

## **Assoc. Prof. Peter Thomson**

*Associate Professor in Biometry, The University of Sydney*

Peter Thomson is an Associate Professor of Biometry at The University of Sydney. His academic training was in zoology and statistics. He has spent most of his career teaching applied statistics to agricultural, veterinary and medical audiences. His research background is quite broad, but with a focus on quantitative genetics, and epidemiology, often with a 'big data' perspective. However, increasingly, his interests are in international agricultural development, assisting in-country researchers implementing and evaluating their programs, and developing their research skills. He has been involved in development projects and capacity building in Kenya, Zambia, Tanzania, Tibet, Vietnam, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

### **Presentation Title:**

The digital future: the role of 'big data' for agricultural development in the region

Making optimal decisions for agricultural improvement should be evidence-based and this requires collection of appropriate data, careful data analysis, and drawing of appropriate conclusions. Until recently, data sets available for this process were often manually collected and processed. However, increasingly, large-scale data sets, known as 'big data' are being generated automatically, and this presents new opportunities. Relevant areas of 'big data' in the agricultural and animal production sector in particular, are in the area of genomics, mapping, fine-scale climate data, and are often freely available. Utilizing these free resources in particular has a great potential, particularly counties in the region.