3.1 Prepare annual budget plan including costs to the Secretariat, journals and criteria for providing support to chapter and committees

5.2. Membership

Objectives

1. Increase and maintain ongoing membership to more than 1000 members
2. Broaden membership in geographic areas and scientific areas underrepresented in ISEE (actions)

Actions

To accomplish objective 1:

- 1.1 Create an early career membership category
- 1.2 Define benefits gained from membership including new journal benefits and development opportunities for next generation of environmental epidemiologists
- 1.3 Develop practical solutions that will facilitate new members and renewals, e.g. 3 yr membership, automatic renewal etc

To accomplish objective 2:

- 2.1 Promote membership through existing chapters, particularly in Asia, South America, and Africa
- 2.2 Contact current members with expertise in radiation, climate change, occupation, and molecular environmental epi to help recruit new members from the network of colleagues

5.3. Communication and website

Objectives

1. Improve timely communication with ISEE members
2. Develop and launch a new ISEE website
3. Host online webinars on new ISEE website

Actions

To accomplish objective 1:

- 1.1 Begin a twitter account (@isee_global) to push out news, job postings, policy statements, Epidemiology news, etc in real time and develop a policy to govern the content distributed through this twitter account
- 1.2 Bi-annual newsletter to share news, job postings, policy statements, committee activities, commentary, conference award winners, strategic plan updates, conference announcements, etc with all currently enrolled members. Newsletters will be distributed via email and posted on the ISEE website.

To accomplish objective 2:

- 2.1 Determine the content to include in the website and how the information will be organized
- 2.2 Determine the content we want to add to the website

- 2.3 Send out for bids and determine costs
- 2.4 Work with web developer to create new site
- 2.5 Launch the new site
- 2.5 Maintain website

To accomplish objective 3:

- 3.1 Have a website capable of supporting streaming video
- 3.2 Determine fee structure for accessing this material
- 3.3 Identify content
- 3.4 Create content
- 3.5 Post content

5.4. Capacity building and education

Objectives

- 1. Strengthen ISEE member's research capacities, particularly from middle and low-income countries
- 2. Provide training opportunities in environmental epidemiology and related fields, in collaboration with the Regional Chapters and the Students New Researchers Network.

Actions

To accomplish objective 1:

- 1.1 Conduct workshops in annual conferences providing information, skills, and tactics that will help researchers to write and publish their research
- 1.2 Create a list of possible funding sources for researchers from low- and middle income countries to assist in travel to ISEE annual conferences.
- 1.3 Organize webinars on specific themes
- 1.4 Promote networking of junior, mid-career, senior researchers, promote both North-South, South-South, North-North collaborations

To accomplish objective 2:

- 2.1 Video-tape key-note lectures and post them on ISEE website
- 2.2 Develop a set of lectures on topics related to environmental epidemiology and post them on ISEE website
- 2.3 Post presentational courses (or parts of them) in the field of epidemiology on ISEE websites
- 2.4 Organize presentational courses during ISEE events
- 2.5 Make an inventory of the training opportunities in the field of environmental epidemiology, including courses on biostatistics and environmental and occupational health, and update it continuously on ISEE's website (have it for each region).

5.5. Policy

Strategic priority:

Support Environmental Health (EH) policy increasing visibility and impacts of environmental epidemiology in national, regional and global EH policy making

Objectives

1. Issue evidence-based statements providing expert opinion on scientific questions related to environmental health policy
2. Identify EH issues where ISEE expertise could influence policy and organize member's discussion concerning those issues
3. Encourage and support ISEE members in offering their expertise in EH policy making

Actions

To accomplish objective 1:

- 1.1. Define priorities on policy statements or other interventions in environmental health
- 1.2. Prepare corresponding statements or other interventions on priority issues in environmental health
- 1.3. Comment on issues discussed by the World Health Assembly
- 1.4. Comment on the processes and methods of using evidence from environmental epidemiology in EH policy making

To accomplish objective 2:

- 2.1. Networking within scientific community
- 2.2. Networking with policy-makers and NGOs

To accomplish objective 3:

- 3.1 Organize policy discussions at ISEE Annual Conferences
- 3.2 Involve members in preparation and formulation of policy statements
- 3.3 Promote participation of ISEE members in national and international policy making processes
- 3.4 Involve Policy Committee in statements prepared by regional chapters

The next step consisted of developing plans for each action, identifying persons responsible for the specific actions and defining a timetable. A provisional table of responsible persons/committees and deadlines is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. ISEE priority actions – responsible and timetable.

