New Nutrition Science in Practice

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A number of imperatives require a re-think of science in general and of nutrition science in particular. Nutrition science has never been a body of knowledge in its own right and many other sciences have been nutritional in their orientation. At its best “nutrition science” has been integrative as well as reductionist. It has worked across disciplines. The IUNS, (International Union of Nutritional Sciences) undertook to re-examine nutrition science from a policy point of view and to do so with knowledge-makers in general and with the International Science Council. There is now a Sciences for Health and Wellbeing (SHWB) initiative involving all branches of science. It is expected that innovative, integrative, sustainable, and cost-effective approaches to human well-being and health will emerge. Some of the pressing needs for such collaboration have been in the areas of sustainable food systems, potable water, more nutritious crops, food and human behaviour, to reduce the burden of nutritionally-related disease (NRD) and make health care affordable. An IUNS Task Force met in Giessen in 2005. It concluded that nutrition science should develop on 3 fronts, the biomedical, societal and environmental. This will encourage new and more effective initiatives for nutrition and its partners to address local, regional and global concerns about planetary and personal health and well-being. Some important and critical areas already require collective attention. Unlike our predecessors in nutrition science, we will be unable to fulfil the expectations of us unless we progress this wider and less anthropocentric form of our science.