

# Theme Forums

Theme forums bring together special speakers to open IAIA06 conference discussions on various aspects of power, poverty and sustainability.

Theme forums are integrative in nature and deal with cross-cutting issues relevant to the many specialties of impact assessment. The program committee will select speakers with broad appeal and topics particularly relevant to the conference theme.

Participants are invited to discuss how the various instruments of impact assessment—Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Sustainability Assessment (SA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Social Impact Assessment (SIA), etc.—can contribute in assisting developers, decision makers, development cooperation providers, and the public to integrate environmental, social and other concerns in the various thematic fields.

## Energy for the future: what kind of future?

Energy is fundamental for all people and societies in the world, and practically all governments seek to ensure reliable, affordable and clean energy for their citizens because of the strong linkage between energy and development. Those having access and control of energy sources in a society also to a large extent possess the key to prosperity or poverty. Energy is both a very important geopolitical issue—and a daily issue for all citizens of the globe.

During the last decades, the energy markets have changed, and the focus has been moving to broader energy issues, including development of new renewable energy sources, climate change policies, market reform, energy technology collaboration and outreach to the world. Many countries are now involved in energy research programs, data compilation, publications and public dissemination of the latest energy policy analysis, and recommendations on good practices.

There is a strong linkage between energy use and environmental and social quality. All sources of energy are causing adverse impacts to the environment in one way or another. Impact assessments of energy development projects are therefore conducted all over the world, identifying both adverse and beneficial impacts—and seeking to mitigate the adverse impacts and enhance the beneficial ones.

Because of the strong relationship between socio-economic development and environmental issues, energy development and policies are closely related to environmental and social sustainability issues, often giving rise to controversies and conflicts at both global and local scale.

Energy policies have important health impacts, first through environmental effects, but also in other ways. A specifically important problem is fuel poverty. This goes for developing countries, but also for Eastern European countries and even well-developed industrialized societies such as the UK where fuel poverty leads to a number of health problems as well as to excess mortality in the winter months.

Energy is a separate theme forum at the conference, allowing ample opportunities for debate and discussion. Concurrent sessions will further develop the issues, as will dedicated training courses and technical visits. Invited speakers at the theme forum will focus on both present and future aspects of energy.

*Conveners: Ole Anders Lindseth, Sigurd Juel Kinn, Norway*

## Climate change and impact on society

The climate is changing, and it is widely recognized that it is partly due to human emissions of greenhouse gases. The emissions of greenhouse gases are mainly due to the use of fossil fuels. Through the Climate Change Convention and its Kyoto Protocol, the world has set goals for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. To succeed in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, the impact of a project, plan, program or policy on the climate through emissions should be assessed and mitigated.

Research shows that the climate is already changing, and even with the planned reductions of emissions the climate will change even further. Many people feel that they are not in a position to put political power behind a wish to halt negative trends in climate development, and find it difficult to create a sustainable future for themselves and their children. It is widely recognized that climate change will affect developing countries and people living in marginal areas more than others. However, developed countries will also be affected by the climate changes. Increased occurrence of extreme weather and changes in precipitation and temperature will have effects on sectors as diverse as agriculture, health, roads and other building. Therefore, it is vital that occurring changes in the climate be taken into account when designing or locating a development project or formulating a plan or policy.

These approaches will be presented and put under discussion, and further elaborated during the concurrent sessions.

*Convener: Pål Prestrud*

## Land use planning, transportation and coastal zone management: how do we deal with the complex issues and impacts of development?

The aim of this theme forum is to provide participants with an opportunity to examine linkages between land use planning and impact assessment, paying particular attention to the current debates and how they can be related to the field of environmental assessment and SEA in particular. In addition, the role of planning in the national institutional context, the available tools for evaluating and developing planning practice, and the application of impact assessment will be addressed.

These general questions will be discussed with a special focus on transport and coastal zone management. The transport sector has a profound impact on land use, economic undertakings and the socio-economic structures. Moreover, aspects such as safe traffic and clean air are important health determinants. Within this sector, the discussion will focus on devising and assessing alternative strategies, impact mitigation, stakeholder involvement in defining the problems and objectives and developing tools and methodology.

The coastal zone is vulnerable to developments, and to extreme natural events. The coastal zone management discussion will focus on IA related to different geographic and thematic contexts, IA of ports and integration of other specific coastal issues like coastal erosion, sea level rise and protection of coastal land.

This theme forum will consist of key speakers, a panel and group discussions. It will link into the conference's Nordic stream, in particular the training course on Spatial Planning and SEA from a Nordic Perspective and the Nordic IA Day, as well as several concurrent sessions. In addition, the theme will also be addressed in the context of several technical visits such as Ryfylke Fjord: Coastal Zone Management, North Jæren: Land Use and Transport Planning, and Stavanger: Urban Transformation.

*Convener: Lars Emmelin*

# Theme Forums

## Roles and responsibilities of actors in impact assessment involving Indigenous Peoples

Impact assessment is a development tool that should not be seen as merely an instrument for mitigating unintended consequences. It should be viewed, and designed, as a process. Its role should be to engage in a dialogue that explores ways in which it can strengthen the host communities by giving voice to Indigenous Peoples' own development aspirations and helping them realize these aspirations. This emphasizes the importance of impact assessment as a process of relationship and trust building. It also underscores the importance of context and culturally adapted outcomes: development projects should strive towards benefits to host communities in accordance with their development aspirations and priorities.

These are part of the conclusions of a special conference event on Indigenous Peoples and Impact Assessment held 29 May 2005 in Boston as part of the IAIA'05 annual conference. The day-long event brought together Indigenous Peoples' leaders, practitioners and other stakeholders to exchange and discuss how impact assessment is measuring up to the challenges of Indigenous Peoples' development.

Organizers of the IAIA'05 Indigenous Peoples event, with the collaboration of the Sámi Council as co-host, wish to pursue last year's mutual learning experience. The two-part theme forum on Indigenous Peoples at IAIA06—which will be followed by a workshop session—is meant to further engage dialogue on the complex and sensitive issues related to the contribution of impact assessment to Indigenous Peoples' development.

Indigenous Peoples are often among the most adversely affected and among those who least benefit from development projects. In addition to the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' fundamental rights, the impact assessment process can be a powerful enabling tool. The Indigenous Peoples' forum will address the need to involve Indigenous Peoples directly in all aspects of the process as well as the need to enable all relevant actors with the capacity, skills and resources to meaningfully engage in impact assessments affecting Indigenous Peoples.

The first part of the forum will address defining roles and responsibilities of actors in impact assessment involving Indigenous Peoples: Indigenous Peoples, government, project proponent, intermediaries and international financial institutions. The second part of the forum will focus on building Indigenous Peoples' capacity to exercise their right to engage in impact assessments, and all other actors' capacity in Indigenous Peoples' issues. Panelists will review and discuss recognizing the existing indigenous capacity, developing Indigenous Peoples skills to effectively be involved in decision making processes, developing the necessary technical skills to be effectively involved in the study process and tools as well as implementing learning and knowledge requirements. Furthermore recognizing the existing capacity, developing other actors' skills and understanding of Indigenous Peoples' issues as a fundamental requirement for successful involvement in these impact assessments.

