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ANNOUNCEMENT



**THE INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT SOCIETY  
AND  
THE INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH  
PRESENT THEIR JOINT WEBINAR:**

## **CONCEPTUALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT OF LEARNING**

**WEDNESDAY, 16 NOV 2016, 8.00 – 9.30 AM GMT (9.00 – 10.30 AM CET)**

### **Background and Focus**

Learning is of crucial importance for transitions towards sustainability in general and natural resources management in particular. In both fields, different learning concepts have become popular, including social learning, transformative learning, or experimental learning. How learning is being conceptualized and measured by different people in different contexts is the focus of this webinar. In doing so, we discuss recent developments and challenges thereby contributing to ongoing discussions on the conceptualization and measurement of learning and bringing together those who are interested in learning in transitions as well as (social) learning in natural resources management.

During the webinar we will see a presentation on conceptual and methodological challenges when using social learning as starting-point for community-based interventions by Romina Rodela, who is the author of several reviews about social learning. PJ Beers, who has a background in transition studies and educational sciences, will provide a presentation about the conceptualization and measurement of learning in transitions with a concrete example of how discursive approaches may be used to understand learning in interaction processes. We conclude with highlights from two recently conducted review studies. Geeske Scholz will present findings on the conceptualization of social learning and Johannes Halbe on learning in sustainability transitions research.

This webinar is organized by the coordinators of a [Learning Community](#) (see below), which was established as a follow-up of three sessions on learning at the [International Sustainability Conference 2016](#). By establishing this Community, its coordinators aim to enhance the learning capacity of those who examine or seek to stimulate or organize learning processes. In doing so, we bring together people working on learning in transitions and those working on social learning in natural resources management. We expect that both communities have a lot to offer to each other. By connecting these usually rather separate communities, we hope to create synergies and to identify and address cross-cutting questions.

The webinar is the first in a series of webinars that we would like to organize on learning. Ideas for future webinars and expressions of interest are welcome at [learningcommunity@tias-web.info](mailto:learningcommunity@tias-web.info). The webinar is organized and hosted by The Integrated Assessment Society (<http://www.tias-web.info>) and the Institute of Environmental Systems Research (<https://www.usf.uni-osnabrueck.de>).

## Agenda

<b>8:00</b>	<p><b>Welcome and introductory remarks</b></p> <p><i>Joanne Vinke-de Kruijf, Institute of Environmental Systems Research, University of Osnabrück, Germany</i></p>
<b>8:10</b>	<p><b>Community-based social learning interventions</b></p> <p><i>Romina Rodela, School of Natural Sciences, Technology and Environmental Studies, Södertörn University, Sweden</i></p> <p>An increasing number of projects is turning to the literature on social learning for input and guidance for the development of activities and interventions targeting local communities. Yet, there are substantial challenges when ideas, normative claims and expectations, as those found across most of that body of works, have to be operationalized and then used to inform practice in the field. As a consequence to these challenges the result often is sub-optimal and has led to empirical research that is methodologically weak and inconclusive. In this talk I will look at common pitfalls and reflect on ways how research teams can deliver (academically) solid and issue-driven community-based social learning interventions.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p>
<b>8:30</b>	<p><b>Matching the potential of learning to transitions</b></p> <p><i>Pieter Jelle (PJ) Beers, Dutch Research Institute for Transitions, Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands</i></p> <p>Learning and transitions go hand in hand. Yet, transition scientists have done little work to conceptualise the role of learning. In this presentation I explore various aspects of transitions that feature specific learning process and I give an example of how I applied a discursive approach to learning to a transition experiment.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p>
<b>8:50</b>	<p><b>Highlights from a review on conceptualizing social learning</b></p> <p><i>Geeske Scholz, Institute of Environmental Systems Research, University of Osnabrück, Germany</i></p> <p>The definition of social learning proposed by Reed et al (2010) has been adopted, extended and put aside in social learning studies. Based on a review of common practice in the field, we provide researchers with a guideline which aspects to define and consider when examining social learning and developed a protocol for reporting on social learning.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p>
<b>9:00</b>	<p><b>Highlights from a review on learning in transitions</b></p> <p><i>Johannes Halbe, Institute of Environmental Systems Research, University of Osnabrück, Germany</i></p> <p>Even though learning is considered as fundamental for innovation and system transformation, a differentiated and comprehensive review of learning concepts used in the field of sustainability transitions is currently missing. We conducted a systematic literature review of learning concepts in transition research and identified factors that may support or impede learning.</p> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p>
<b>9:10</b>	<p><b>Roundtable discussion and wrap-up</b></p>
<b>9:30</b>	<p><b>Close of Webinar</b></p>

