BellagioSTAMP: Sustainability Assessment and Measurement Principles

TIAS webinar

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June 16, 2017

OECD BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

IISD International Institute for Sustainable Development

Ambition

BellagioSTAMP will guide the totality of the sustainability assessment process

- **Content** – Questions that should be answered in assessments
- **Process** – The way in which assessments should be carried out
- **Scope** – Range of assessments across the dimensions of time and geography
- **Impact** – The way to maximise the impact of assessments on the public and policy makers

(Back Row, Left to Right)

Dr. Robert-André MARTINUZZI, Director, Research Institute for Managing Sustainability, Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, Edgar GUTIERREZ ESPELETA, Director, School of Statistics, University of Costa Rica, Katherine SCRIVENS, Researcher, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Jonathan LOH, Editor, Living Planet Report, WWF and Zoological Society of London, Robin MIÉGE, Head of Unit, DG Environment, European Commission, Eszter HORVATH, Chief, Energy and Environment Statistics Branch, UN Statistics Division, Jochen JESINGHAUS, Scientific / Technical Project Officer, Econometrics and Applied Statistics, Institute for the Protection and the Security of the Citizen (Ispra), Joint Research Centre, European Commission, Dr. Tongsan WANG, Director, Institute of Quantitative and Technical Economics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Dr. Nikhil CHANDAVARKAR, Chief, Communications and Information Management Service, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations and Jan BAKKES, Senior Advisor, The Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL)

(Front Row, Left to Right)

Rob SMITH, Director, Environmental Accounts and Statistics, Statistics Canada, Dr. Peter HARDI, Professor and Director, Center for the Social Responsibility of Business, CEU Business School, Central European University, Enrico GIOVANNINI, Chief Statistician, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), David RUNNALLS, President and CEO, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), Dr. László PINTÉR, Director, Measurement and Assessment Program, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), Simon BRISCOE, Statistics Editor, Financial Times, Dr. Shailaja CHANDRA, Executive Director, National Population Stabilization Fund, Government of India, Dr. Ken PREWITT, Vice President for Global Centers & Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University and Jon HALL, Project Leader, Global Project on Measuring the Progress of Societies, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Principle 1

Guiding vision

Assessing progress towards sustainable development is guided by the goal to deliver well-being within the capacity of the biosphere to sustain it for future generations.

Principle 2

Essential considerations

Sustainability Assessments consider:

- The underlying social, economic and environmental system as a whole and the interactions among its components
- The adequacy of governance mechanisms
- Dynamics of current trends and drivers of change and their interactions
- Risks, uncertainties, and activities that can have an impact across boundaries
- Implications for decision making, including trade-offs and synergies

Principle 3

Adequate scope

Sustainability Assessments adopt:

- Appropriate time horizon to capture both short and long-term effects of current policy decisions and human activities
- Appropriate geographical scope ranging from local to global

Principle 4

Framework and indicators

Sustainability Assessments are based on:

- A conceptual framework that identifies the domains that core indicators have to cover
- The most recent and reliable data, projections and models to infer trends and build scenarios
- Standardized measurement methods, wherever possible, in the interest of comparability
- Comparison of indicator values with targets and benchmarks, where possible

Principle 5

Transparency

The assessment of progress towards sustainable development:

- Ensures the data, indicators and results of the assessment are accessible to the public
- Explains the choices, assumptions and uncertainties determining the results of the assessment
- Discloses data sources and methods
- Discloses all sources of funding and potential conflicts of interest

Principle 6

Effective communication

In the interest of effective communication, to attract the broadest possible audience and to minimize the risk of misuse, Sustainability

Assessments:

- Use clear and plain language
- Present information in a fair and objective way, that helps to build trust
- Use innovative visual tools and graphics to aid interpretation and tell a story
- Make data available in as much detail as reliable and practical

Principle 7

Broad participation

To strengthen their legitimacy and relevance, sustainability assessments should:

- Find appropriate ways to reflect the views of the public, while providing active leadership
- Engage early on with users of the assessment so that it best fits their needs

Principle 8

Continuity and capacity

Assessments of progress towards sustainable development require:

- Repeated measurement
- Responsiveness to change
- Investment to develop and maintain adequate capacity
- Continuous learning and improvement

BellagioSTAMP applications

Global assessments (e.g. GEO)
Multilateral outlook reports (e.g. OECD Environment Outlook)
National assessments and outlooks (e.g. CEDO)
SDG indicators and reporting (global and sub-global)
Urban indicators and assessments (e.g. PEG)
Sector assessments (e.g. energy, agriculture)
…

From principles to standards

Some preliminary ideas

- Clarify purpose and audience, broaden participation, create facilitation mechanism
- Sharpen conceptual foundations and language (indicators vs. assessment)
- Create mechanism for adoption
- Make adherence verifiable
- Create ‘verification’ mechanism
- Explore options for formalization through standards body
- …

Further information

- https://www.iisd.org/pdf/2009/brochure_bellagiostamp.pdf
- Pintér, L., Hardi, P., Martinuzzi, A., & Hall, J. (2012). Bellagio STAMP: Principles for sustainability assessment and measurement. *Ecological Indicators*, *17*, 20-28.