



TIAS Quarterly

August 2008

The newsletter of *The Integrated Assessment Society (TIAS)*
<http://www.tias-web.info>

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Courtesy of J. Newig

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 and use 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

Key Messages of two water related workshops on Integrated Management

This issue's feature documents key messages for policy makers and practitioners from two events on Integrated Water Management. The CAIWA conference, held in November 2007 in Basel, Switzerland, was the first international conference on adaptive and integrated water management. It brought together scientists, policy makers and practitioners to analyse progress in integrated management and highlight policy implications of scientific findings. The Integrating Water and Agricultural Management (IWAM) Workshop was held in March 2008 in Bath, UK. It was intended to increase levels of shared understanding or experience of the science required for integrated and adaptive management.

CAIWA conference on Adaptive and Integrated Water Management: Key Messages for Policy Makers and Practitioners. These messages below highlight policy and research implications of scientific findings on adaptive and integrated water resources management in light of climate change.

Collaboration and Knowledge

- Policy makers, practitioners and researchers must increase their cooperation efforts to effectively deal with the challenges of climate change.
- Differences in understanding present opportunities for increasing knowledge through collaboration and negotiation. This is also the case for differences in comprehension of good water management and good responses to climate change (economic, cultural, rights, etc).
- Uninformed action is as bad as no action. Means of arriving at knowledge-based decision making should be further exploited. But knowledge gaps should not be used as an excuse for delaying action!

Participation and Communication

- Involving society in the debate on solutions to climate change and its impacts is key.
- Mechanisms are needed for better connecting technical discourse with political dialogue at multiple administrative levels, between multiple sectors and at different time scales. Participatory instruments can help.
- Active involvement of stakeholders and the public is a means for more adaptive management styles.

Dealing with Uncertainty

- Policy making must combine long-term planning with short-term responsiveness to results of monitoring and evaluation to reduce uncertainties
- Probability based (defensive) risk management styles should be replaced by integrated management. This includes anticipated impacts so far without statistical evidence
- A certain amount of uncertainty will always persist. Here, a new attitude towards uncertainty should be promoted: "Learning to live with uncertainty and being comfortable with it".

Research Issues

- Research should be supported that helps us to understand more about organisational cultures and what will enable them to effectively handle the connectedness needed for sustainability and climate change adaptation.
- Research duplication should be avoided by better coordination among respective countries.
- New means of channelling donor money to developing countries need to be identified. Responsibility for good coordination of research funds should be increasingly moved towards the respective countries

Implementation Issues

- Well designed policies and laws are frequently in place but get blocked upon implementation. Implementation needs to be approached as a continuation of the political process. This requires more resources and political will



Dialogue matters: discussions during the conference helped predefine ideas and messages for policy makers.

- Water problems cannot be only solved inside the water sector. It is a precondition in water management to understand that water is more than a commodity.
- Foster a clear coupling of water policies with environmental and sector policies, at national and European levels (e.g. agriculture, tourism, energy; etc.).
- Climate change and adaptation is an issue for mainstreaming through all sectors as gender and participation are.
- Demonstration projects should be supported where the objective is to increase the adaptiveness of the water management system in an integrated manner (considering the socio-ecological environment, the technical infrastructure and the management style itself). Organisational adaptability is required.
- Existing administrative structures should be analysed with regard to their adaptive capacities and measures taken to increase adaptiveness of the system.

Further Opportunities

- The holistic concept of 'environmental flows' may be used as a management and communication tool: holistic approaches are required to protect human and nature water needs.
- The direct link of water management to energy must be further highlighted.
- Biomass production can have potential in developing countries for dealing with climate change from an energy perspective but is competing with food production.
- Reducing corruption stimulates proper water management and IWRM; transparency of water management still needs to be improved.

The article is an excerpt of the **NeWater Policy Brief No. 6** (www.newater.info). It summarises for policy makers and practitioners of water management, the key messages of the CAIWA Conference that took place in Basel in November 2007. The full NeWater Policy Brief is published as: D. Ridder and C. Pahl-Wostl. **Key messages of the Caiwa Conference 2007**. www.newater.info, Institut für Umweltsystemforschung - Universität Osnabrück, Barbarastr. 12, 49076 Osnabrück; Author contact: dridder@seecon.org

Integrating Water and Agricultural Management (IWAM) Workshop on 'Agriculture, Water Management and Climate Change', Bath (March 2008)

The key messages from this workshop highlight the need to move towards greater levels of shared understanding or experience of the science required for integrated and adaptive management.

IWAM is a new forum for scientists and policy makers in the UK involved in land-water science. The aims are to:

- Provide a think tank to critically assess the 'evidence base'
- Highlight the uncertainties and gaps in our knowledge
- Encourage interdisciplinary science, interactions between the social and natural science communities and integrated science between the science and policy communities

As part of IWAM a successful international workshop on 'Agriculture, Water Management and Climate Change' has been held in Bath, UK (March 2008). The event was attended by over 70 participants mainly from the UK with colleagues from a further six countries. The purpose of the workshop was to move towards greater levels of shared understanding or experience of the science required for integrated and adaptive management.

