

The State of Digital IA Practice Webinar Series



Digital IA: What might Artificial Intelligence offer Impact Assessment? The IFC's MALENA

Webinar: Nov 3, 2022

This 90-min webinar is the third in a series on digital impact assessment organized by **IAIA** and **FothergillTC** which delves deeper into specific areas and examples of practice as identified and discussed in their late 2021 report on [The State of Digital IA Practice](#).

The webinar provides a deep dive into the development and application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in relation to the management and understanding of environmental and social risk related to its projects.

The focus of the webinar is a presentation by core IFC staff who have developed and are testing the deployment of the IFC's Machine Learning ESG Analyst (MALENA). **MALENA** uses machine learning, natural language processing and sentiment analysis to rapidly analyze text and extract and compile useful ESG metrics that can be used to assist in the management of environmental and social risks. The IFC presentation explains the basis of **MALENA** and its current beta testing phase, in particular exploring how the tool both utilizes existing ESIA content and acts to assist the ESIA and ESG Due Diligence process related to IFC's own and wider partner investments.

The final 20-30 minutes of the webinar are dedicated to a facilitated discussion with the speakers by Josh Fothergill (lead author of the **State of Digital IA Practice**), with opportunities for participants to pose questions.

MALENA
MACHINE LEARNING ESG ANALYST



AN INNOVATION OF

IFC International
Finance Corporation
WORLD BANK GROUP

Presenters

Chair: Josh Fothergill, Founder & Director – Fothergill Training & Consulting



Josh is the lead author of *The State of Digital IA Practice* launched in late 2021. He has regularly lead in-depth reviews into IA systems, including: the UK's Proportionate EIA Strategy (2017), Global EIA Accreditation Systems (2019), and Linking the Circular Economy & IA (2021). Josh founded Fothergill Training & Consulting to provide independent IA expertise and capacity building services. He previously spent a decade at the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA), co-authoring much of the UK's IA guidance over that period, and creating the award-winning EIA Quality Mark scheme.

Speakers:

**Atiyah Curmally, Principal Environmental Specialist
International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group**



Atiyah is a Principal Environmental Specialist at the International Finance Corporation where she leads the ESG Innovation and Data Science work program which most recently conceived, prototyped, and delivered an artificial intelligence solution to create analytical capacity at scale using natural language processing. Her responsibilities also include support to senior management on global sustainability issues for capital markets.

**Florian Skene, ESG Data & Innovation
International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group**



Florian is a Data Analyst at the International Finance Corporation. In his role with the ESG Innovation and Data Science team, Florian is the Product Owner of MALENA, the artificial intelligence solution to create analytical capacity for ESG at scale using natural language processing. He works on all data-related aspects and coordinates the development work to enhance the product. Previously Florian worked in credit risk management for a global investment bank and a technology startup. He holds degrees in mathematics and international relations from the University of Mannheim and Johns Hopkins University.

Blaise Sandwidi, ESG Officer – Data Scientist
International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group



Blaise is a Data Scientist with IFC’s ESG Global Advisory team. Blaise oversees the development of data science to support ESG risk modeling and data science for development. His past work experience includes positions with private sectors institutions focused on building machine learning platforms to enable better investment decisions. Blaise holds a Ph.D. and a Master’s degree in Finance from the University of Paris-Est, France.