

Transitioning to the Green Economy



IAIA 30th Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment
6-11 April 2010 | Geneva, Switzerland

“We invite international experts, IA practitioners, sector leaders, and policy makers from industry, government, consultancies, donor agencies, and academia to collaborate on what needs to be done and how to attain this vision.”

— Hussein Abaza
IAIA10 Program Chair | Chief, UNEP Economics and Trade Branch

In order to prepare our global societies to face a transition toward green economies, it is important to conduct assessments that will demonstrate the types of green investments that best fit local, national, and regional environments. Impact assessments have the power to influence and shape green policy development, which will in turn play a major role in addressing the global crises.

Global economic growth over the past 50 years has been accompanied by accelerated environmental decline. From 1981 to 2005, global GDP has more than doubled. In contrast, 60% of the world's ecosystems are now considered degraded or are being exploited in an unsustainable manner.

Currently, the global economy is in a multi-dimensional crisis. The **financial crisis** has been driving much of the developed world into recession, affecting businesses and jobs around the world. The **fuel crisis**, reflected in wildly fluctuating prices, is threatening the reliability and security of energy supply. The **food crisis** in 2007 cost developing countries US\$324 billion, the equivalent of three years' worth of global aid, and last but not least, the **water crisis**, where one in five people in the developing world lacks access to sufficient clean water. At the same time as these crises, **climate change** is aggravating these challenges and the achievement of Millennium Development Goals.

These prevailing crises are providing a rare opportunity for government and business to seek new opportunities and adopt alternative strategies that lead to investments for economic and environmental sustainability.



Objective, Topics, and Outcome

The objective of IAIA10 is to provide policy makers with tools to help address the global crises and to mobilize support for creative and credible initiatives.

IAIA10 will focus on the following sectors that have the potential for sustainable green investment:

- Agriculture
- Industry
- Tourism
- Cities
- Transport

Papers will be posted online in advance of the conference, providing material for discussion and development prior to the lively exchange in Geneva.

Papers will focus on:

- One of the specific sectors listed above: examine the current policies and practices, consider their impacts on natural resources (water, energy, land, biodiversity, forests, soils and sub-soils), and propose policies and the enabling conditions (trade, finance, institutions, technology, capacity building, training and education, public participation, and public awareness) that will facilitate the transition to a green economy and the potential positive impacts on the environment, natural resources, jobs, the economy, and human welfare.
- The sustainability impacts of a) the financial and economic crisis on groups of countries (developed, emerging, and developing), and b) the stimulus packages proposed by the USA, the EC and the emerging economies on their respective economies and globally.

Papers addressing transboundary issues such as health and ecology, as well as methodologies like Strategic Environmental Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Social Impact Assessment, and cumulative effects are expected to be prominent within the sector discussions. IAIA's special-interest Sections will highlight their Section's special contribution to each critical sector noted above.

The response to policymakers by conference participants and IAIA must be both practical and creative. And in light of the urgency:

THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW.

Program

In addition to conference sessions, workshops, and training courses, you will also be able to participate in technical visits and sightseeing tours, special networking events, and more.

The preliminary program and registration materials are available on the IAIA Web site and from IAIA HQ.

What Delegates Said About IAIA09

“The mix of people from all kinds of backgrounds was excellent. They let me get a better understanding of what the big issues are across impact assessment from many perspectives and really made me think about the way I practice on a day to day basis.”

— Philip Le Gouais
Mott MacDonald, UK

“IAIA conferences are the only platform where impact assessors with different views and ideas gather to learn and share knowledge with others.”

— Pius Kahangirwe
WSS Services Uganda Ltd., Uganda

“IAIA is THE place to be for impact assessment people.”

— Frank Vanclay
Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research, Australia



Geneva's Lakefront
Photo by AMAeschlimann. Courtesy of Geneva Tourism.



The Palais des Nations



Switzerland

Host Organization



United Nations Environment Programme

Welcome to Geneva

Geneva is a worldwide centre for diplomacy and international cooperation, and is widely regarded as a global city. It is the home of numerous international organizations, including the headquarters of many of the agencies of the United Nations and the Red Cross. Geneva has been referred to as the world's most compact metropolis and the "Peace Capital."

Geneva is the second most populated city in Switzerland (approximately 186,825 people). It is located where the Rhône River exits Lake Geneva (Lac Léman) and is the capital of the Republic and Canton of Geneva.

Visiting Switzerland

Switzerland lies at the heart of Europe and is famous for its watches, chocolates and cheeses. It is the main route linking northern and southern Europe and runs through the Alps.

Switzerland borders Germany in the north, Austria in the east, Italy in the south and France in the west. This means that three important European cultures meet in Switzerland: German, French and Italian.

Switzerland is endowed with some of the most beautiful scenery in Europe. Within a 1 to 3-hour train trip through Switzerland you can experience its various landscapes, including lakes, glaciers, mountains and vineyards.

Come and experience the international flavor and appreciate both the tranquility and the idyllic beauty of this little Alpine country.

About IAIA

IAIA is the International Association for Impact Assessment, organized in 1980 to bring together researchers, practitioners, and users of various types of impact assessment from all parts of the world. IAIA involves people from many disciplines and professions. Our members include corporate planners and managers, public interest advocates, government planners and administrators, private consultants and policy analysts, university and college teachers and their students. IAIA has members from over 120 nations.

For 30 years IAIA has been holding annual conference events all over the world to promote best practices in impact assessment.

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