The Indigenous Peoples' forum is a collaboration between the Sámi Council and Sámi allaskuvia, the Cree of Eeyou Istchee, the Tebtebba Foundation, Hydro-Québec and the World Bank Group.

### Conveners:

*Rune Fjellheim, Sámi Council*

*Liv Østmo, Sámi allaskuvia*

*Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Tebtebba Foundation*

*John Paul Murdock, GCC of Eeyou Istchee*

*Navin Rai, World Bank*

*Peter Leonard, Hydro Québec Production*



## Biodiversity: The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) is the most comprehensive appraisal of the state of the world's ecosystems that has been undertaken. MA has involved contributions from 1360 researchers and will become the most significant assessment in terms of raising awareness of the socio-economic importance of ecosystem services.

For many of the world's poor and indigenous peoples, ecosystem services represent the very bottom line and safety net of their everyday existence. One of the dramatic observations from the MA is that most of the ecosystem services were found to be disturbed to such an extent that reaching the WSSD 2002 goal of a significant reduction in the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010, or the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, could prove impossible unless remedial action is taken urgently.

An important output of the MA is the emerging recognition among environment and development agencies of the relationship between poverty, natural resource management, governance and capacity-building. UNDP's Human Development Report 2005 emphasizes the importance of sustainable natural resource management for reaching the Millennium Development Goals, preventing conflict over limited natural resources, reducing the vulnerability of the poor to natural disasters, and equipping them to be able to adapt to the effects of climate change. UNEP, in a similar vein, observes that the MDGs will not be attained unless the concept of ecosystem services becomes integral to national poverty reduction strategies.

Presenters will pay special attention to experience with community based natural resource management as a vehicle for poverty reduction and implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements, with a particular focus on the biodiversity-related conventions. The MA observes that many of the measures needed to maintain vital ecosystem services would stand a better chance of success if communities were allowed a greater share of the value added by sustainable management of natural resources, and had greater say in decision-making relating to natural resources. Contributors are therefore asked to identify conditions enabling communities to conserve, manage and use natural resources sustainably.

This theme forum forms part of the Nordic Council of Ministers' efforts to make sure that the knowledge generated, and the policy recommendations made by the MA, are acknowledged in multilateral environmental cooperation and in development policy and practice.

*Convener: Leif John Fosse, Norway*

## **Circumpolar issues: impacts around both poles**

The Arctic and Antarctica are affected by a number of environmental problems that originate to a large extent from activities in areas outside of the region; these include long range transport of pollutants, and the impacts of global warming, which is set to produce major changes in the Arctic environment over the coming decades. The heritage of past nuclear and industrial activities also poses severe problems in certain locations. Within the Arctic, increased economic development will put the vulnerable environment under pressure and change the traditional ways of life for Arctic indigenous peoples. High energy prices now make it economically feasible to develop Arctic oil and gas resources, which are estimated to perhaps be as much as 25% of global resources, both on land and offshore. Associated with this development is a rapidly growing transport of oil products by ship and through pipelines. Resource development also includes harvesting of minerals, timber and fish, and all of this new development will require new infrastructure. The eco-tourism industry is expanding as well as searching for new undisturbed areas; this, together with pressures from scientific activities, also represents a new threat for the Antarctic region.

EIA and SEA can provide important tools to stimulate sustainable development. What are the practical experiences from the use of these tools in the Arctic and Antarctica? Do the "Guidelines for EIA in the Arctic" (1997) meet the needs? What can be done to enhance the use of impact assessment in the polar regions? This theme forum will present lessons learned from the application of impact assessments of projects (EIA) and at a strategic level (SEA), in Arctic and northern regions, and hopefully also with examples from Antarctica. The forum will consist of invited speakers and panelists, and there will be ample opportunity for discussion.

This theme forum will run all day Wednesday, 24 May. Simultaneous English-Russian translation will be provided.

*Conveners: Lars Otto Reiersen and Gunnar Sander, Norway*

## **Governance: how to encourage decision makers to make better use of IA as an efficient and transparent planning tool**

Governance deals with the relationships between institutions, processes, and exchange of ideas. Good governance requires transparency in decision making processes, loyalty to institutional goals, and honesty and willingness to work for the institutional benefit and the greater public good. Impact assessment is a key tool in guiding good governance leading to sustainable development. Public participation or consultation in decision making processes stimulates ownership and works as a guarantor of good governance in development projects and helps ensure sustainability of the undertakings. Local community engagement in these processes secures better development outcomes and strengthens democratic ideals. Impact assessment will provide decision makers and participating civil society with the information necessary to reach the best long term development solutions for the community as a whole.

This theme forum will explore the many facets of good governance, public participation in decision making, democratic processes, and how impact assessment can contribute to strengthen these aspects and secure a more sustainable future. An important issue for good governance is the legal framework in existence and its enforcement institutions and status. The forum will also discuss the potential for strategic impact assessment of political and administrative regulations and decisions, as well as implementation and enforcement issues. A difficult but still important question to discuss in this context is the use of power and how power is manipulated in the communities or governments against the use of IA under a number of circumstances.

This theme forum will consist of key speakers as well as a panel discussion. It links to the training course on Public Participation in Environmental Assessment (a course on improving stakeholder engagement and governance in EA processes), and to several concurrent sessions.

*Convener: Peter Tarr*

## **Poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals: how can an impact assessor contribute?**

The wide gap between the rich and the poor is making the world more insecure. The United Nations adopted in 2000 a set of development goals with the objective of reducing global poverty by 50% by 2015. The UN Millennium Development Goals outline a number of objectives for the global fight against poverty that includes the provision of basic education for all, gender equality, improved health for the poor, environmental concerns, and sustainable development.

Impact assessment is an extremely important tool in all development activity, whether it is for projects, programs or policy development, by providing the information necessary for the decision makers to reach sound and professional development decisions. Impact assessment in a poverty context is about public health, social relationships, sharing of resources, property distribution and property rights, and power structures in the communities. Environmental, social and health impact assessments can contribute to more secure and healthy water supply to poor areas and slums, better sanitation and sewerage, reduced air pollution, and improved access to green areas for the poor. Community based IA can, with small means, secure an improved environment and livelihood for poor people in communities. Capacity building of key members of a community, and training of barefoot IA assessors for work in poor rural areas or villages or in the informal sector, can do much to improve the environmental conditions in a community.

Development agencies should routinely apply environmental impact assessments or strategic assessments to all projects and programs, and also when policies affecting resources are changed. Health impact assessment should be carried out to guard the health-related millennium goals, but should not be limited to activities from the health sector itself: it is generally recognized that health goals can often only be obtained by focusing on work in other fields such as economy, housing, spatial planning, or energy.

