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(Photo: U. Meissner ©)

## The Society

The Integrated Assessment Society is a not-for-profit entity created to promote the community of inter-disciplinary and disciplinary scientists, analysts and practitioners who develop integrated assessment. The goals of the society are to nurture this community, to promote the development of IA and to encourage its wise application.

### Integrated Assessment Defined

Integrated Assessment (IA) can be defined as the interdisciplinary process of integrating knowledge from various disciplines and stakeholder groups in order to evaluate a problem situation from a variety of perspectives and provide support for its solution. IA supports learning and decision processes and helps to identify desirable and possible options for addressing the problem. It therefore builds on two major methodological pillars: approaches to integrating knowledge about a problem domain, and understanding policy and decision making processes. IA has been developed to address issues of acid rain, climate change, land degradation, water and air quality management, forest and fisheries management and public health.

## Feature

### A month of EU environment, energy and development policy events

by Ulrike Meissner, TIAS Associate, Brussels Liaison Office

Six months after COP21 in Paris and nine months after the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were formally accepted by the UN General Assembly, three important annual events of the European Commission on related themes took place in the month of June: Green Week, Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) and EU Development Days (EDD).

Each event was organised by a different policy department - Directorate General or DG - of the Commission: DG Environment, DG Energy and DG Development and Cooperation. An array of themes were common to all three events ranging from COP21 to green financing to sustainable cities and communities. There was also plenty of talk about the need for mainstreaming the environment, energy and climate. Surprisingly however, these three events were presented as stand-alone events with none of them promoting the other.

#### Green Week

The first event, Green Week, took place under the motto 'Investing for a greener future'. This year's event had a different format: Instead of concentrating the activities in Brussels, they took place all over Europe, even as far away as Australia. The Green Week high-level conference and the awards ceremony of the Life Programme preceding this remained in Brussels. This 'decentralisation' of Green Week was generally perceived as a good decision by the participants of the conference as it made possible the involvement of those from regional and local levels and it made the other participating cities important partners in this event. On the other hand, the conference was not as well attended as in previous years meaning fewer networking opportunities on a European level. The conference provided much-needed

advice on green finance possibilities to private enterprise through, for example, the *European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)* and the *Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Instrument*. Furthermore, the *Private Finance for Energy Efficiency (PF4EE)* a funding programme under the *European Life Programme* was presented. The initiative supports commercial banks that lend money to energy efficiency projects proposed by SMEs, private individuals, municipalities and other public bodies. The Green Action Plan for SMEs which is part of the Circular Economy Package was also profiled. However, it was made clear in the policy debates that there are important prerequisites for successful green investment, such as:

- comprehensive and clear policies (both on the EU and national levels) to ensure stability for investors;
- integrated management of natural resources in order to avoid failures such as the biofuel strategy which had disastrous consequences for biodiversity;
- positive incentives and appropriate taxes to reward sustainable practices;
- elimination of environmentally harmful subsidies that directly or indirectly support fossil fuels;
- a framework to standardize reporting data from companies to make it comparable, at least on a European level, to make it easier for investors to make the right choices.



The Conference also stressed the importance of financing the transition to a circular, low-carbon economy and looked at various business models and best practices to support this. The Life Programme awards showcased a wide range of ideas on how circular economy can become a reality. Finally, in the

closing debate of the conference, the question of whether Europe can remain a key player in the greening of financial systems globally was raised. Although the EU played a leading role in COP21 with regards to renewables and the setting of standards, the region has started to lag behind countries such as China which has included green finance in its five-year plan last November. While China is pushing at the G20 for the setting of environmental standards, the EU seems slow and is losing its role as a leader or even key player in this. Representatives from the Commission explained that while China can be more mobile and flexible, the EU has to take into account the views of the different Member States and reach a consensus, which slows down the process considerably.

In his closing remarks Daniel Calleja- Crespo, Director-General of DG Environment, maintained that an important step is that 20% of the total EU budget is earmarked for climate change. He also argued that if we really want the EU to be a catalyst for change in response to environmental challenges, we cannot do it with rules and standards alone. What is needed is the political will.

### Sustainable Energy Week

In the 11<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) a high-level debate on Europe's leadership role, specifically in the area of renewable energy took place. Adnan Amin, Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency stated that Europe was and still is a forerunner regarding policy frameworks. However, the EU was also criticized for giving funds to conventional energy production and killing priority access to renewables which goes against the achievement of the EU's 2020 climate and energy targets.



