

# tentative program overview



The conference will formally commence on Monday, April 26, 2004. The Honourable David Anderson, Minister of Environment for Canada, has been invited to address conference delegates at the opening plenary, and other prominent keynote speakers will introduce the conference theme.

Training courses will be offered on the weekend of April 24-25, immediately preceding the formal commencement of the conference. A number of interesting technical visits will be offered on April 24, 25 and 30.

SATURDAY 24 April	SUNDAY 25 April		MONDAY 26 April	TUESDAY 27 April	WEDNESDAY 28 April	THURSDAY 29 April	FRIDAY 30 April
Registration for Training Courses and Technical Visits 8.00-12.45	Registration 7.45-18.30	8.00	Registration	Registration	Registration	Registration	Registration 6.30-9.00
		8.30	*Opening Plenary	*Theme Forums	*Theme Forums	*Awards and Closing Plenary	
Training Courses 1a, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 9.00-17.00	Training Courses 1b, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 9.00-17.00	10.00	Break				Technical Visit E 7.00-19.30
Technical Visit A 12.45 - 16.30	Technical Visit B 8.15-16.30	10.30	*Opening Plenary	*Theme Forums	Concurrent Sessions	*Closing Plenary	Technical Visit F 7.45-18.00
	Technical Visit C 8.45-16.30	12.00	Lunch				Technical Visit G 8.15-18.00
	Technical Visit D 8.45-16.30	13.30	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions	Council Meeting	Technical Visit H 8.45-16.30
	Exhibits and Posters Setup 1.30 - 18.30	15.00	Break				
		15.30	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions		
		17.00	Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Practitioners' Forum  Committee Meetings	Practitioners' Forum  Section Meetings		
	Opening Reception	18.30	Practitioners Forum  Poster Session		Banquet		

\* Simultaneous interpretation between English and French is planned for the opening and closing plenaries and where practical for the theme forums and other selected concurrent sessions.

The cost and realization of the opening reception and conference banquet will depend on the availability of sponsorship. Please check the web site ([www.iaia.org](http://www.iaia.org)) and watch your e-news for updates and information.

# conference program

## OVERVIEW

**IAIA'04** WILL OFFER A VARIED PROGRAM. THERE WILL BE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE: **PLENARY AND CONCURRENT SESSIONS, POSTER SESSIONS, AND THE INFORMAL PRACTITIONERS' FORUMS** THAT HAVE BEEN SO POPULAR IN PREVIOUS CONFERENCES. A NEW FEATURE TO BE INTRODUCED AT **IAIA'04** WILL BE **THEME FORUMS**, WHICH WILL SET THE STAGE FOR FRUITFUL DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO THE CONFERENCE THEME, **IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT – WHOSE BUSINESS IS IT?**

## Theme Forums

Theme forums will bring together the various aspects of impact assessment, examine how they apply to various sectors and issues, and open discussion around the question "Impact Assessment for Industrial Development – Whose Business Is It?". These forums will be integrative in nature and will tie together the various threads of impact assessment as they pertain to a specific sector or broad topic. For example, a theme forum dealing with impact assessment and the oil and gas industry might address biophysical, socio-economic, cultural and health issues; public participation; issues of particular relevance to Aboriginal or indigenous people; regulatory issues; follow-up; assessment of cumulative effects; and voluntary environmental initiatives.

Theme forums will be offered in three parallel sessions. Each will deal with a key economic sector or with an important facet of impact assessment. More detailed exploration of aspects introduced in theme forums will take place in subsequent concurrent sessions.

The following are the theme forum topics:

- Achieving Sustainability: The Role of Impact Assessment
- Application of Impact Assessment to Fisheries, Agriculture and Forestry
- Impact Assessment and the Oil and Gas Industry
- Impact Assessment and the Mining Industry
- Impact Assessment and the Electricity Sector
- Industry Perspectives on Biodiversity and Impact Assessment
- Integrated Assessment of International Trade

There is potential for accommodating two additional topics for theme forums. Moreover, the input of conference participants and supporters will be important for developing the specifics of each theme forum. We encourage you to submit your ideas and suggestions for this part of the program.

## Poster Session

A poster session will be held at the end of day Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. This session provides a specific opportunity for conference participants to meet poster authors and to discuss with them questions and issues raised by the posters. Posters will be exhibited throughout the conference.

## Practitioners' Forums

These sessions are for issues that arise during the conference and that practitioners wish to pursue through informal follow-up discussions. Participants propose and post potential topics for discussion, and individuals interested in each posted topic sign up for the related discussion group. If a topic generates sufficient interest, space is then made available for the discussion to take place.