Key messages from the workshop are:

- We need to improve linkages between data-models-evidence-policy (under uncertainty).
- Economics is very important and not just the micro and the macro. Cost of change, resources and payments for services are also important.
- Sharing of knowledge through communication and education amongst stakeholders (including scientists, farmers and policy makers) is vital.
- We need to combine scientific credibility with practical usefulness.
- There is a need to look at ecosystems and our management of them more holistically.
- There are increasing calls for longer term outdoor observatories that meet societal and policy needs in support of the evidence base.
- We need simple yet robust solutions so that policy makers and farmers can act.

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IWAM is a Defra Water Coordination activity

URL:

<http://www.northwyke.bbsrc.ac.uk/IWAMwebsite/Index.htm>

Methodological review of recent Global Assessments: Workshop to be hosted by TIAS

In the past year four large worldwide assessments related to the environment in a broad context have been published. They include the *Global Environment Outlook* led by UNEP; the *IPCC Fourth Assessment Report on Climate Change*; the *International Assessment of Agricultural, Science and Technology for Development* (IAASTD or 'AgAssessment'), led by World Bank, FAO and UNEP; and the *OECD Environmental Outlook*.

On November 6th and 7th of this year, TIAS will host a workshop bringing together 20 practitioners/authors who represent the lead agencies involved in these assessments in order to undertake a methodological review of these processes. Based on recommendations that emerged from the TIAS-GWSP Global Assessments workshop in 2007, the organisers intend to use the latest experience of practitioners to explore how the business of developing, conducting and delivering integrated assessments has evolved. The results are intended to provide important insights into methodological innovation and will be published as a special journal issue. The workshop which will be held in Brussels is co-sponsored by the European Commission's Environment Directorate and the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency.

For more information, contact Caroline van Bers, TIAS Secretariat,
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TIAS Annual General Meeting 2008

The TIAS Annual General Meeting 2008 was held from June 24th to July 2nd as an online forum by CRC Research in Canada. In addition to presenting TIAS activities over the last year and discussing plans for the near future, the AGM brought some changes within the advisory board and the TIAS secretariat.

Dirk Günther of the German Federal Environment Agency was elected as the new secretary of TIAS. Prior to this, he worked with the Institute for Environmental System Research at the University of Osnabrück. Dirk has been a member of TIAS since 2006 and supported former TIAS secretary, Caroline van Bers, in outreach and promotion activities. Caroline van Bers continues on as treasurer and is responsible for memberships. Jan Klauck and Irene Brink were re-elected to the TIAS executive committee and will continue to support the various activities of TIAS such as the website, promotion, membership and accounts.

In addition, advisory board elections also brought some changes. TIAS warmly welcomes new board members including Carolien Kroeze of the Environmental Systems Analysis Group, Wageningen University in the Netherlands, Matt Hare of the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development, Dagmar Ridder of Seecon (Consulting) in Germany. Anne van der Veen of the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation in the Netherlands.

TIAS also welcomes back the advisory members: Bruce Beck, Hadi Dowlatabadi, Bill Easterling, Alex Haxeltine, Leen Hordijk, Anthony Jakeman, Paul Jeffrey, Laszlo Pinter, John Robinson, Jan Rotmans, John Schellnhuber, and Jeroen van der Sluijs. On behalf of the executive committee and members, we extend our sincere thanks to outgoing board members for their contribution to and support of TIAS over the past two to four years.

Further to this, meeting participants initiated a discussion on an issue that is fundamental to TIAS – that is the Society's role in bringing together a functioning IA community and whether or not IA is the best 'bonding agent' for this role (given its focus on methodology rather than on application and content). It was suggested that related themes such as 'managing change' and 'sustainability science' may be better vehicles for promoting active participation and sharing of tools and methods, as they may more vividly represent processes of change. However, the strength of IA is that it integrates formal modeling and qualitative interpretative strands of the social sciences

The implications of this discussion for TIAS activities were summarised as follows:

In promoting TIAS, it makes sense to re-emphasize IA roots in environment assessment

The society should continue to take advantage of the current array of global environmental assessments to work on the connection between pure methodology and practice.

For the journal, it makes sense to produce thematic issues only (as also proposed by the editor)

This discussion was by no means conclusive and will be encouraged to continue via an online forum to be announced to members in the autumn.

Further to this, plans for 2008-09 were approved. To summarise a few activities, a virtual '**guest-in-residence**' programme will be initiated to allow a series of rotating experts in specific IA fields to discuss topical issues with members. Furthermore, TIAS and the **SENSE Research School** (Socio-Economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment) will formally cooperate in their respective training activities beginning this year. Dr. Carolien Kroeze is the SENSE Director of Education, a long-time member of TIAS and now also a TIAS advisor. This year will also see a follow-up to the 2007 'Global Assessments' workshop, with a **Methodological Review of Recent Global Assessments** to take place 6-7 November in Brussels and involving authors and principals of the major assessments (more information on p. 3).

