



# TIAS Quarterly

June/July 2009

The newsletter of *The Integrated Assessment Society (TIAS)*

<http://www.tias-web.info>

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Courtesy of D. Günther

## 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.

## News

### TIAS Annual Meeting In Brussels

The Annual General Meeting of The Integrated Assessment Society took place on April 20<sup>th</sup> this year. Generously hosted by our member, Peter de Smedt, the meeting took place in Brussels, but also virtually via our new TIAS online forum: [www.tias-web.info/AGM2009/](http://www.tias-web.info/AGM2009/). There were 8 members physically present and five who participated virtually.

In addition to the usual business of reviewing past activities and finances, passing motions, etc., the group devoted most of the available time to new ways of expanding our community, collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Among the ideas to be pursued this year are web-based seminars (webinars) and an internal forum for members to exchange information including CVs and new projects in development. This information could be used to provide expertise to TIAS 'clients' by those members who wish to share their expertise. The details of which can be found in the meeting minutes that have been circulated by email.

For more information, contact Caroline van Bers, [cvbers@usf.uos.de](mailto:cvbers@usf.uos.de)

### Providing Guidance for Global Integrated Assessments: Progress report

In April, TIAS held its second Experts Workshop in Brussels focusing on a *Methodological Review of Recent Global Assessments*<sup>1</sup>. The 25 participants brought with them a rich collection of experience and insights from their work with the various major assessments<sup>2</sup> in order to translate this experience into guidance and good practices for future integrated assessments related to global environmental sustainability.

These assessment reports vary in their issue focus, governance structure, stated purpose and methodologies, but they often face common challenges including the range of disciplinary and political perspectives that participants bring; the multi-scale nature of environmental issues; the level of uncertainties in our understanding of many of the issues; the need to communicate to a range of audiences; and the need to walk a fine line between being policy relevant and policy prescriptive. There are also challenges related to the coordination across assessments, given the linkages and overlaps among themes (e.g. climate change and water) and many researchers are involved in more than one assessment.

The workshops provided new meaning for classical do's and don'ts such as:

#### *Improving the Science in Assessments*

##### *Multi-scale linkages, uncertainties and integration*

- Give more attention to the design of assessment processes, including indicators of successful achievement of the objectives of the assessment, and evaluation based upon these indicators during the assessment process.
- Recognize the fundamental uncertainty of many parts of the systems being considered, particularly those related to human processes.

<sup>1</sup> First experts workshop held 6-7 November 2008 in Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> IPCC, UNEP's Global Environment Outlook, International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, World Water Development Report, Assessment of Assessments for the Marine Environment, OECD Environmental Outlook and The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity report (TEEB)

## Coordination of Assessments

*How many should there be, how should they be related and how best co-ordinated?*

- Design the assessment and its process with a conceptual framework
- Clearly define objectives, purpose, scope, audience, and boundaries
- Stress transparency and accountability in both the process and the product
- Exercise flexibility to respond to policy demands and scientific discoveries

## **A diversity of purpose: Assessments serving many audiences**

*Assessments have various purposes (awareness raising, consensus building, consolidating evidence, etc.), but they generally enable people to make informed decisions*

- Selection of stakeholders: determine at the outset whom to include and the role they will play to secure commitment and avoid disappointment, and impress upon commissioning institutes with the importance of outreach.
- Connecting with the policy process: Involve policy makers in the process; Create appropriate products for (multiple) audiences, and prepare a solid outreach plan.

## **Defining Salient and Credible Actions for a Sustainable Future**

*From problem definition to action*

- Include options for action for different time scales (short, medium and long term) Demonstrate the risks associated with inaction to make accountability more transparent.
- Link assessment to implementation (including impact monitoring).

These are just a few of the numerous recommendations or guidelines resulting from the workshop series. The results were extensive in their coverage of the various themes listed above. They are now being translated into a full set of guidelines and best practices that will initially be published as a journal article and a slide presentation for use by the practitioners themselves. These results will also be made available on the TIAS website by early autumn.