## Concurrent Sessions

Concurrent sessions provide the principal means for participants to present detailed material for discussion. These sessions will be in various formats including presentations of papers, panels, roundtables and workshops.

As noted at left, the topics introduced in theme forums (sustainability, fisheries, agriculture and forestry, oil and gas, mining, electricity, biodiversity, international trade) will also be pursued in greater detail in concurrent sessions.

In addition, the following concurrent sessions have been proposed specifically for this conference:

- Capacity Building: Follow-up on the Marrakech Declaration
- Impact Assessment of Infrastructure Projects
- Impact Assessment and International Finance, with Specific Reference to the Equator Principles
- Impact Assessment and NEPAD: Environment, Poverty and Development in Africa
- Corporate Social Responsibility, Impact Assessment and Sustainable Development
- Impact Assessment and Decision-making
- Impact Assessment and the Transportation and Communication Sectors
- Industry and CIPEC: Making Progress in Achieving Kyoto Objectives
- Integrated Impact Assessment: The Sydney Tar Ponds, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Tourism, Recreation and Impact Assessment
- Cumulative Effects Assessment
- Impact Assessment Follow-up
- New Methods for Impact Assessment and other Technology Futures Analyses
- Public Involvement and Risk Management

Finally, the following concurrent sessions will deal with topics (sections) that are normally addressed on an ongoing basis at IAIA annual conferences:

- Biodiversity
- Environmental Management Systems
- Health Impact Assessment
- Integrated Assessment of Trade-Related Policies
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Urban Impact Assessment
- Impact Assessment of Disasters, Accidents and Conflicts
- Environmental Law, Policies and Institutions
- Public Participation
- Social Impact Assessment (SIA)

Please refer to the concurrent session descriptions on pages 10-14 for more information.

The program committee is looking forward to the submission of abstracts for concurrent sessions. You may submit an abstract on any topic relevant to impact assessment, and need not restrict yourself to the categories of topics that have been identified to date. The abstracts received will influence the final categories that are established for concurrent sessions. Please see the abstract submission guidelines on page 4 for further details.

# Theme forums

## Achieving Sustainability: the Role of Impact Assessment

In order to be a meaningful and worthwhile endeavour, impact assessment should contribute significantly to worldwide efforts to secure a sustainable future for the human race. This will likely be one of the most important criteria upon which the historical relevance of impact assessment is judged by future generations.

This theme forum will examine the connection between impact assessment and sustainability, and will seek to identify whether and how impact assessment has made a difference. It will explore ways in which the effectiveness of impact assessment in achieving sustainability objectives could be enhanced. It will also look at the ways in which impact assessment and related tools (e.g., environmental management systems, triple bottom line accounting, adaptive management) are being used by organizations in the day-to-day conduct of their businesses. It will explore how these evolving tools can be most effectively used to achieve a sustainable future.

This theme forum will provide an important jumping off point for a wide range of topics that will be pursued in detail in subsequent concurrent sessions.

## Application of Impact Assessment to Fisheries, Agriculture and Forestry

During the first thirty years of its existence, impact assessment has focused on physical projects. For the most part, fisheries, agriculture and forestry have not benefited from systematic impact assessment. These sectors have been largely excluded from impact assessment policies and practices in most national, provincial and state jurisdictions worldwide, including those of Canada. Moreover, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) does not have an EIA policy and procedure, although it is responsible for these three sectors in the UN system.

During the same period, soil, land and water, and the resources they support, have continued to be used inefficiently or have significantly deteriorated, while poverty and income disparities have grown.

Impact assessment could have played an important role in addressing the problems that have been encountered. Recent impact assessment work has demonstrated that this tool has important potential to predict and mitigate negative effects for projects and practices in the fisheries, agricultural and forestry sectors.

The theme forum and related concurrent sessions will:

- Take stock of the status quo of environmental protection and impact assessment in the three sectors. What has been achieved? What are the issues and the lessons learned?
- Provide examples of successful applications of impact assessment to the sectors, and of gaps and obstacles to a wider beneficial application of impact assessment.
- Make recommendations on the way forward to usefully broaden the application of impact assessment to fisheries, agriculture and forestry.

## Impact Assessment and the Oil and Gas Sector

The oil and gas sector is a global leader in the application of impact assessment. Yet its detractors often claim that impact assessment processes are still not rigorous enough to prevent unsound projects. Its supporters, on the other hand, often protest that the sector is over-regulated and unfairly subjected to greater scrutiny than are other industrial sectors.

The discussions of impact assessment in the oil and gas sector will focus on two areas.