The general theme adopted at IAIA06 relating power, poverty and sustainability is particularly useful in addressing and balancing crucial development issues at levels of strategic decision-making. Strategic Environmental Assessment methods have proven to be particularly useful in addressing the relationship of power and poverty in the develop-

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ment process towards sustainability. Various developing countries in different parts of the world have been trying to apply and develop SEA for investments and programs in their societies. It is intended that the theme forum will become an important opportunity for participants from both developing and developed countries to share experiences and discuss ideas and perspectives for future development of SEA to adequately address the challenges of reducing poverty.

Socioeconomic and environmental conditions in developing countries vary considerably, not only compared to the developed world but also compared to each other. A panel on the advancement of SEA in developing countries will discuss how developing countries may use IA to balance crucial development issues at levels of strategic decision-making. To highlight current efforts in adopting innovative and adapted forms of IA and SEA in developing countries, and to strengthen the learning process and the linkages between SEA practitioners across the world, this panel will discuss the issues and invite practitioners from the developing world to share their experiences.

The new OECD DAC guidelines on SEA are planned to be launched at this IAIA conference; they give detailed direction for all future development assistance provided by donor agencies.

*Conveners: Maria Rosário Partidário, Portugal; Arne Dalfelt, Norway*

## **Tool development workshop: from project assessment to sustainability appraisal**

Following a consultative meeting with governments and agencies in September 2005, UNEP, in association with IIED and other organizations, is exploring modalities for an initiative to develop and test an international voluntary framework for integrated assessment/sustainability appraisal. This is interpreted to include analytical approaches that can be used to integrate or inter-relate the environmental, social and economic pillars of sustainability into decision-making on proposed initiatives (at any level from policy to project).

Progress with this initiative will be reported and the key opportunities and challenges presented, followed by debate covering:

- Integrated assessment/sustainability appraisal as tool for poverty reduction and achieving the MDGs.
- Capacity-building, institutional and human resource requirements at the national level.
- Key sectors for applications (energy, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, etc.).
- Role of international organizations, development assistance organizations, financial institutions, NGOs to promote Integrated assessment/sustainability appraisal.

UNEP will also report on the outcome and lessons that can inform the framework initiative derived from 10 recent country projects on integrated assessment.

For the past 18 months, IIED has been undertaking a review of international experience and practice in sustainability appraisal (SA). IIED is preparing a sourcebook and reference guide. The authors will present key findings which will provide a baseline for the framework initiative.

*Convenors: Hussein Abaza, Switzerland; Barry Dalal-Clayton, UK; Barry Sadler, Canada*

## **Integrated Assessment**

The HIA and SIA Sections will contribute specifically to the tool development theme forum, presenting a report on the pre-conference HIA-SIA workshop just concluded on "Integration: Theory to Practice."

The pre-conference workshop is aimed at putting ideas about integration of HIA, SIA and other IA approaches to practice on an experimental basis, thus focusing on generic issues of integrated impact assessment, using the area of Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) as a case example. A synopsis of workshop proceedings will be presented, including general and sectoral issues of integrated impact assessment and recommendations for future joint activities. For information on the workshop, see page 28.



# Concurrent Sessions

## There are concurrent sessions:

- Dealing with the same themes as in the theme forums.
- Dealing with the themes of the established IAIA Sections.
- Dealing with topics which have been suggested but are not directly related to either of the above categories.

The broad topics of the theme forums will be further developed and discussed in more detail at the theme forum concurrent sessions.

The difference between theme forum concurrent sessions and IAIA Section concurrent sessions is mostly in the selection of topics. Theme forum concurrent sessions will focus on themes fairly unique to IAIA06, while the IAIA Section concurrent sessions relate to topics of interest to IAIA's permanent Sections which are carried through from year to year.

**Participants are invited to submit abstracts sharing their experiences, studies, plans and thoughts on the theme forum concurrent session topics as well as IAIA Section and other topics.**

## THEME FORUM CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### Energy

Papers, studies, plans and thoughts dealing with impact assessment of a broad range of energy related topics are invited, including oil and gas issues, transport of hydrocarbons, hydro power, wind power, wave power, geothermal energy, nuclear energy and waste, and more.

*Co-chairs: Ole Anders Lindseth, Sigurd Juel Kinn*

### Impact assessment of hydrocarbon pipelines

Hydrocarbon pipelines represent some of the largest projects now being developed, both geographically and financially. These projects are also some of the most controversial because of the geopolitics that underlie their justification and routing, rather than their potential environmental impacts. Public participation in the impact assessment of these projects is being used to question these geopolitical choices, as well as the validity of the assessment, and often calling for the assessments to be at the strategic scale. This topic will examine these issues, firstly by presenting some of the projects and secondly through a panel discussion. There will be opportunities to describe pipeline projects and to examine methodological issues in the impact assessment of these large projects, public participation, the regulatory context, ethics, the role of international financing institutions and more.

*Chair: Nick Bonvoisin*

### Using environmental assessment to overcome financial barriers to renewable energy options (Panel)

This panel will examine, through selected

case studies, how the use of environmental assessment tools can assist in identifying and measuring environmental values (both market and non-market values) that might be used to overcome the financial barriers of high up-front cost of investments in renewable energy (RE) options faced by developing countries. The main theme is that environmental benefits that accrue from RE technologies can, in some instances, provide the catalyst to cover the initial high overhead cost that will lead to longer term sustainable investments in RE. How do we measure or derive market values for these, and how do we collateralize them to promote investments in RE? How can we lower the risks faced by low-income villagers in order to scale up investments from the village-level to broader scale, sustainable investments? Cases will be drawn from China, other Southeast Asian economies, as well as others as appropriate.

*Chair: Gene Owens*

### Assessing the gender-energy link on the ground: bottlenecks to sustainable development (Panel)

Gender has become increasingly recognized as a critical component in facilitating sustainable development. Women are among the poorest of the poor, yet they have the most potential for driving and influencing sustainable development. Only through disaggregated energy analysis will the effects of increased access to energy be understood. While gender has been widely recognized as an important component in agriculture, health care, and education, the gender-energy link has been a more recent phenomenon. Planners view energy as a technology-driven issue that is gender neutral. However, poverty and economic development cannot be addressed without considering gendered access to energy. This panel is proposed to present methods for analyzing energy and its impacts through a gender lens. It will explore

the challenges scientists face, methodologies that can help disaggregate impacts on men versus women, and difficulties analysts face in incorporating disaggregated energy impacts into useful policy recommendations. Panelists will discuss what field-based methods they have used to address the gender-energy link in practical, real-world assessments, and present recommendations for incorporating a gender analysis into social and environmental assessments in the developed and the developing world. Papers are invited on all aspects of this topic.

*Chair: Barbara Bamberger*

### Power generation and biodiversity

Much of the world's population gets its energy directly from biological resources, but if not properly planned large energy development projects, such as dams, or inappropriately sited projects, such as wind farms or biofuel crops, have enormous potential to damage biodiversity. Biodiversity is currently a "hot" topic in assessments of new power projects and the strategic debates about what are "good" sources of energy. Presenters are invited to submit papers on these issues, and case study examples would be particularly welcome.