The three-day policy conference in Brussels focused on the following topics:

- Energy efficiency in buildings, products, industry and transport
- Renewables
- Energy markets – electricity and gas grid issues
- Internal energy market and support schemes
- Local and regional energy planning and financing

The dominant theme however was how to provide incentives to consumers. Reaching and empowering citizens to achieve cultural change was considered to be key for a sustainable energy future. The EUSEW itself tried to reach out much more to the citizens than in previous years, with hundreds of events taking place during 'energy days' across Europe throughout the month of June; promoting the event on social media and providing the possibility for citizens to vote for the EU sustainable energy awards.

On the whole, the Sustainable Energy Week was a much bigger event in Brussels than Green Week, with more than 2000 participants, 52 policy sessions and a large 'networking village' with a speaker's corner, which was well received by the participants. The App for this year's event also introduced new features to speed up and, thus, intensify informal networking. A lot of sessions were web-streamed to reach out to a larger community. Slide presentations, audio-recorded sessions and photos are/will be available from: [www.eusew.eu](http://www.eusew.eu)

### EU Development Days

The EU Development Days (EDD) was by far the largest event of the three with over 6000 participants. This year marked its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The so-called 'Davos of Development' was opened by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and EU High Representative Federica Mogherini. Taking part in the conference were leaders from Africa, the Pacific, Europe and other regions around the globe. The focus of this year's conference was the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, making it one of the very first major conferences dedicated to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The sessions centred around the question of how to work on the implementation of the SDGs. According to David Naborro, the UN Special Adviser, success depends very much on inclusive partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society and how the key feature of the Agenda are applied in practice, namely its universal, all-encompassing character, interconnecting between its goals, between all countries, as well as between global, regional and local levels, and ensuring no one is left behind.

However, in order to engage all actors, the problem according to Naborro is that people do not know the SDG story and he pledged that by 2017 all people should know about the SDGs which will be accomplished through a partnership between government and business and civil society with the involvement of one million activists around the globe acting as promoters of the SDGs.

Throughout the conference there were also voices which maintained that there is evidence of increasing mistrust of government stemming from rising inequalities and, connected with this, the question of ownership. One possible way to bring about change is to localise the SDGs. There are increasingly more actors moving in this direction: The French Development Agency (afd) is already shifting from project financing to a focus on local stakeholders. Furthermore, the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments (GTF), UN- Habitat and UNDP are jointly working on a 'Toolkit for Localising the SDGs', aimed at advocating the importance of localisation, while assisting in the implementation process at the local level.



(Source: <http://www.eusew.eu> ©)

### Networking Events

One of the European Commission's priorities in all policy areas is to facilitate the sharing of ideas and best practices. The events this year were important instruments for networking and exchange and to support the replication of successful projects in the European Member States. Both Green Week and EUSEW had award ceremonies which showcased a wide range of innovative projects from all over Europe. The networking villages complemented this by giving participants a chance to explore policies, projects and funding opportunities within EU institutions more deeply. It also gave the floor to a wide range of participants and thus the opportunity to share information and connect with each other.

## Some Concluding Remarks

Citizen involvement is key for success and we cannot look at the challenges discussed at these events without looking at the social dimension. The EU is taking first steps into that direction but if we really want to work towards a sustainable Europe (and world) it is important that the EU develops a positive vision and shows a strong commitment to engaging everyone.

Returning to the issue of mainstreaming, it is of course important to profile environment, sustainable energy and development each in their own right. However, it reflects the fact that EU policy departments still often work in silos. I believe that these events could also help to deepen cooperation between the policy areas if they could be jointly implemented and carefully orchestrated to facilitate integration. Keep the three events but let there be a day of overlap where all participants could come together and engage in fruitful discussions and learn from each other. This could also be an opportunity for integrated assessment scholars and practitioners to showcase their knowledge and provide solutions to address the common challenges.

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## TIAS Webinars

Since the last newsletter TIAS has held three **webinars** by members of our advisory board: most recently on the **co-production of knowledge** by Marcela Brugnach and two on the implementation of the **Sustainable Development Goals** hosted by Laszlo Pinter. A follow up webinar or activity on both themes is planned. Later in the Autumn a webinar on social learning is planned. For more information, visit our webinar page: [www.tias-web.info/tias-activities/webinars/](http://www.tias-web.info/tias-activities/webinars/)