First, there will be an examination of actual project-specific experience in conducting impact assessments of various phases of oil and gas development. Offshore oil and gas exploration and development experience will be highlighted, and its relevance to proposed oil and gas development off the west coast of Canada will be explored. In addition, there will be an examination of impact assessment experience related to various other types of oil and gas activities, including seismic surveys, exploration, development, production, transport and commercialization. Case studies illustrating both Canadian and international experience will be featured.

Secondly, broader applications of impact assessment, like regional and strategic assessment and analysis of cumulative effects, will be explored. These discussions will draw heavily upon the experiences of such jurisdictions as Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. Because of its broad scope, the theme forum will emphasize “lessons learned.”

## Impact Assessment and the Mining Industry

Environmental impact assessment (EIA) in the mining industry has been important in dealing with mine impacts such as acid rock drainage, the use of toxic chemicals for mineral processing and large residual waste rock piles. These days impact assessment tools such as environmental management systems, adaptive environmental management, better public consultation and more effective environmental regulation have reduced mining impacts where they have been effectively used. Mine “design for closure” is a technique in growing demand and of obvious value for sustainability of mining operations.

The theme forum and related concurrent sessions will examine the application of these and other impact assessment tools in the mining industry applied over the life cycle of mining projects. The intent is to find those impact assessment tools that are most effective and efficient. Some of the issues to be discussed include:

- evolving standards and expectations for impact assessments of mining projects
- the balance between any rights of communities to reject new mining development and the potential for national economic impact
- designing for closure and closure planning for sustainable development subsequent to the exhaustion of the resource
- case studies that demonstrate successful innovation in mining impact assessment

## Impact Assessment and the Electricity Sector

The electric industry has traditionally carried out assessments for its major hydroelectric, fossil fuel, and nuclear generation facilities. Major transmission lines have also required assessment.

In addition, “second generation” infrastructure and energy provision (hydro re-licensing in the United States, restructuring of the national transmission grids in the United Kingdom, and renewable energy systems such as wind and solar) are required to undergo environmental impact assessments or strategic environmental assessments.

The theme forum and its related concurrent sessions will address how such assessments have been carried out more efficiently and effectively. In addition, they will address how electric utilities have effectively used the many tools related to impact assessment.

The forum will demonstrate how such companies are integrating strategic environmental assessment (SEA), environmental impact assessment (EIA) and environmental management systems (EMSs) into their existing business strategies, and how stakeholders are participating in their business processes.

## Industry Perspectives on Biodiversity and Impact Assessment

Biodiversity is climbing the business agenda around the world. From the extractive industries to resource-based industries and the financial and insurance sectors, biodiversity is becoming an increasingly important issue. Impact assessment has long been an industry tool, but has traditionally not provided the specific information and guidance necessary to identify and manage impacts—both positive and negative—on biodiversity. But the situation is changing—as industries and companies are recognising the importance of biodiversity and moving to ensure that it is integrated substantively into impact assessment processes.

This theme forum and related concurrent sessions will focus on the business case for biodiversity and highlight progress made through guidelines and practice in integrating biodiversity into corporate and industry impact assessment practices. They will also identify gaps and needs in these processes and practices.

In addition, lessons learned from the IAIA Biodiversity and Impact Assessment Capacity Building Project will be brought forward to build the understanding of the biodiversity and impact assessment work being done. This project has made significant progress in building the capacity of impact assessment practitioners in integrating biodiversity issues.

# Theme forums

## Integrated Assessment of International Trade

Since the Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Cancun in September 2003, the impacts of international trade have received considerable public attention. Meanwhile, as the current round of WTO negotiations move towards a conclusion, many regional trade agreements are being forged or extended. A fuller understanding of the likely impacts of all these trade agreements, and of individual countries’ trade policies, can both inform the public debate and contribute positively to the negotiations themselves.

Impact assessment of trade-related policies can provide important insights into the relationships between trade and poverty reduction, conservation of natural resources, biological diversity and the social and cultural aspects of development. It aims to provide developed, developing and transitional countries with tools and mechanisms which help to realise the potential economic gains of trade liberalisation, in a manner that is consistent with national and international sustainable development goals. It may similarly cast light on the relationships between trade rules and multilateral environmental agreements, and other aspects of global governance, highlighting areas where further international cooperation and technical assistance may be needed in pursuit of sustainable development goals.

Topics for discussion during the theme forum will include: North American and European approaches; the impacts of agricultural trade, forestry, etc.; the impacts of trade on biodiversity; relationships between trade agreements and multi-lateral environmental agreements (MEAs); and corporate responsibility (e.g., technology transfer, multinational operations and free trade zones).

Topics for discussion during the pursuant concurrent sessions include impact assessment case studies, sector case studies (agriculture, forestry, etc.), consultation and public involvement, capacity building and technical assistance, methodologies, quantitative and qualitative techniques.