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For more information contact: Dr. Dale Rothman, Center for International Futures, University of Denver. [drothman@du.edu](mailto:drothman@du.edu)

## **Envisioning sustainability pathways: The application of Participatory Integrated Assessment**



On June 19, TIAS member John Robinson of the Institute for Resources, the Environment and Sustainability and Department of Geography at the University of British Columbia in Canada, presented the projects and initiatives in this field of

Participatory Integrated Assessment

that have been undertaken by him and his research colleagues in British Columbia. The colloquium was held at the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC) in Enschede, Netherlands and was co-hosted by TIAS.

Professor Robinson briefly traced the evolution of Participatory Integrated Assessment (PIA) since the 1990's, and outlined its role in significantly improving

our understanding of complex human-environment systems.

Like Integrated Assessment, PIA is a problem-based field, with a focus on interdisciplinary research. Fundamental to PIA, he stressed, is the assertion that the quality of decisions is improved by the direct involvement of stakeholders in the assessment process.

Professor Robinson described the application of participatory scenario-based backcasting approaches to sustainability research – approaches that blend quantitative and qualitative analysis – in order to explore alternative climate change futures. This was demonstrated by several projects undertaken in British Columbia involving backcasting techniques, 3D visualization tools, criteria and indicators, and multi-stakeholder participation. The success of these techniques in building capacity, designing integrated policy solutions, revealing values and attitudes, building awareness, promoting dialogue, and enhancing collaboration among various departments, disciplines, and stakeholders were the focus of the results presented. The full presentation can be downloaded from the TIAS website:

[http://www.tias.uos.de/documents/PIA\\_Robinson\\_Jun2009.pdf](http://www.tias.uos.de/documents/PIA_Robinson_Jun2009.pdf)

## **A methodological framework for participatory processes in resources management**

Planning processes in resources management require an array of sometimes complex approaches and methods. Most resources management authorities have considerable experience in and knowledge of engineering aspects as well as environmental impact assessment, but little experience in public and stakeholder participation. Despite the multitude of manuals and guidebooks available for the implementation of public and stakeholder participation, a generally applicable and consistent methodological basis for participatory water management in resources management is still missing.

In his doctoral research, Jörg Krywkow has developed a framework based on the following: a goal-oriented approach to participatory water management; a consistent methodological basis comprising methods, classes, tasks and levels of participation; a process-oriented framework for the management of a participatory process; and a generally applicable monitoring and evaluation approach. The context of and constraints on these processes are analyzed resulting in the application of methods that are appropriate for the achievement of both planning and management goals and the specific goals of the participatory process. Results from a European water management project, TRUST, demonstrate the applicability of this methodology. The publication is available from:

<http://www.seecon.org/data/090324draft4com.htm>

A web-based 'support tool' for designing and planning participatory processes in resources management based on this framework is an important next step in making the methodological framework an approach that can be easily implemented by scientists, managers and decision makers alike.

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Full Citation: Jörg Krywkow. 2009. A methodological framework for participatory processes in water resources Management. Department of Water Engineering and Management, University of Twente, Enschede. ISBN: 978-90-365-2835-1  
Contact : Jörg Krywkow , Seecon Deutschland GmbH, Osnabrück, Germany, [jkrywkow@seecon.org](mailto:jkrywkow@seecon.org)

## Events

**September 28 - 30, 2009:** The EU's integrated project NOMIRACLE invites to participate in sessions on Sept 29th on the theme "**Breaking through: Evolving Concepts, Issues and Policies in Risk Integration**" at the **conference on 'Multiple Stressors - Novel Methods for Integrated Risk Assessment' of in Aarhus (Denmark)**. Additional information on and links to the event can be found at:

<http://nomiracle.jrc.ec.europa.eu/default.aspx>

**October, 7- 9, 2009: "Modeling Spaces - Modifying Societies"** Conference organized by the graduate program Topology of Technology of the Darmstadt University of Technology. The conference will be held at the Fraunhofer IGD, Darmstadt (Germany).