Priority action	Responsible	Timetable	Status
Finances			
1.1	Implement change in electronic only subscription to Epidemiology		Ongoing
1.2	Facilitate payments by members to improve active member retention		Ongoing
1.3	Promote active follow-up of members to improve active member retention		Ongoing
2.1	Promote personal donations from members and the public at large		Ongoing
2.2	Identify and pursue other potential sources of revenue including from paid advertisement (on website and posting of job ads), sponsorship, and annual meetings	Income from job posts: Marc Weisskopf System in place by January 2017?	Ongoing
2.3	Evaluate possibilities for funding from state/federal or NGOs		Ongoing
3.1	Prepare annual budget plan including costs to the Secretariat, journals and criteria for providing support to chapter and committees		Ongoing
Membership			
1.1	Create an early career membership category	Membership Committee	December 2016 Ongoing
1.2	Define benefits gained from membership including new journal benefits and development opportunities for next generation of environmental epidemiologists	Membership Committee	September 2017 Ongoing
1.3	Develop practical solutions that will facilitate new members and renewals, e.g. 3 yr membership, automatic renewal etc	Membership Committee	September 2017 Ongoing
2.1	Promote membership through existing chapters, particularly in Asia, South America, and Africa	Membership Committee	September 2017 Ongoing
2.2	Contact current members with expertise in radiation, climate change, occupation, and molecular environmental epi to help recruit new members from the network of colleagues	Membership Committee	September 2017 Ongoing
Communication and website			
1.1	Begin a twitter account (@isee_global) to push out news, job postings, policy statements, Epidemiology news, etc in real time and develop a policy to govern the content distributed through this twitter account	Molly Kile	September 2016 Accomplished

Table 2. (continued)

Priority action	Responsible	Timetable	Status
1.2 Bi-annual newsletter to share news, job postings, policy statements, committee activities, commentary, conference award winners, strategic plan updates, conference announcements, etc with all currently enrolled members. Newsletters will be distributed via email and posted on the ISEE website	Molly Kile	January and August	Ongoing
2.1 Determine the content to include in the website and how the information will be organized	Communications & website committee	September 2017	Done
2.2 Determine the content we want to add to the website	Communications & website committee		Ongoing
2.3 Send out for bids and determine costs	Communications & website committee		Ongoing
2.4 Work with web developer to create new site	Communications & website committee		Ongoing
2.5 Launch the new site	Communications & website committee		Ongoing
2.6 Maintain website	Communications & website committee		Ongoing
3.1 Have a website capable of supporting streaming video	Communications & website committee	September 2017	Ongoing
3.2 Determine fee structure for accessing this material	Communications & website committee		Ongoing
3.3 Identify content	Communications & website committee, capacity building and education committee		Ongoing
3.4 Create content	Communications & website committee, capacity building and education committee		Ongoing
3.5 Post content	Communications & website committee		
Capacity building and education			
1.1 Conduct workshops in annual conferences providing information, skills, and tactics that will help researchers to write and publish their research	Jane Schroeder and Berna van Wendel de Joode	Yearly at ISEE conference	Ongoing
1.2 Create a list of possible funding sources for researchers from low- and middle income countries to assist to ISEE meetings.	Capacity building & education committee	February-April 2017	Ongoing
1.3 Organize webinars on specific themes	Capacity building & education committee	Twice a year: June and November	Ongoing
1.4 Promote networking of junior, mid-career, senior researchers, promote both North-South, South-South, North-North collaborations	Capacity building & education committee	September 2017	Ongoing

Table 2. (continued)

Priority action	Responsible	Timetable	Status
2.1 Video-tape key-note lectures and post them on ISEE website	Capacity building & education committee	April 2017 (Rome), October 2017 (Sydney)	Ongoing
2.2 Develop a set of lectures on topics related to environmental epidemiology and post them on ISEE website	Capacity building & education committee	March 2018	Ongoing
2.3 Post presentational courses (or parts of them) in the field of epidemiology on ISEE websites	Capacity building & education committee	May 2017, August 2017	Ongoing
2.4 Organize presentational courses during ISEE events	Capacity building & education committee	September 2017 (Sydney)	Ongoing
2.5 Make an inventory of the training opportunities in the field of environmental epidemiology, including courses on biostatistics and environmental and occupational health, and update it continuously on ISEE's website (have it for each region).	Capacity building & education committee	December 2017	Ongoing
Policy			
1.1 Define priorities on policy statements or other interventions in environmental health			Ongoing
1.2 Prepare corresponding statements or other interventions on priority issues in environmental health	Policy committee	Mid-2017	Ongoing
1.3 Comment on issues discussed by the World Health Assembly	Policy committee	April (each year)	Ongoing
1.4 Comment on the processes and methods of using evidence from environmental epidemiology in EH policy making	Policy committee	Mid-2017	Ongoing
3.2 Involve members in preparation and formulation of policy statements	Policy committee	Mid-2017	Ongoing
3.3 Promote participation of ISEE members in national and international policy making processes	Policy committee	continuing	Ongoing
3.4 Involve Policy Committee in statements prepared by regional chapters	Policy committee	continuing	Ongoing