*Chair: Helen Byron*

### Climate change

Papers, studies, plans and thoughts dealing with impact assessment of a broad range of climate related topics are invited, including climate change scenarios, climate variability, atmospheric disturbances, emissions and emission reduction, impact mitigation, adaptation to climate change, public and official attitude to climate change, vulnerability to climate variability and change in developing countries, and more.

*Chair: Pål Presterud*

### Land use planning, transportation and coastal zone management

Papers, studies, plans and thoughts dealing with impact assessment of a broad range of spatial planning, transportation and coastal zone management related topics are invited, including impacts of land use zoning, special user rights, coastal zone vulnerability, transportation and navigation, risk management, pollution, waste disposal, conservation areas protection, and more.

*Chair: Lars Emmelin*

### Mainstreaming universal design using impact assessment

"Environmental factors interact with a health condition to create a disability or restore functioning, depending on whether the environmental factor is a facilitator or barrier," according to International Finance Corporation. Substantial growth in infrastructure projects worldwide is expected over next decade.

# Concurrent Sessions

Poverty reduction, a primary goal of developing nations and the MDGs, is enhanced through proper infrastructure development creating near- and long-term employment, future economic growth and stability, and short- and long-term quality of life. Impaired by inadequate infrastructure planning and construction are disabled people and elderly. Universal design is important because:

- Over 400 million disabled people are in developing countries.
- Annual GDP loss estimates globally of US\$ 1.37 trillion - US\$ 1.94 trillion associated with disabled people.
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific indicates in its region increases in people aged 60 and over from 600 million to almost one billion in 2050.
- As much as 50 to 60 percent of the population aged 65 years and over have some kind of disability.

Impact assessment/social assessment offers a logical structured process identifying and assessing unnecessary project impairment features with disabling effects, sometimes virtually irreversible, on people already experiencing severe poverty.

*Chair: Charles Alton*

## Planning and zoning: the forgotten aspect of project development

Project development routinely begins with the question of “what permits do we need?” Fortunately it is generally recognized that a project must address the potential impacts that it will have on the environment and responsibly develop means to mitigating these during project construction and operation. Often forgotten is the issue of whether the proposed development will actually be allowed at the site that has been selected. Under the title zoning, master planning or land allocation, local and/or federal governments exercise control over site development. The process of site development approval typically runs parallel to project environmental review. Documents prepared and used for the one process quite often are required for the second process. Because of the overlap in the agencies that participate in these parallel processes, project proponents often see this as duplicative and unnecessary. Rather, the processes are complementary, and if identified at the start of development, the studies and analyses needed to support both can and should be coordinated in order to meet project cost and schedule objectives. This discussion will explore these parallel processes as they are implemented in several countries, identify the common elements and provide examples of how both can be effectively pursued simultaneously.

*Chair: Patricia Fleischauer*

## Biodiversity: international environmental governance, incentives and capacity building

IUCN has recommended following up the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) with specific measures at regional and local level. The sub-regional MAs undertaken in various places around the globe are important references in this regard. Contributors are invited to provide experience with how poor communities are affected by, and adapt to, the changes in ecosystem services documented by the MA. Of particular interest to international environmental governance would be the potential that community-based natural resource management might hold for practical implementation and further development of the biodiversity related conventions.

Rural communities, according to the MA, play a significant role in the maintenance of crucial ecosystem services including biodiversity, carbon sequestration, pollination, and water resource management. The World Resources Institute's 2005 report “The Wealth of the Poor: Managing Ecosystems to Fight Poverty” underlines the importance of access to forests, fishing and agriculture as a safety net for the poorest, three-quarters of whom live in the countryside. In countries characterized by a limited reach of the state over its citizens, natural resource management is, practically speaking, left to communities. Poor governance, political marginalization and lack of secure access to these natural resources today prevent poor communities from exercising this responsibility in a sustainable manner.

The Convention on Biological Diversity, in its ecosystem approach, states that the management of natural resources should take place at the lowest possible appropriate level, and be based on people's cultural understanding and traditional use of natural resources. Capacity building in natural resource management should therefore be directed towards the local level when possible and beneficial for the overall management of natural resources. Contributors are here challenged to consider the relevance, potential and performance of the rural poor as custodians of natural resources, and provide experience with devolution of appropriate authority for natural resource management.

*Co-chairs: Leif John Fosse, Helen Byron*

## Indigenous peoples

Indigenous peoples figure as a focus both in the theme forum concurrent sessions as well as in the IAIA Section concurrent sessions. The difference is mainly to be found in the broadness or specificity of the issues. In the theme forum concurrent sessions, general issues related to indigenous groups will be discussed, and papers or inputs are invited on a broad range of topics, including, for example, indigenous societies' land use practices and their impacts on resources, impacts of large infrastructure projects on indigenous societies, developments and their impacts on indigenous culture, and others. IAIA Section concurrent sessions will focus on more specific indigenous issues.

*Co-chairs: Liv Østmo, Peter Leonard*

## Indigenous issues and biodiversity

This joint session of the Biodiversity and Indigenous Peoples Sections will look at treatment of indigenous issues and biodiversity in IA. Papers from the perspective of Nordic/Circumpolar Indigenous People would be especially welcome; particularly their response to biodiversity change and adaptation in the light of the effects of climate change on the polar regions of the world.

*Chair: Peter Croal*

## Circumpolar issues

Papers, studies, plans and thoughts dealing with impact assessment of a broad range of circumpolar related topics are invited, including resource use and exploitation, potential for conflicts, tourism, fishing and whaling, impacts on indigenous populations, migratory species, polar bears, biological vulnerability, polar transportation and communication, circumpolar collaboration, and more.

*Co-chairs: Lars Otto Reiersen, Gunnar Sander*

## Governance

Papers, studies, plans and thoughts dealing with impact assessment of a broad range of governance related topics are invited, including on transparency in decision making, impacts of rent seeking and corruption, social exclusion and nepotism, power and democracy, impacts of bad governance, the impacts of open access resources, the role of the media, empowerment of local communities, delegation of authority, and more.

At this state, sessions have been proposed on the relationship between institutions, processes, and ideas and on the tragedy of the commons.

*Chair: Arne Dalfelt*

## Assessing the resource sector's impact on sustainable development

(Workshop)

In accordance with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, institutions worldwide are increasingly calling for the extractive industry to demonstrate a positive impact on local sustainable development. Companies and their project lenders are also feeling pressure from local communities, who are increasingly having success in blocking operations that they believe will negatively impact their long-term livelihood. Thus far, the industry has struggled to demonstrate their long-term impact on local communities. Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) commissioned an in-depth study in an effort to identify ways that resource companies can effectively measure and monitor the social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts their operations have at a local level. This workshop will present the study's findings to date, including a comprehensive Sustainable Development Assessment (SDA) framework that is being piloted at operations around the world. Participants in this workshop will explore techniques for measuring and monitoring the impacts that various activities throughout the company have on sustainable development. Discussion will also examine how to measure efforts to overcome external challenges, such as ensuring that communities have the capacity to effectively engage with company decision-makers and, ultimately, assume responsibility for their own development.