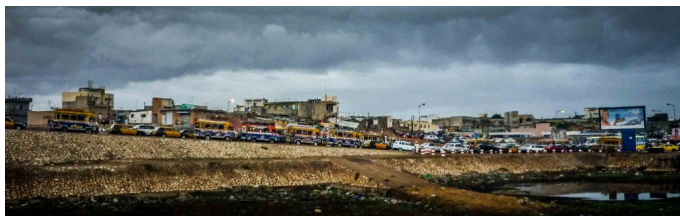


Photo: U. Meissner ©

## Events

4–9 September 2016, **Quadrennial Ozone Symposium**, Edinburgh, UK. The symposium brings together researchers and stakeholders interested in a wide range of aspects related to stratospheric and tropospheric ozone. The 2016 symposium is organised by the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and the University of Edinburgh on behalf of the International Ozone Commission (IO3C), and will incorporate scientific sessions on the following topics: stratospheric ozone, tropospheric ozone, ozone chemistry-climate interactions, global ozone observations and measurement technique ozone on climate, human health, ecosystems and food production. The deadline for registration is **July 31, 2016**. More information: <http://www.ozone-symposium-2016.org/>

19-23 September 2016. **European Ecosystem Services 2016 Conference**, Antwerp, Belgium

The theme: 'Helping nature to help us' focuses on the important role that healthy ecosystems play in supporting human well-being and the protection of nature. This conference links science, policy and practice on ecosystem services and natural

5-7 December 2016. The **Ninth Annual Meeting of the Integrated Assessment Modeling Consortium**. Beijing, China. Abstracts can be submitted until 30 July 2016. Multiple submissions are allowed. Abstracts are invited for the following topics:

- Analysis of climate change, climate impacts and adaptation in IAM applications
- Uncertainty and the use of IAM projections
- From climate policy to broader sustainable development analysis: New IAM analyses on the climate policy – sustainable development nexus and strategies
- Global deep transformation pathways
- National and regional transformation pathways, including INDCs and mid-century mitigation strategies

More information:

<http://www.globalchange.umd.edu/iamc/events/ninth-annual-meeting-of-the-iamc-2016/>

28 April – 01 May, 2017 Call for papers: **Adapting to climate change: Actions, implementations and outcomes**. University of Notre Dame, USA. This workshop focuses on social science research on climate change adaptation. Specifically, there is an interest in seeing the climate adaptation scholarship move beyond intentions and plans and focus on policy implementation, policy change, policy outputs, and if possible, policy outcomes. Proposal submission deadline 01 Oct. 2016.

More information:

[http://depts.washington.edu/envirpol/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/climate\\_change\\_adaptation\\_call\\_for\\_papers.pdf](http://depts.washington.edu/envirpol/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/climate_change_adaptation_call_for_papers.pdf)

## Job openings

**Associate Professor** with a focus on **global policy/assessments/politics in the field of climate and/or food**. Environmental Policy Group, Department of Social Sciences, Wageningen University, Netherlands. Application deadline: 31 July, 2016. [www.academictransfer.com/34577](http://www.academictransfer.com/34577)

**Two PhD positions** at the Department of Economics, University of Heidelberg. The NATCOOP research team studies **how nature affects cooperation in common-pool resource systems**. The project involves field-work in Tanzania and/or Chile. Deadline: 15 July, 2016. More information: <https://finetwork.wordpress.com/2016/06/27/two-phd-positions-at-the-department-of-economics-university-of-heidelberg/>

## Publications

Report of the **1st Global Forum on Green Economy Learning** (16-18 December 2015, OECD, Paris). The report provides reflections and highlights from the Forum, as well as overall results of the event and the preceding global survey. In addition, the report outlines next steps to strengthen existing efforts to up-scale green economy learning. The report can be downloaded from: [http://www.un-page.org/files/public/global\\_ige\\_learning\\_forum\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.un-page.org/files/public/global_ige_learning_forum_final_report.pdf)

Maas R., P. Grennfelt (eds), 2016. **Towards Cleaner Air. Scientific Assessment Report 2016**. EMEP Steering Body and Working Group on Effects of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, Oslo. Coordinated action under UNECE Air Convention during the last 30 years has significantly improved air quality in North America and Europe - but more efforts are needed! A high level assessment report of the work under the Air Convention has been launched on May 30th 2016 and can be downloaded here: [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/lrtap/ExecutiveBody/35th\\_session/CLRTAP\\_Scientific\\_Assessment\\_Report\\_-\\_Final\\_20-5-2016.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/lrtap/ExecutiveBody/35th_session/CLRTAP_Scientific_Assessment_Report_-_Final_20-5-2016.pdf)



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Institutions: € 200 / US\$ 250 annually