3. Communication

It is very important that the members of ISEE understand and agree with the strategic plan. To ensure this, it is essential to involve them in the planning and to keep them periodically informed. During the strategic planning process, we sent information by e-mail, performed membership surveys, had meetings and hosted blogs on the website of ISEE Europe.

SWOT summary results blog – August 8, 2016

An email has been sent to all members that the results of the SWOT have been made available for comments through a blog hosted on the website of ISEE Europe.

ISEE General Members Assembly – September 2, 2016

A summary of the SWOT results and the membership surveys (past & current members, students & new researchers) has been presented.

Email to participants of SWOT survey –December 8, 2016

Draft 2.2 was sent by email to those who were involved in the SWOT survey asking them to review and comment on the draft Strategic Plan on December 8, 2016.

Strategic plan document: email to all members and blog – February 2017

Draft 2.3 of the strategic plan document will be made available to the membership through a blog hosted on the website of ISEE Europe in February 2017. Members will be informed about the blog by email.

Appendix 1 – Initial SWOT form

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS (internal to ISEE)</p> <p>Definition: Capabilities that enable ISEE to perform well, capabilities that need to be leveraged</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what do we excel? • What are our comparative advantages? • What resources or issues make us strong? • What do others define as our main strengths? <p>Example: We cover most of the important areas in environmental epidemiology</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES (internal to ISEE)</p> <p>Definition: Characteristics that prohibit ISEE from performing well and need to be addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can we do better? • For what sort of things are we criticized? • In which areas are we vulnerable? <p>Example: Limited financial resources</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES (outside ISEE, external)</p> <p>Definition: Trends, forces, events and ideas that ISEE can capitalize on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which opportunities are there that we do not take advantage of? • Which trends can we capitalize on or take advantage of? <p>Example: The international research agendas.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS (outside ISEE, external)</p> <p>Definition: Possible events or forces outside of your control that ISEE needs to plan for or decide how to mitigate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which external elements do not allow us to develop ISEE as we wish? • Which external changes occurring outside ISEE are we not ready for? • Which financial issues outside ISEE are crucial? <p>Example: Political priority /support to environmental health research may diminish</p>

Appendix 2 – Initial SWOT contributions

Strengths of ISEE

1. its membership, consisting of a good blend of senior and junior researchers.
2. a core group of engaged and committed members.
3. its active Students and New Researchers Network (SNRN).
4. its international representation.
5. its council and committee members.
6. the development of active regional chapters.
7. its advocacy - Policy and Ethics committees are active and strong.
8. its coverage of most of the important areas in environmental epidemiology.
9. its recognition as the premiere society in environmental epidemiology worldwide
10. its annual conference
11. its relative unique emphasis on ethics and philosophy among similar research societies.
12. its award program

Weaknesses of ISEE

1. its small number of (approx. 700-900) members.
2. the fact that most members are not actively engaged in society.
3. its absence in large geographic areas of the world (most members are from North American and Europe).
4. the lack of established partners in the wider public health area.
5. the lack of extensive action in important areas (education, policy).
6. the limited activities outside of annual conference (limited value for members).
7. the limited engagement with external stakeholders.
8. the lack of dissemination activities.
9. its website, which is text heavy and outdated.
10. the lack of modern communication activity including social media usage.
11. its limited financial resources.
12. its inefficiency in annual conference site selection and conference organization.
13. its membership system
14. the lack of membership benefits beyond the annual conference and journal
15. the lack of communication with members in between the annual conferences
16. the lack of clarity in projecting the society's image; whether the essential characteristic of the society is "international" or "environmental".
17. its lack of a board of directors insurance and/or occasional legal counsel is a concern, especially with issuing policy statements.

Opportunities of ISEE

1. its large potential member base (past and present).
2. climate change and environment being recognized as major worldwide problems.
3. emerging technologies (e.g. citizen science, etc) and big data.
4. environmental health/epidemiological transition in developing countries.
5. the Exposome
6. possibilities for dissemination of environmental health in mass media including internet and social media.
7. the expansion of SNRN opportunities and outreach on campuses.
8. increasing and encouraging donations to scientific activities.