Chair: Sandra Seru

## Poverty Reduction and the Millennium Development Goals

Papers, studies, plans and thoughts dealing with impact assessment of a broad range of poverty related topics are invited, including impact of poverty on the environment, impact of natural resource degradation on poor societies, impacts of development assistance, the UN Millennium Goals and their impact, poverty and empowerment, the invisible poor, lack of opportunities, poverty and health impacts, the gender issue, and more., In particular, how IA can contribute to poverty reduction will be highlighted.

Chair: Arne Dalfelt

## The advancement of strategic environmental assessment in developing countries (Panel)

Rational developing countries have many differences in context and conditions when compared to the developed world. They also differ significantly when compared to each other, reflected in their various forms and tools for decision-making. Impact Assessment is one of such tools, and the process of making IA appropriate and effective in each society is very crucial. The general theme adopted at IAIA06 relating power, poverty and sustainability is particularly enlightening to address how developing countries propose to use IA to balance crucial development issues at levels of strategic decision-making, as well as to review the opportunities to use and apply IA at such strategic levels. Various developing countries have been working in applying and developing SEA for their society. This theme forum concurrent session will highlight current efforts in adopting innovative and adapted forms of SEA in developing countries, and to strengthen the learning process and the linkages across SEA practitioners across the world. Several SEA practitioners from the developing world will be invited to share their experience and to discuss innovative ways to progress in the application of IA to levels of strategic decision-making.

Chair: Suphakit Nuntavorakarn

## Poverty reduction and biodiversity

Biodiversity, poverty reduction and MDGs: how can and do development activities in forests affect biodiversity? How can they be combined to have positive environmental and social impact? Is this an impossible dream or actual reality, and what are the problems and tensions? Some examples of successes using results from IAIA sponsored projects in Cameroon will demonstrate how biodiversity and poverty alleviation can be combined and how biodiversity impact assessment and indicators can be used to set a balance between livelihoods, poverty alleviation and biodiversity. Examples from Community Forestry will be used to illustrate.

Chair: Verina Ingram

## Tool development workshop: sustainability appraisal and integrated assessments

Papers, studies, plans and thoughts dealing with sustainability appraisal and integrated assessment are invited, including about methodologies, experiences with their application, needs and users, cost implications, etc.

Co-chairs: Hussein Abaza, Barry Dalal-Clayton, Barry Sadler

## IAIA SECTIONS CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Section

Section Coordinator: Patrick Duffy

### Success stories in the application of EIA to agriculture, forestry, and fisheries

EIA can go far to reduce and even eliminate degradation caused by ill-planned projects and activities (and even policies and legislation) in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. To date the benefits fall far short of the potential to do this.

The Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Section concurrent sessions will feature:

- Experience which gives us useful lessons that require or encourage EIA on new initiatives. In particular, papers are solicited on success stories that show the beneficial application of EIA to correct chronic environmentally degrading practices in these sectors.
- A joint session is planned with the Biodiversity Section to examine the impacts and mitigation of the effects of the sectors' pervasive activities on biodiversity and habitats.

Chair: Patrick Duffy

### Agriculture, forestry and fisheries: relationships with "wild" biodiversity

This joint session of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Biodiversity Sections will examine the relationships between agriculture, forestry and fisheries and "wild" biodiversity (non-domesticated species/habitats), including how IAs of projects in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors address biodiversity impacts. Papers on relevant issues including case studies of practical examples are welcomed.

Chair: Patrick Duffy



# Concurrent Sessions

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## Biodiversity and Ecology Section

Section Coordinator: *Helen Byron*

### Power, poverty and sustainability: the importance of biodiversity

Biodiversity issues are inextricably linked to the key themes of IAIA06: much of the world's population gets its energy directly from biological resources. A considerable percentage of the world's economy and of the needs of the poor are derived directly from biodiversity, e.g., food from wild and cultivated biodiversity, which therefore has a key role to play in poverty reduction; and conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are recognized as essential tenets for more sustainable patterns of development. The biodiversity stream sessions will explore these issues and the potential role of impact assessment in illuminating the relationships and communicating them to decision-makers. Specific sessions are planned on particular issues (see the session descriptions following), and papers on these topics would be particularly welcome:

- Impact assessment and biodiversity
- Delivering the Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 Biodiversity Target
- Biodiversity and power generation
- The EU Birds and Habitats Directives and impact assessment
- Nordic biodiversity
- Outputs from the CBBIA (Capacity Building for Biodiversity in Impact Assessment project) programme
- Indigenous Issues and biodiversity (Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity Sections joint session)
- Forestry and Fisheries
- Relationships with "wild" biodiversity

Chair: *Helen Byron*

### Capacity building for biodiversity

Capacity Building for Biodiversity and Impact Assessment (CBBIA) is a program administered by IAIA with grants from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. CBBIA provides practical and demand-driven support to developing countries, by working with practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders to share, collate and synthesize information and experiences, build expertise and promote good practice. It includes activities geared towards ensuring that IA has an important role in implementing the biodiversity-related global conventions as well as helping to ensure that development is planned and

implemented with biodiversity "in mind." In this session, recipients of CBBIA grants will present the results of their activities, including projects to review the use of impact assessment as a tool for the regulating activities in and around protected areas. The session will also provide an opportunity for others to present their experiences on capacity building and empowerment for biodiversity and impact assessment.

Chair: *Jo Treweek*

### The EU Birds and Habitats Directives and impact assessment

This session will look at the relationships between Article 6/"appropriate assessment" required under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and EIA/SEA. Practical examples of the different approaches developing in different European countries would be particularly welcome. Especially on the issues of compensation for habitat loss, an issue that the European Commission is currently considering with a view to providing more detailed guidance to Member States; and the adoption of joint procedures for Article 6 and broader EIA/SEA assessments.

Chair: *Helen Byron*

### Impact assessment and biodiversity: Delivering the Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 Biodiversity Target

Participants are invited to submit papers relating to the following questions, which will be used to focus this session:

- Most of the MDGs have links with biodiversity, not only the goal of "ensuring environmental sustainability." How can IA make the links explicit, promote a win-win situation and raise awareness of these critical links?
- Biodiversity, poverty and resilience: how can IA best safeguard socio-ecological resilience in working to meet the MDGs?
- Biodiversity issues in IA: Can biodiversity IA help alleviate poverty?
- Which key areas of biodiversity IA should we be striving to improve, to deliver the MDGs? a) process, b) information, c) stakeholder involvement, d) decision making?
- At what levels should we be concentrating capacity building effort through IA and

consideration of biodiversity to improve delivery of the MDGs - decision-makers, NGOs, business, the public, local communities?

Chair: *Verina Ingram*

### Nordic biodiversity

To celebrate the first IAIA conference held in a Nordic country, this session will look at issues relating to Nordic biodiversity and IA. Case study papers would be welcomed, as would papers discussing more general approaches to treatment of biodiversity in IA in Nordic countries.