Progress in these and other TIAS activities will be reported in subsequent issues of the newsletter and on the website. The next Annual Meeting is proposed for February or March 2009. The secretariat will aim to organize a live meeting of members this time.

Courses

EASY ECO training – a call for cases and case trainers:

EASY ECO is also looking for evaluation and impact assessment projects, which can be lectured in one of the upcoming EASY-ECO training courses on sustainability evaluations. ECO-EASY is looking for cases and case trainers. Case trainers should have been leaders or core team members of the evaluation case, be familiar with utilized evaluation methods, various concepts of sustainable development and have training experience in English. For more information see <http://www.sustainability.at/easy/?k=traininginfo&s=callforcases>

9-16 November 2008. **Postgraduate International Course: Integrated Assessment of Global Environmental Change: Causes and responses.** Deadline for applications: 01 Sept. 2008. Wageningen, Netherlands. More information: <http://www.sense.nl/courses/264.html>

Events

16 June – 10 September 2008. **Expo Zaragoza 2008 Water Tribune**. Zaragoza, Spain.

The Thematic Weeks include presentation, evaluation and proposal of elements for the development of public policies, good practices, lessons learned, repeatable experiences and specific recommendations that will contribute to improving the current paradigm of water and sustainable development. The treasury of knowledge will be laid out in the Zaragoza Charter. More information: <http://www.expozaragoza2008.es/>

21–22 August 2008. **2nd International Sustainability Conference ISC 2008: Creating Values for Sustainable Development**. Basel / Switzerland. For more information see: <http://www.isc2008.ch>

1–5 September 2008. **Fifth Conference of the European Social Simulation Association**. Brescia /Italy. For more information see: <http://www.eco.unibs.it/essa>

1–4 September 2008. **13th World Water Congress – Global Changes and Water Resources: Confronting the expanding and diversifying pressures**. Montpellier /France. For more information see: <http://www.eco.unibs.it/essa>

9 Sept 2008. **Key challenges of environmental sociology to sustainable societies research**. International workshop on the occasion of the 1st World Forum of Sociology International Sociological Association Research Committee. 24 sessions on ‘Contributions of environmental sociology to sustainable societies’. Barcelona, Spain. For more information contact akgunilhan@gmail.com

7–12 September 2008. **IWA World Water Congress and Exhibition**. Austria Center, Vienna. More information: <http://www.iwa2008vienna.org/i8/>

3-7 November 2008. **Climate 2008: The world's CO₂-friendly Scientific Climate Conference. Online**. Hosted by Hamburg University of Applied Sciences. For more information: <http://www.klima2008.net/>

17-19 Nov. 2008. **Adaptive Integrated Water Resources Management under Uncertainty. Final Conference of the EU NeWater project**. Seville, Spain. <http://www.newater.info/everyone/3319>

10-12 March 2009. **Integrated Assessment of Agriculture and Sustainable Development: Setting the Agenda for Science and Policy**. Hosted by the EU funded SEAMLESS project. Egmond aan Zee, Netherlands. Deadline for abstracts 15 Oct 2008. More information: <http://www.conference-agsap.org>

New Publications

Greg L. Zacharias, Jean MacMillan, and Susan B. Van Hemel (Eds). 2008. **Behavioral Modeling and Simulation: From Individuals to Societies**. Committee on Organizational Modeling from Individuals to Societies, National Research Council.

J. Lahart, et al. **New Limits to Growth: Revive Malthusian Fears**. (Spread of Prosperity Brings Supply Woes; Slaking China's Thirst) The Wall Street Journal. March 24, 2008. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB120613138379155707.html>

Ad Langendijk. **'Survival Guide for Scientists'** presents practical how-to advice on essential topics such as the foundations for writing scientific texts, presenting data and research information, and the writing and reading of collegial e-mails <http://www.sciencesurvivalblog.com/about-the-book>

Downstream: Adaptive Management of Glen Canyon Dam and the Colorado River Ecosystem. Committee on Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research, National Research Council. Available from <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/9590.html>

Job openings

PhD positions available. Mansholt Graduate School of Social Sciences (MG3S), Wageningen, Netherlands. Positions available in i) food and food production; ii) health, lifestyles and livelihood; iii) environment and natural resources. For more information: <http://www.sls.wau.nl/mi/mgs/>

Post Doctoral Research position on the theme of Governance for Sustainable Innovations. Stockholm Environment Institute. Göteborg, Sweden. For more information contact mans.nilsson@sei.se or annika.rickne@dahmeninstitutet. Deadline for applications 30 August 2008.

ERC Starting Independent Researcher Grants (ERC Starting Grants) aim to support up-and-coming research leaders who are about to establish or consolidate a proper research team and to start conducting independent research in Europe. For more information: <http://erc.europa.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&topicID=65>

Jobs Portal for research vacancies in Europe http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index_en.cfm?11=13

Call for Submissions

TIAS Members are encouraged to submit feature articles and/or news items for future issues of TIAS Quarterly. Contact Caroline van Bers cvbers@usf.uos.de

The TIAS Quarterly

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