Threats to ISEE

1. the movement towards interdisciplinary environmental health research.
2. political priority/support to environmental health not being translated to research funds
3. the general reduction of research funds in many parts of the world.
4. the competition for membership with other societies.
5. the fact that the role of scientific associations may become less clear/important

Appendix 3 – SWOT survey results

Figure 1. Responses to SWOT survey – strengths

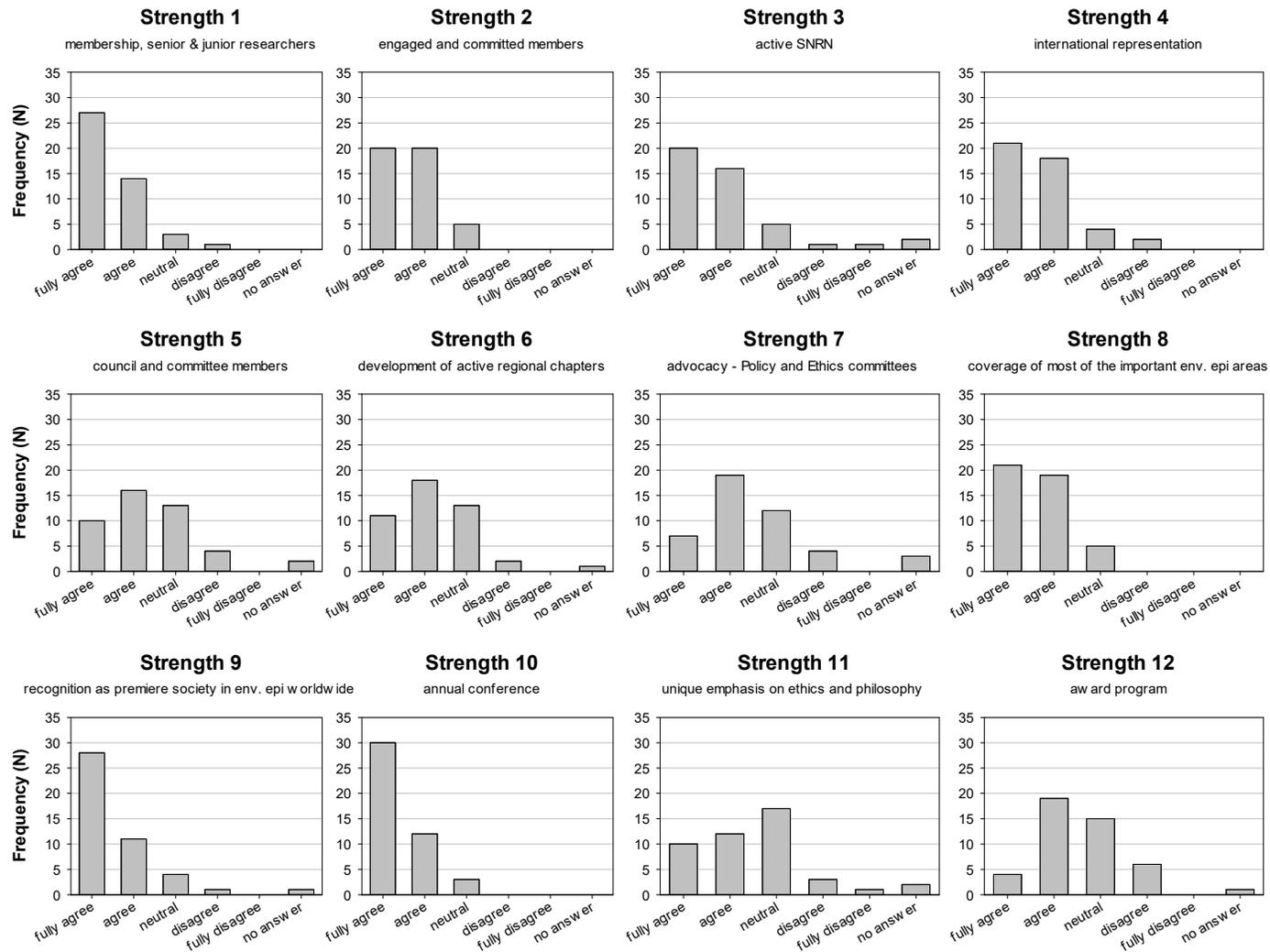


Figure 2. Responses to SWOT survey – weaknesses

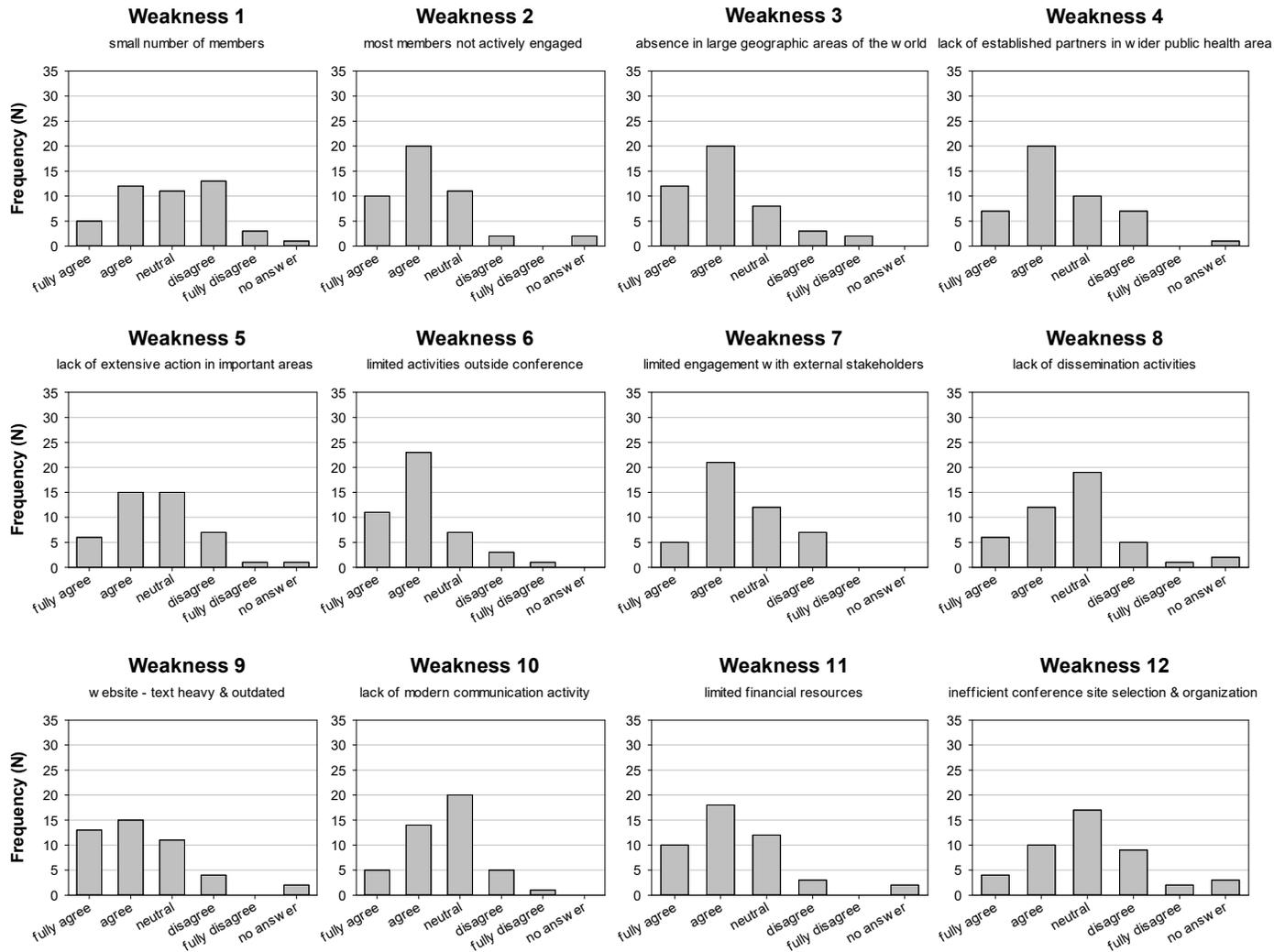


Figure 2. (continued)