Chair: *Helen Byron*

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## Disasters and Conflicts Section

Section Coordinators: *Charles Kelly/Michel Bouchard*

### The impact of conflict, disasters and other extreme events impact assessments

The assessment of extreme events has received little attention from the impact assessment mainstream. However, as the events of Hurricane Katrina demonstrated, extreme events need to be accurately assessed if the disastrous impact of these types of events is to be avoided. But, as with normal impact assessments, even when disastrous impacts are accurately identified, there remains a glaring gap in the application of what is known and avoiding what can be expected. In other words, even a good assessment of an extreme event does not necessarily lead to action to address the negative impacts identified. The Impact of the Conflict, Disasters and other Extreme Events Impact Assessments workshop encourages presentations on the pre or post impact assessment of any type of extreme event. Potential events to be covered include wars and other conflicts, natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, and the impacts of other non-normal events, such as economic crisis or epidemics. While there is not any prescribed format or content for a presentation, each presenter should identify how the assessment results presented could be, or have been, used in policy or practice to avoid or minimize the negative impacts identified.

Chair: *Charles Kelly*



# Concurrent Sessions

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## Environmental Management Systems (EMS) Section

Section Coordinator: Debra Zanewich

### Environmental Management Systems

An Environmental Management System (EMS) is a tool that can be used to promote business greening, to monitor compliance with applicable regulations and standards, and to work toward environmental sustainability. During development of its EMS a corporation should undertake a detailed process to identify activities that create environmental impacts and develop specific goals, objectives and targets to address significant impacts. Key performance indicators can be developed within a corporate or project-level EMS to assist with measuring and demonstrating success in meeting EMS objectives. Responsible practices suggest that corporations should not only ensure their projects are environmentally sustainable through the use of impact assessment, but they should also manage their own corporate environmental impacts through the development of an EMS. In addition to hearing case studies of how EIA findings have been incorporated into EMS, examples of how corporations have integrated societal needs into corporate EMS will also be explored. Practical applications of EMS will be presented to show how corporations transition from corporate EMS to project-specific objectives and actions, and how the use of EMS can help promote transparency and accountability of Project Sponsor activities.

Chair: Debra Zanewich

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## Health Impact Assessment Section

Section Coordinators: Lea den Broeder and Suphakit Nuntavorakarn

The IAIA06 conference theme “Power, poverty and sustainability” has many links to health impact assessment (HIA). Public participation (and public empowerment) is often at the core of HIA work. One of the basic principles in HIA is that attention should be paid to inequities in health, including socioeconomic health inequalities and gender based health inequalities. And sustainability objectives such as waste management or energy management have obvious links to public health.

The HIA Section invites papers related to these themes. Presenters are encouraged to state what the relation of their paper is to the central conference theme by answering the question: *What is the role of Health Impact Assessment in issues of power, poverty and sustainability?*

As a population’s health is shaped by a variety of physical and social factors, there are clear interfaces with other types of IA, such as SEA, EIA or SIA. Integrated approaches are therefore a point of interest for the health stream at IAIA06.

Any other HIA-related paper is also welcomed by the HIA Section. Topics may be policy and planning, methods and tools, evaluation in HIA, or specific performed HIAs.

Co-chairs: Lea den Broeder and Suphakit Nuntavorakarn

### Integrating HIA and SIA

(Session/workshop)

This is a session jointly sponsored by the Sections on HIA and SIA to report and reflect on the pre-conference specialty workshop on that topic. The workshop prospectus reads in part: “In accord with a central value of IAIA stated in the 2005 handbook, that of promoting ‘the application of integrated and participatory approaches to impact assessment, conducted to the highest professional standards,’ the purpose of this workshop is to explore issues and options in strengthening cooperative working relations between the two sections. The workshop agenda will focus on generic issues of integrated impact assessment as encountered and exemplified in specific activities and applications in the practice of HIA and SIA. Particular emphasis will be placed in the area of Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) ... and related [topics], such as corporate social performance and community relations ... as a case example reflecting the intersection and interaction of generic and specific contexts.” At the session, a synopsis of workshop proceedings will be presented, including substantive contributions, general and sectoral issues of integrated impact assessment discussed, and recommendations for future joint activities, including draft terms of reference for a project to be conducted over the coming year.

Chair: C.P. Wolf

### Can genetically modified organisms (GMOs) be safely used to alleviate poverty? (Panel)

The purpose of the panel is to stimulate discussion on the safe environmental and human health use of GMOs developed to alleviate poverty. Key issues include:

1. The global regulation on GMOs.
2. EIAs and SEAs for GMOs.
3. Bioconfinement strategies.
4. Poverty reduction potential.
5. The role of development organizations.

Panel members will be invited to represent different perspectives on the issue of the potential safe use of GMOs for poverty reduction.

Chair: Nicholas Linacre

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## Indigenous Peoples Section

Section Coordinators: Bob Tai and Amy Emerhi

Papers and posters are invited on indigenous issues in impact assessment, developing guidelines for the recognition and full inclusion of indigenous concerns in all aspects of impact assessment, traditional knowledge, and impact assessment capacity building for indigenous people.

Note: the program committee may place presentations on these topics in other sessions in order to better integrate indigenous peoples issues into all forms of impact assessment.

Chair: To be determined

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## Integrated Assessment of Trade-Related Policies Section

Section Coordinators: Bernice Goldsmith and Clive George

Trade and the liberalization of markets are often considered as a solution to ending poverty. A crucial meeting of the WTO on the Doha Round of trade negotiations is scheduled in Hong Kong. A topic for negotiation is to free agricultural markets for poorer countries—a key objective of the Millennium Development Plan. It is important that developing countries assess the potential benefits and costs of liberalizing trade before scheduling commitments, as they have very diverse interest and concerns. IATRP is inviting papers on the practice and process of integrated assessments; case studies of sectoral assessments from developed and developing countries; present methodological advancements in the context of the following topics. How can trade impact assessment assist in achieving the Millennium Development Goals of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability? How can national development agencies, international financing institutions, and NGOs contribute to integrating trade concerns into their practice and decision-making? Can trade impact assessment be an important instrument to achieving sustainable development? What is the role of integrated assessment or sustainability impact assessment? Is impact assessment of trade an elitist process? Is the process inclusive, open and transparent? What are the technical difficulties and how can they be overcome?

Co-chairs: Bernice Goldsmith and Clive George

# Concurrent Sessions

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## Public Participation Section

Section Coordinator: *Pierre André*

### Public participation: new spaces of governance

Public participation in IA is now required by many institutions and much legislation. People and organizations ask for their involvement during the IA process at different stages of a project life cycle, from the strategic planning phase to the operation and follow-up phases. These requirements from both decision-takers and public create new spaces of governance where values and political power are expressed. Hybrid forums, multi-actor focus groups, follow-up committees, and Internet discussion groups are among these new spaces, as well as more traditional participation practices. During the PP sessions, we would like:

- To share about the ways PP, through these traditional and new spaces of governance, may contribute to poverty reduction and empower communities towards a more sustainable environment.
- To learn about the institutional and organizational design of these new spaces of governance.
- To identify and debate about the ethical challenges in public participation.
- To hear about case studies from around the world having experienced some ways, traditional or new, of public participation in IA.