This conference aims to increase our understanding of the power and limitations of models, their construction and effects in the sciences and in fields of practice. It explicitly aims at bringing scientists and practitioners from outside the academy together. To simplify discussion and the exchange of information and experience, plenary speeches will be complemented by smaller workshop-like sessions.

The conference is organized by the graduate program Topology of Technology of Darmstadt University of Technology and is financed by the German Research Foundation (DFG). The interdisciplinary graduate program focuses on the interdependencies of technology and space.

The final program will be advertised in the second half of July.

For further information please visit our website at:

<http://www.modelingspaces.com>.

**December 2-4, 2009: 'Earth System Governance: People, Places, and the Planet', 2009 Amsterdam Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change, Amsterdam (Netherlands).**

This conference will be the ninth event in the series of annual European Conferences on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change. This year's conference will also be the global launch event of the Earth System Governance Project, a new ten-year research programme under the auspices of the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP).

The conference is hosted jointly by the Institute for Environmental Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the Netherlands Research School for Socio-economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment (SENSE), in co-operation with their partner institutions.: the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Action on Transformation of Global Environmental Governance; GLOGOV.ORG—The Global Governance Project; the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan; the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency; the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences; the Stockholm Resilience Centre; and the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.ac2009.earthsystemgovernance.org/>

**January 5 – 8, 2010: Information systems and decision technologies for sustainable development. Forty-third Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS-43), Kauai (Hawaii)**

This mini-track emphasizes the significant research synergies that exist between information systems and environmental management for sustainable development from an organizational as well as a technical perspective. We maintain that collaboration and cross-fertilization between these domains can be mutually beneficial and may in fact present unique, timely and socially relevant 'real-world' research opportunities as well as viable public sources of empirical ecological information for interdisciplinary research and application.

Accordingly, the mini-track welcomes both research articles and practitioner reports exploring technical and organizational issues that pertain to the development, implementation, and deployment of environmental management information systems (EMIS) and environmental decision support systems (EDSS) in the context of sustainable development. Theoretically founded papers that illustrate the application of information systems and decision technologies technology in sustainable development are particularly welcomed.

Additional information can be found at:

[http://www.hicss.hawaii.edu/hicss\\_43/apahome43.htm](http://www.hicss.hawaii.edu/hicss_43/apahome43.htm)

**April 11 - 17, 2010: ICCCM10 - International Conference on Coastal Conservation and Management in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, Estoril, Cascais (Portugal)** held by the New University of Lisbon, the Cascais Municipality, the Cascais Energy Agency, the Cascais Atlantic Agency and the Organizing Committee.

Important dates:

1st June 2009- Pre-registration opening

25th September 2009- Abstract submission deadline

30th November 2009- Acceptance notification

15th January 2010 - End of reduced fee for registration

26th February 2010 - Submission of papers for publication at Journal of Coastal Conservation

Further information can be found at:

<http://icccm.dcea.fct.unl.pt>

Contact: [icccm@cascaisenergia.org](mailto:icccm@cascaisenergia.org)

## Job openings

**Adelphi Research is seeking a Social Scientist / Economist for a full time position (starting August / September 2009)** in Berlin for at least two years (with the option of extending the contract). He/she will work on methods to analyse the role of natural resources and environmental change for peace and security within two EU funded projects. One project aims at improving earth-observation based analytical methods for early warning and monitoring. In a second project we will assess environmental accidents and their security implications for the EU.

Applications are most welcome until July 20.

Contact: Alexander Carius

Executive Director / Geschäftsführer, Adelphi Research

Phone: +49 (30) 89 000 68 - 50

E-Mail: [carius@adelphi-research.de](mailto:carius@adelphi-research.de)

Web: [www.adelphi-research.de](http://www.adelphi-research.de)



**The University of Saskatchewan (Canada) is seeking a Tier I Canada Research Chair in the field of Water Policy ([http://www.chairs.gc.ca/web/home\\_e.asp](http://www.chairs.gc.ca/web/home_e.asp)).** The position is interdisciplinary and collaborative and intended to bridge key areas of institutional priority (environment, public policy and public health) as they pertain to freshwater resources. The successful candidate will provide leadership to one or more of the three initiative partners (School of Environment and Sustainability, Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, and School of Public Health) through world-class research and student training in any number of areas related to water policy. Given the ever-increasing importance of well-informed regional, national and international water policy development, the University of Saskatchewan is excited about this opportunity and encourage interested persons to either apply directly for this position or to distribute this advertisement to other potentially interested individuals or relevant organizations.