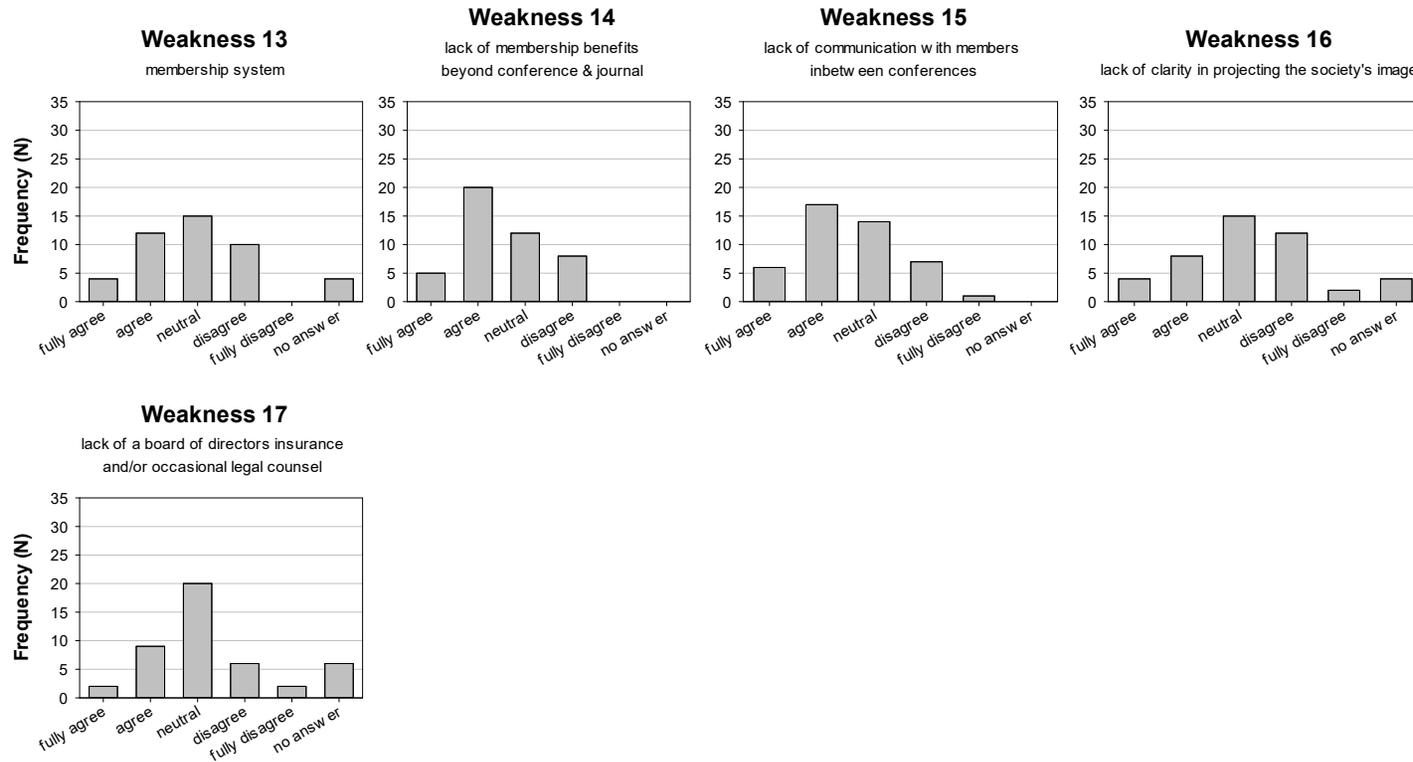


Figure 3. Responses to SWOT survey – opportunities

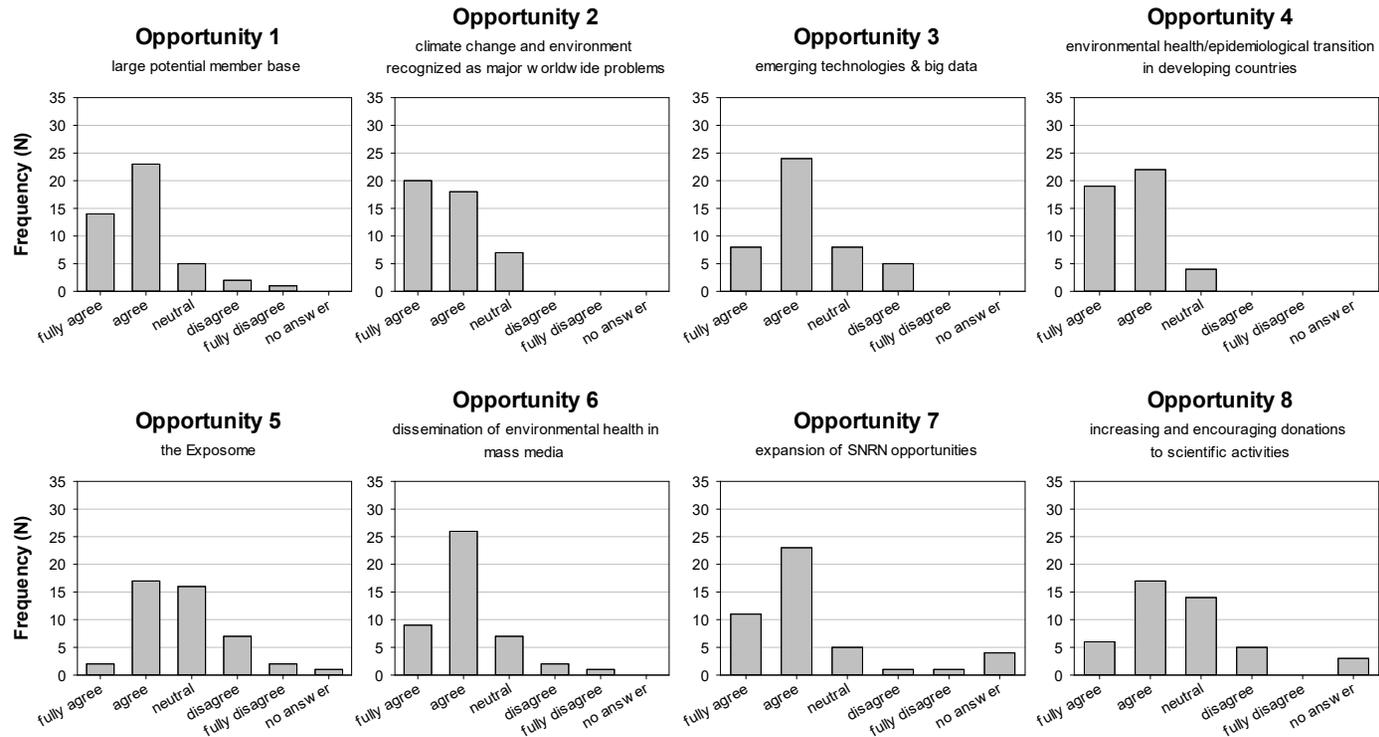


