



THE LEARNING COMMUNITY OF THE
INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT SOCIETY
PRESENT THEIR JOINT WEBINAR

Narratives for engagement, learning and action-taking in support of environmental management

26th of October 2020 from 15:00-16:30 CEST

Background and focus

The necessary social distancing of these corona times made us realize the power of collective action-taking to deal with the various hazards that trigger our society and environment. The government and scientific messages per se are often not enough to promote behavioral change, especially under the need to maintain the economy and a desired life style. The communication about corona measures is not entirely different from the communication about sustainability science where, for example, integrated environmental management approaches are promoted to adapt to floods or other changes in the environmental system.

Aiming at more effective environmental communication, many researchers have experienced themselves the need to explore and adapt their efforts towards more narrative approaches (Cortes Arevalo et al., 2020). This is also the case of our [Integrated Assessment Society \(www.tias-web.info\)](http://www.tias-web.info), whose members try to understand and influence policy and decision-making processes for a better application of integrated environmental knowledge. In light of current research on learning (Suškevičs et al., 2019), we are curious on how narratives can stimulate engagement, learning and action-taking not only at individual but also at collective level (Chabay et al., 2019).

Narratives structured as written, oral, visual stories or a combination thereof seem to stimulate engagement and learning (Shanahan et al., 2019), which serve as an impetus for pro-environmental action-taking (Morris et al., 2019). A key challenge is therefore to explore ways for integrating narrative and learning theories and approaches in environmental management. We take this challenge as a point of departure to present and discuss **three questions** in this webinar:

- 1. Can stories make climate change communication more effective and how can this be evaluated?**
- 2. Under which conditions narratives influence human behavior (pro-environmental, pro-social, etc.)?**
- 3. How can narrative research contribute to theories on learning and which challenges are ahead?**

Proposed agenda

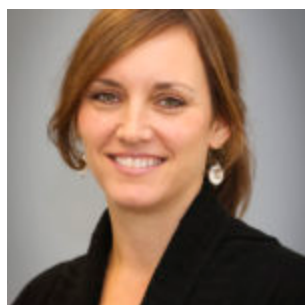
Background information about the **TIAS society, the speakers and the organizers** along with **supporting references** is provided on the next page:

15:00	Welcome and introductory remarks Larissa Koch and Juliette Cortes
15:15	Speakers
(10 min + 5min Q&A)	Can stories make climate change communication more effective and how can this be evaluated? Dr Brandi Morris
(10 min + 5min Q&A)	Under which conditions narratives influence human behavior (pro-environmental, pro-social, etc.)? Prof. Dr. Elizabeth Shanahan
15:45 (10 min)	Reflections How can narrative research contribute to theories on learning and which challenges are ahead? Prof. Dr. Ilan Chabay
16:00 (20 min)	Round table discussion Challenges and issues to move ahead
16:20 (10 min)	Wrap-up and close of the webinar

About the TIAS learning community

The Learning Community brings together those interested in learning for sustainable development. This community is a working group of The Integrated Assessment Society. The Learning Community is coordinated by: Joanne Vinke-de Kruijf (University of Twente, The Netherlands, contact person), Caroline Lumosi (University of Osnabrück, Germany), Romina Rodela (Södertorn University, Sweden) and Blane Harvey (McGill University, Canada). You can also email us on learningcommunity@tias-web.info, or find us on <http://www.tias-web.info/tias-activities/learning-community/> or find TIAS on (www.tias-web.info) Although participation in the webinar is free of charge, we very much appreciate your support to TIAS. Your membership fee and donations make it possible for TIAS to maintain operations and make webinars and other events and activities possible

About the presenters



Dr Brandi Morris is a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Management at Aarhus University in Denmark where she is working to understand how we might improve science communication through the use of stories. Her experimental research focuses on understanding the neurological and psychological mechanisms of influence, decision-making and risk perception in the context of climate change. Prior to embarking upon her PhD, Brandi worked in private sector agencies as a marketing communication strategist. Her integrated campaign work included print, digital and short-film campaigns to raise awareness and funds for well-known charitable brands.



Prof. Dr. Elizabeth Shanahan is professor for public policy at Montana State University. The overarching research question that guides her work is: What is the power of policy narratives in shaping governmental and individual decisions? In the context of flood hazard preparation, risk communication about pathogen spillover, and human-wildlife conflict. She uses the Narrative Policy Framework to investigate the power of specific mechanisms of narratives in communications about and in perceptions of risk. Most of her work is interdisciplinary, with a focus on the dynamics within the human system as well as the effects of feedbacks from and to the ecological system.



Prof. Dr. Ilan Chabay is Head of Strategic Science Initiatives and Programs and the knowledge, learning, and societal change research alliance at the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies. Over the past decade, his focus has been on understanding and facilitating processes of societal change toward just and equitable sustainable futures, including understanding scientific, local, and cultural knowledge systems for decision-making on common resources; characterizing the role in different cultural and socio-economic contexts of affective narratives of vision and identity in guiding and motivating collective behavior change; and the potential utility of narratives in modeling social dynamics.

About the organizers



Larissa Koch, MSc. Communication and Environmental Sciences, started her PhD in 2017 at Osnabrück University in resource management with Claudia Pahl-Wostl. She is broadly interested in local stakeholder collaboration and collaborative environmental governance approaches. In particular, she combines and integrates narrative and social network analysis to study the social structure and group dynamics of environmental governance networks; thereby paying attention to the question how do narratives influence the social structure of environmental governance networks and vice versa. Her case study is located in the region of Osnabrück focusing on the implementation of the EU Habitat directive to enhance and conserve local biodiversity.



Juliette Cortes, Post-doc researcher on participatory water management and science communication at the University of Twente and the Technical University of Delft. She carried out her MSc and PhD research supporting the online communication of participatory modelling and monitoring exercises to reduce flood risk management. She has further designed the websites www.rivercare.nl and www.all-risk-program.nl for the communication of Dutch research on integrated flood risk management approaches. Via interviews and focus groups, she has identified requirements for effective visual storylines that help to communicate the application of research to water professionals.

Supporting references

- Chabay, I., Koch, L., Martinez, G., Scholz, G., 2019. Influence of Narratives of Vision and Identity on Collective Behavior Change. *Sustainability* 11, 5680. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11205680>
- Cortes Arevalo, V.J., Verbrugge, L.N.H., Sools, A., Brugnach, M., Wolterink, R., van Denderen, R.P., Candel, J.H.J., Hulscher, S.J.M.H., 2020. Storylines for practice: a visual storytelling approach to strengthen the science-practice interface. *Sustain Sci.* <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-020-00793-y>
- Morris, B.S., Chrysochou, P., Christensen, J.D., Orquin, J.L., Barraza, J., Zak, P.J., Mitkidis, P., 2019. Stories vs. facts: triggering emotion and action-taking on climate change. *Climatic Change* 154, 19–36. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-019-02425-6>
- Shanahan, E.A., Reinhold, A.M., Raile, E.D., Poole, G.C., Ready, R.C., Izurieta, C., McEvoy, J., Bergmann, N.T., King, H., 2019. Characters matter: How narratives shape affective responses to risk communication. *PLoS ONE* 14, e0225968. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0225968>
- Suškevičs, M., Hahn, T., Rodela, R., 2019. Process and Contextual Factors Supporting Action-Oriented Learning: A Thematic Synthesis of Empirical Literature in Natural Resource Management. *Society & Natural Resources* 32, 731–750. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2019.1569287>