## About the presenters

**Romina Rodela** is a researcher working in the interdisciplinary field of environmental governance. She has a research interest in participatory approaches, collective action and social learning. As part to past projects she was engaged on research synthesis of conceptual and methodological aspects of the literature on social learning in the field of natural resource management. Romina is currently managing the project "[Environmental Governance in Context](#)" at Södertörn University (Sweden). She is collaborating with Wageningen University (the Netherlands) and Can Tho University (Vietnam) on the assessment of the learning effects of serious games in the context of climate smart technologies in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.



**Pieter Jelle (PJ) Beers** is a transition scientist. His academic expertise focuses on learning and monitoring in transitions. He does most of his work in the fields of agriculture and education. He currently works as professor of applied sciences at HAS University of Applied Sciences (Den Bosch, The Netherlands) and as senior researcher at DRIFT, the Dutch Research Institute for Transitions. PJ studied Environmental Health Sciences at Maastricht University and obtained his doctoral degree in Educational Technology in 2005 at the Open University of the Netherlands, on research about knowledge sharing in multidisciplinary teams.



**Geeske Scholz** is lecturer at the Institute of Environmental Systems Research at Osnabrück University, Germany. She holds a PhD in Applied Systems Science. Geeske published on social learning, the evaluation of participatory methods, and agent-based modeling. Her research interests are social learning and social change, and how modeling, specifically computer simulations, can help us to understand and facilitate these phenomena.



**Johannes Halbe** is a Ph.D. student at the Institute of Environmental Systems Research, University of Osnabrueck, Germany. He has an interdisciplinary educational background with a Diploma degree in Civil Engineering (Dipl.-Ing.) and a B.A. in Economics. In his research, Johannes analyses the applicability of participatory modelling methods to stimulate learning and actively govern transition processes towards sustainable development.



## About the organizers

This webinar is chaired by Joanne Vinke-de Kruijf who organizes this webinar in cooperation with Caroline van Bers and the other three coordinators of the Learning Community: Johannes Halbe, Geeske Scholz (see above) and Claudia Pahl-Wostl.

**Joanne Vinke-de Kruijf** is postdoc researcher at the Institute of Environmental Systems Research, University of Osnabrück. Additionally, she is the honorary secretary of The Integrated Assessment Society. Her research focuses on international cooperation, (social) learning, policy transfer and governance in the domains of water management and climate change adaptation. In her current research, she examines learning about climate change adaptation through European cooperation projects. Before joining the University of Osnabrück, Joanne worked for one year as international project manager at a Dutch regional water authority. She obtained her PhD degree from the University of Twente, the Netherlands in 2013.



**Caroline van Bers** has been involved in environmental management and sustainable development with academic, governmental and non-governmental organizations in Europe and North America for over twenty-five years. This work, ranging from research to capacity development, has always been interdisciplinary and applied in nature. A particular focus has been the promotion of Integrated Assessment approaches and methods at the science-policy-practice interface particularly in my role as programme manager for [The Integrated Assessment Society](#) for more than ten years.



**Claudia Pahl-Wostl** is professor for resources management at the Institute for Environmental Systems Research at the University of Osnabrück, Germany. Her major research interests are adaptive, multi-level governance and management of water resources, social and societal learning and their role in sustainability transformations, and conceptual and methodological frameworks to analyze social-ecological systems. She is (co)author of numerous papers in peer-reviewed journals, chapters in edited books, policy briefs and popular reports. Her emphasis on interdisciplinary and community-building work is reflected in her role as editor of three books and fifteen special issues in peer reviewed journals.