Figure 4. Responses to SWOT survey – threats

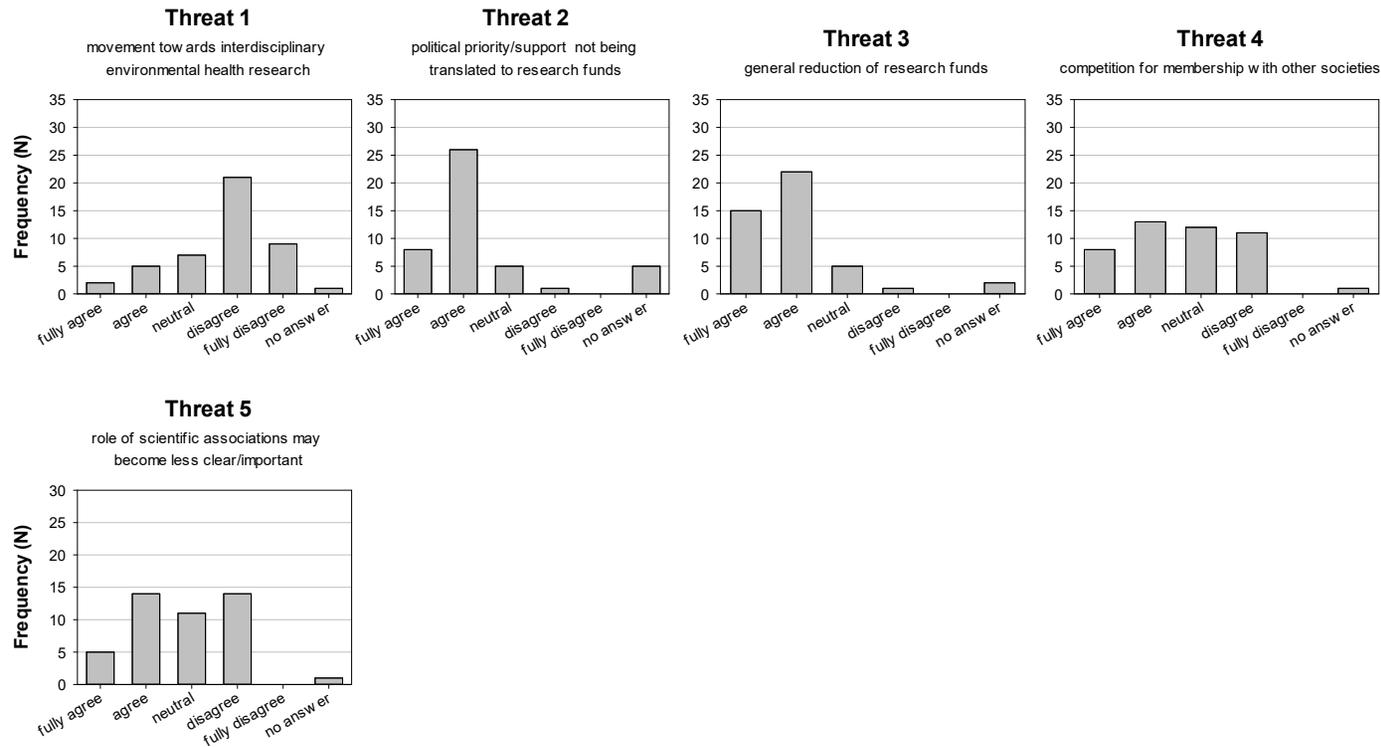
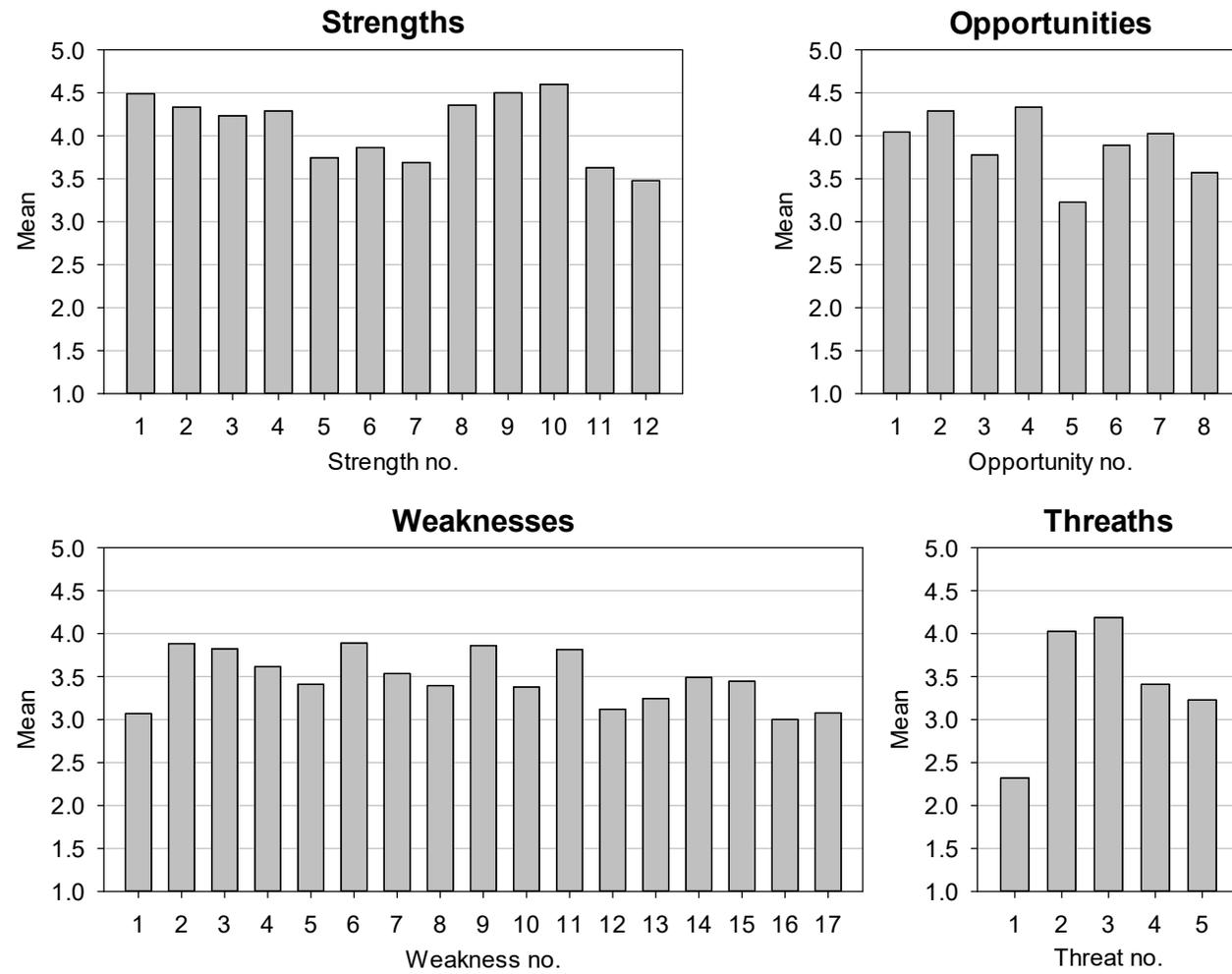


Figure 5. Mean responses per question - strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. *



* 5 = fully agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = fully disagree