We hope that these discussions will bring to the agenda new challenges in public participation and capacity-building, and that they will improve networking for a better practice.

Chair: *Pierre André*

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## Social Impact Assessment Section

Section Coordinator: *James Baines*

This stream of sessions, which has been included in the program for many years, will explore current issues which matter to SIA practitioners, whether they deal with the meeting's overall theme of "Power, Poverty and Sustainability," generic issues such as ethical considerations and climatic changes, or more methodological issues such as social indicators or predictive modelling. This year, SIA practitioners are particularly invited to present papers on integrated assessment, a critical issue which has been highlighted at

recent IAIA meetings and which has many specific implications for SIA. How should SIA practitioners relate and integrate their EIA contributions with those of other human impact assessment specialists but also with SEA, sustainability assessments, trade-related policy evaluations and other emerging fields? Practitioners are also invited again to present papers on SIAs conducted in the context of projects, especially those related to the meeting's theme - energy projects - in the sectors of gas and oil, hydropower, nuclear power and renewables.

Chair: *Pierre Senécal*

### Empowering people to participate in SIAs (Roundtable discussion)

This theme links to the main conference theme of "power" in the sense of ability to influence assessments and decisions. The main principle we have in mind is that the session(s) are participatory in nature and aimed at providing pragmatic shared professional advice. SIA practitioners (and other interested people) will meet to exchange practical experience on the theme of 'empowering people to participate in SIAs, with the aim of finding possible resolutions to practical issues so that individual practitioners are better equipped to address them in future. Particular issues under this theme are being canvassed within SIA Section members. A list of issues for discussion will be available online prior to the start of the conference.

Chair: *James Baines*

### Industrial benefits planning

There is increasing interest in the management of the social and economic impacts of industrial activity, including the distribution of the resultant employment and business. More and more national, state and aboriginal authorities are requiring that the benefits of such activity reach their citizens and local companies. Those living near industrial projects are demanding that, as those most likely to experience any negative effects, they should receive first priority for benefits. Lastly, international financial institutions are requiring that project proponents seek to provide industrial benefits to affected populations, and companies are paying greater attention to the issue because of corporate social responsibility concerns. This session will discuss these pressures and requirements, the approaches, methods and tools that are being used to deliver industrial benefits, and related issues and concerns. This will include discussion of the place of industrial benefits planning within socio-economic impact assessment, and the use of such tools as ben-

efits plans, impacts and benefits agreements, and diversity and equity plans. Examples will be drawn from the oil and gas, mining and hydro-power industries. The goal is to further our understanding of, and share experiences and lessons with respect to, industrial benefits planning.

Chair: *Mark Shrimpton*

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## Strategic Environmental Assessment Section

Section Coordinator: *Thomas Fisher*

Previous IAIA conferences have shown that SEA has developed quickly over the past decade. Whereas in the mid-1990s it was only sporadically applied in few countries and systems, it now has become an established policy, plan and programme support instrument that is used in many countries, in a wide range of different situations and by different administrations and bodies. SEA now encompasses many instruments that differ in terms of the methods and techniques used, scope and elements covered. This became very clear during the 2005 Prague IAIA SEA thematic meeting at which several hundred papers were presented in five streams and on 37 topics. While Prague showed that there has been some considerable progress in developing SEA quality and effectiveness, there are a number of aspects that need improving. Following on from Prague "conference highlights" prepared by Barry Sadler, papers are invited on the following themes:

- The effective implementation of SEA, particularly focusing on jurisdiction specific guidance, generic effectiveness or performance criteria (such as the IAIA SEA performance criteria).
- The effective communication in the SEA process and on the SEA results with decision makers and other stakeholders.
- The adaptation of SEA to specific contexts and systems, so that SEA is fit for purpose; in this context, we particularly need to know more regarding SEA at the policy level.
- The delivery of better outcomes through objectives-led and tiered SEA and systematic follow-up.
- The role of SEA in safeguarding of the environment.

Based on our experiences in Prague, we envisage sessions with different formats, including paper-based and debate-oriented sessions. Depending on the number of paper submissions, in addition to the core themes presented above, several other sessions may also be organized. But this is entirely up to you!

Chair: *Thomas Fisher*

# Concurrent Sessions

Abstracts on theme forum concurrent sessions, Section, and other concurrent session topics are welcome until 31 January.

## Strategic environmental assessment: learning and governance

Through the last years, some authors came up with the hypothesis that carrying out an SEA leads in the long run to better governance and a learning process inside the organization with regard to environmental awareness. So as a consequence, even if an SEA has no direct effect on the ongoing plan or programme, there is an increasing consciousness in the organization. One aspect of the session will therefore look at empirical evidence. Furthermore, the session will be based on former results of the Session “Search for Appropriate Organization” in Prague 2005. Key questions will be raised:

1. How does SEA contribute to social and organizational learning?
2. Is the learning process dependent more on the individual actors, the kind of organization or which role the organization is playing in the process?
3. Which institutional development will promote learning and better governance?

*Chair: Holger Dalkmann*

## Transposition of the EC SEA Directive

The deadline for transposing the regulations of the EC SEA Directive (2001/42) into the legislations of the EU Member States was July 20, 2004. Approximately two years after this deadline, it is time to check the progress made on that implementation process. Taking into account the results of the IAIA SEA conference in Prague (September 2005), this session within the SEA stream intends to critically examine the state of the art of the transposition of the Directive and to compare the approaches of different EU Member States. Papers that deal with SEA implementation issues in old and new EU Member States are invited.

*Chair: Ralf Aschemann*

## Local/Regional Government Policy and IA (Urban Governance) Section

*Section Coordinators: Markus Eggenberger and Viv Heslop*

Worldwide, towns and cities are growing at an unprecedented speed, transferring our planet by the first trimester of this century from a basically rural to a dominantly urban world. As centres of industry and commerce, urban areas have long been the centres of wealth and political power; they also account for a disproportionate share in the national income. In general, countries with the most rapidly growing economies have the most rapid increase in their level of urbanization.

Given the strong relation between (national) economic growth and urbanization, it is now accepted that urbanization is not only inevitable, but also a positive phenomenon without which the economic development gaps between the richer and the poorer countries can never be diminished.

The flip side of the coin is that many environmental and social problems go hand in hand with urbanization. Poverty is one of the key-issues, which is at their very heart. Government's administrative competence is an important factor for explaining the differences in growth among developing countries. In many cities, poor governance (the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political, and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and private sector) and wrong policies have led to severe environmental degradation, increased poverty, low economic growth, and social exclusion. This emphasizes the important role of local authorities in bridging the gap between the different stakeholders within their jurisdiction (civil society, private sector, local government), and between the different levels of Government (national – local).

The urban governance section invites all stakeholders – representatives from local authorities, private business, civil society and research – to contribute to this discussion.