Contact: Dr. Karsten Liber, Acting Director  
School of Environment and Sustainability  
University of Saskatchewan  
Room 230, Law Building, 15 Campus Drive  
Saskatoon, SK, Canada S7N 5A6  
Tel: (306) 966-1499  
E-mail: [karsten.liber@usask.ca](mailto:karsten.liber@usask.ca)

**Parmesan, C. & Martens, P. (2009). Climate change, wildlife, and human health.** In: Sala, O.E., Meyerson, L.A. & Parmesan, C. (eds.) Biodiversity change and human health. Scope 69, Island Press, 245-266.

**Moreno, A. & Becken, S. (2009). A Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Methodology for Coastal Tourism.** Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 1747-7646, Volume 17, Issue 4, First published 2009, Pages 473 – 488

**Haase, D., Lamers, M. & Amelung, B. (2009). Heading into uncharted territory. Exploring the institutional robustness of self-regulation in the Antarctic tourism sector.** Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 1747-7646, Volume 17, Issue 4, First published 2009, Pages 411 – 430

**Wardekker, J.A., J.P. van der Sluijs, P.H.M. Janssen, P. Kloprogge, A.C. Petersen (2008). "Uncertainty Communication in Environmental Assessments: Views from the Dutch Science-Policy Interface".** Environmental Science & Policy, 11 (7), pp. 627-641. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2008.05.005>

**Van der Sluijs, J.P., A.C. Petersen, P.H.M. Janssen, J.S. Risbey, J.R. Ravetz (2008). "Exploring the quality of evidence for complex and contested policy decisions".** Environmental Research Letters, 3 (2), art.no. 024008. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/3/2/024008>

## New Publications

The new report **In Search of Shelter: Mapping the Effects of Climate Change on Displacement and Migration** released at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Bonn Meeting says climate change may cause vast human migrations on an order not previously experienced. It was written by CIESIN, the United Nations University, and CARE International.

The report:

- Draws on empirical evidence from a new survey of every continent
- Contains original maps created by CIESIN that pinpoint potential locations of critical displacements
- Aims to inform critical policy making via a comprehensive discussion of the linkages between environmental change, displacement, and migration.

For more information, go to [www.ciesin.columbia.edu](http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu) or read the report.

### **UNEP report: Integrated Assessment: Guidance for Mainstreaming Sustainability into Policymaking**

Recent international experience has demonstrated that Integrated Assessment (IA) can contribute to sustainable development outcomes by making assessment practice more integrated in terms of sustainability dimensions, more proactive and opportunity-oriented, less procedural and more an integral part of a policymaking process.

The purpose of this document is threefold: to document and share knowledge based on experiences, focused on practices to stimulate an integrated and proactive assessment approach; to enable the branching out of IA in order to stimulate and support wider application and address specific concerns such as climate change and biodiversity; and to support Integrated Policymaking for Sustainable Development, with a view to embedding sustainability within policymaking processes.

Contact: [husein.abaza@unep.ch](mailto:husein.abaza@unep.ch)

## 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\[at\]usf.uos.de](mailto:cvbers[at]usf.uos.de)

### **The TIAS Quarterly**

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**Editor:** Claudia Pahl-Wostl  
**Associate editor:** Caroline van Bers  
**Layout:** Dirk Günther

**Postal Address:**  
TIAS Secretariat  
c/o Institute of Environmental Systems Research (USF)  
Barbarastr 12  
University of Osnabrück  
D-49069 Osnabrück  
Germany  
Phone: +49 (0)541 - 969 3349  
E-Mail: [info\[at\]tias-web.info](mailto:info[at]tias-web.info)  
Internet: <http://www.tias-web.info/>

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