Photo courtesy of BC Hydro



Photo courtesy of BC Hydro



## SESSIONS

**Capacity Building: Follow-up on the Marrakech Declaration**

An important outcome of IAIA'03 was the Marrakech Declaration, which reaffirmed IAIA's commitment to building impact assessment capacity. It also committed IAIA to developing an action plan that would provide a coherent and coordinated approach to fulfilling its commitment.

This workshop will continue the process of developing IAIA's action plan for implementing the Marrakech Declaration. The workshop will explore the role that IAIA could play in improving the professional practice of impact assessment; in disseminating information about available professional training; in supporting institutional capacity building; and in the general promotion of impact assessment.

The chairpersons of IAIA'03 will lead the workshop. Their objective is to leave Vancouver with a working plan for commencing implementation of the Marrakech Declaration in the upcoming year.

For more information, please contact Peter Leonard ([leonard.peter@hydro.qc.ca](mailto:leonard.peter@hydro.qc.ca)), Jean-Roger Mercier ([jmercier@worldbank.org](mailto:jmercier@worldbank.org)), or Jaafar Boulejiouch ([dpe@minev.gov.ma](mailto:dpe@minev.gov.ma)).

**Impact Assessment of Infrastructure Projects**

Developing and developed countries alike are very actively engaged in the creation, expansion and replacement of basic infrastructure vital to supporting their social, environmental, and economic goals. Worldwide, both the private and public sectors are undertaking numerous water supply, wastewater management, and solid and hazardous waste management projects. Impact assessment plays an important role in ensuring that these essential infrastructure projects are implemented in ways that support sustainable development.

This session will identify key issues, relevant experience, methodological and technical innovations, key stakeholder concerns, participation strategies, ongoing challenges, lessons learned, and proposed ways forward.

**Impact Assessment and International Finance, with Specific Reference to the Equator Principles**

Financial institutions are increasingly using the instrument of impact assessment (IA). The recent announcement of the Equator Principles (agreement that private banks would employ impact assessment) highlights the international financial community's recognition of the importance of impact assessment.

For multilateral and bilateral development finance institutions, export credit agencies and commercial banks, impact assessment is becoming an integral aspect of project financing. The quality and intensity of its use does vary widely, however.

This session will cover the spectrum of issues and concerns, lessons learned and best practice for IA in the financial community. Topics of interest include:

- Equator Principles
- OECD Common Approaches on the Environment
- Policies, guidelines and directives for IA
- Integrating multiple regulatory requirements
- Financial institutional processes and implementation
- Consultation and disclosure requirements
- Monitoring capacity of finance institution staff, costs and responsibilities
- Selection and management of IA consultants
- Case studies
- Comparisons among development finance institutions
- Relationships with stakeholders, including civil society
- Integrating IA into financial project decision-making
- Social impact assessment
- Strategic IA and the bigger picture
- IA and corporate reputation/risk management
- Socially responsible investment implications
- Impact assessment as a financial risk management tool

**Impact Assessment and NEPAD: Environment, Poverty and Development in Africa**

Recently certain important initiatives, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the New Partnership for the Development of Africa (NEPAD), have been launched on the African continent. It is essential to consider the environmental issues related to those initiatives. In this context, it is important to discuss problems that have been identified in individual impact assessments in individual countries.

Development must take into account the three main types of environmental problems that are affecting the African continent:

- human health problems (hygiene, parasitic diseases, armed conflict, etc.)
- degradation of ecosystems and loss of biodiversity
- global environmental problems (depletion of the ozone layer, climate change)

More than any other region in the world, Africa is affected by the convergence of all three of these types of environmental problems, and by the immense challenges that they pose to its society. Taking environmental factors into account, particularly through the mechanism of impact assessment, can and must play a key role in economic development. This session will provide an opportunity to address the major questions concerning impact assessment in relation to those initiatives.

**Corporate Social Responsibility, Impact Assessment and Sustainable Development**

In this era of globalization, decreasing government intervention in the economy, and increasing influence of local communities and special interest groups, how should corporate social responsibility be defined? Can the concept of corporate social responsibility lead to better impact assessment, better management of the environment and stronger communities?

There are arguments that corporate performance should be judged not only on the basis of economic success, but also on the basis of success in protecting the environment and supporting community values and aspirations, in accordance with the evolving principles of sustainable development.

This session will explore whether initiatives related to corporate social responsibility should be limited to encouraging deregulation, enhancing corporate image, creating good relations with communities affected by corporate operations, and deflecting the criticism of opponents. It will discuss whether