*Chair: Markus Eggenberger*

## Environment IA Law, Policies and Practice Section

*Section Coordinators: Susan Waters and Jan De Mulder*

World leaders at the 2005 UN World Summit recognized the importance of good governance and the rule of law for sustained economic growth, sustainable development and eradicating poverty. Impact assessment law, and more broadly sustainable development law, both internationally and domestically, play a critical role in achieving these goals. The uptake of sustainable development norms at international law relating to economic development power and resource imbalances, and poverty eradication can have an important influence on the development and implementation of domestic legal systems. There has been uptake of international norms such as: access to information, public participation, open and transparent processes, indigenous rights, and growing recognition of environmental health as a human right. Some

of these were identified in the principles of the 1992 Rio Declaration. These horizontal principles have since been endorsed and further elaborated in particular declarations and international agreements that address thematic or cross cutting issues and include targets on poverty reduction. Legal text cannot be relied upon on its own however; the need for effective institutions, transparent and accountable judicial systems, effective civil society and enforceable decisions is also a necessity. This session invites presentations that consider the progress (or constraints) in advancing international and domestic sustainable development law since the 1992 Rio Declaration. The focus will be on recent developments in impact assessment law both internationally and domestically and the effectiveness of these developments in addressing poverty issues and power imbalances such as access and renewable technologies.

*Co-chairs: Susan Waters, Jan De Mulder*

## Transboundary impact assessment

Many larger activities have significant adverse transboundary impacts. Several well-known international agreements provide for transboundary notification and consultation. The UNECE Convention on EIA in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991) and the EU Directive on EIA (97/11/EC) provide for transboundary EIA of projects, while the UNECE Protocol (Kiev, 2003) and the EU Directive on SEA (2001/42/EC) provide for the transboundary SEA of plans and programmes. However, many other regional multilateral environmental agreements, particularly for seas and river basins, provide for transboundary EIA. This topic will consider the complexity of the regulatory framework for transboundary impact assessment and examine some of the common issues in application: time frames, language and legal differences between neighboring countries. The expected format will comprise presentations and group discussions.

*Chair: Nick Bonvoisin*



# Concurrent Sessions

## Measuring and monitoring environmental justice *(Workshop)*

International recognition that those who live in socially disadvantaged circumstances also tend to live in poorer quality environments has led to policy and regulation encouraging progress towards environmental justice (e.g., in the USA, South Africa, India and Scotland). Undoubtedly political power and poverty influence the distribution of environmental quality, which in turn affects the sustainability of the environment and society. What is unclear is whether impact assessment and regulation can measure, mitigate or prevent unequal distributions of environmental quality. Measuring the distribution of environmental quality poses particular problems, many of which already plague impact assessment. For example, can distribution of impacts, taking account of the cocktail of potential impacts in any one area, be meaningfully measured in relation to sensitivity of populations? Can real and perceived disadvantage be appropriately represented? This workshop will explore methodical issues related to environmental justice, in particular if and how environmental justice can be predicted, mitigated and monitored. The workshop aims to engage not only those that have tried to measure and mitigate environmental justice in EIA, SEA, SIA or HIA, but also those responsible for the regulation of the environment in general, so experiences can be traded and new approaches explored.

*Chair: Anna McLauchlan*

## OTHER CONCURRENT SESSION TOPICS PROPOSED TO DATE

### The Marrakech Action Plan and follow-up

The commitment to capacity development for impact assessment in developing countries formulated in the Marrakech Declaration will be discussed, exploring ways to strengthen the action plan and its implementation, focusing on practical and feasible next steps. Sessions will also include presentations on awareness building and criteria for good practices in impact assessment capacity building.

*Co-chairs: Peter Leonard, Jean-Roger Mercier, Jaafar Boulejiouch*

### Capacity building and networking in developing countries

Impact assessment uses a methodology that requires considerable skills in its application. It became apparent early on that training, capacity building and strengthening in EIA and SEA methodology were required if IAs were to get a wider use than just having a few EIAs done by international consultants to satisfy immediate donor needs. Capacity building in EIA has therefore been on the agenda in Africa and other regions for the last 10-15 years. A number of local institutes and networks with the objective of strengthening EIA capacity in their own regions has been established, like CLEAA in Africa, SAIEA in SADC and many sub-regional networks of professionals. This session will discuss the latest progress and developments in IA capacity building in developing countries.

*Chair: Abdulrahman Issa*

### SEA/EIA development and cases in Asia

Being the region with the largest share of world's population, Asia plays a pivotal role in the next phase of application of strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and any new innovations in EIA. Only a few countries or places in Asia have applied SEA, and resistance, reservations and obstacles remain in some parts of Asia to the adoption of SEA at the national level. Notwithstanding this, there has been greater attention to public participation. There has also been increasing attention to the linkage between SEA and sustainable development. Building capacity, gaining actual experiences and enforcing the requirements remain to be major issues.

The session will be organized to promote the sharing of experiences, good practices, case studies and lessons learned in Asian countries. It will also be an opportunity to discuss any practical solutions or strategies to overcome obstacles, promote innovation in practices, and build and sustain better institutions for applying EIA or SEA for sustainability purposes. The main themes of the Asian session at the IAIA06 would likely cover:

- The major characteristics of national and local SEA/EIA system in Asia, their similarities and differences as a result of different socio-economic and political context, and how such systems were developed to overcome various obstacles and constraints.
- The linkages between the application of SEA and the pursuit of sustainable development, poverty reduction or disaster prevention/management (why, how, what and for whom) and how to maximize the associated synergies.

- Actual case studies in the application of SEA in different sectors such as energy, transport, agriculture, land use and so forth; and how to use SEA principles in decision making where SEA has not yet become a legal requirement.
- The applicability of economic tools in SEA for dealing with trade-offs between development and environment.
- Public participation in EIA/SEA: good practices, successful cases and major innovations.
- More effective capacity building and institutional reforms for effective EIA/SEA, and the use of SEA for citizen's capacity building.

*Co-Chairs: Elvis Au, Kii Hayashi and Young-il Song*

### Environmental Careers Seminar *(Panel)*

The Environmental Career Center (ECC) will conduct its second annual IAIA Environmental Careers Seminar in 2006. Come to this session ready with your questions on what it takes to prepare for, enter, and advance in a rewarding career of protecting the environment. ECC will moderate a panel of 4 to 5 environmental employers who are currently seeking staff and/or who have the knowledge and passion for helping others gain employment in the profession.

Last year's career seminar speakers represented the UN Environmental Programme, CH2M Hill, ENSR International, School for Field Studies, and AIS Fisheries Observers. The Environmental Career Center also presented findings on their environmental employment survey.

Want to help guide aspiring professionals enter the environmental career field? Then join this session by submitting an informal abstract on what it takes to prepare for, and advance in, the environmental/sustainability professions.

About the Environmental Career Center: ECC has been helping people work for a better environment since 1980. They operate EnvironmentalCareer.com, publish the Green Careers Journal (new in 2006—formerly the National Environmental Employment Report), conduct careers research and job seminars.

If you are interested in being a panelist, contact John Esson, ECW Environmental Group ([johnesson@ecwenvironmental.com](mailto:johnesson@ecwenvironmental.com)).

*Chair: John Esson*