

Name of Committee - Sections Coordinating Committee

Report to IAIA Board - April 2004

Name of Committee Chair

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Committee's general responsibilities

The Sections Coordinating Committee is different from other IAIA committees in that the committee is made up of section representatives (section conveners or someone designated by the section). The IAIA handbook states the objective of the Committee:

“The Sections Coordination Committee ensures that special interest areas are catered for within IAIA and that the full spectrum of environmental impact assessment issues can be widely discussed.”

Responsibilities of the Sections Coordination Committee are also stated in the handbook:

- provide a focus, within IAIA, to ensure that the academic, professional and practical interests of members are well served by the Organisation facilitate interaction between Sections, and identify issues in common
- fully support the process for input from Sections to the Board
- assist members wishing to establish new Sections and provide related recommendations to the Board for approval
- ensure that each annual IAIA Conference reflects the complete range of member interests, via Sections Coordination Committee representation on each conference task force
- promote development of best practice within Section interest areas
- promote the listserver mechanism to encourage active topical debate
- strengthen links between IAIA and other relevant organisations, as appropriate for the range of Section topics.

Section Representatives, as well as serving on the Sections Coordination Committee, have responsibilities within their respective Sections as follows:

- coordinate and manage Section membership and activities
- act as listserver host if the Section has that facility
- prepare input to Sections Coordination Committee in full consultation with other members of the individual Section.

Sections Committee action plan for 2003-04

Following the committee meeting in Marakesh an action plan was developed for 2003-4 as reported to the Board in October 2003.

- Develop an up-to-date list of sections and their conveners. The current information is attached.
- Encourage job-sharing of section convener to spread workload and maintain continuity of leadership over time - 4 out of 11 have co-conveners.
- Consider role of sections in the conference programme - see also issues below. Both Bill Ross and myself contacted sections about the conference and possible integrating sessions.
- Review ways section communicate (e-mail is the preferred method of communication) -see issue on communication below.
- Consolidate with existing sections rather than encourage any new ones - no new sections at this point.

Issues for the IAIA Sections Committee to address in Vancouver

The role of sections in implementing projects being implemented by the Board - or other members of IAIA.

Naturally, the sections are often approached for input to IAIA projects. However, sections are usually struggling to find volunteers for their own projects and often the onus falls on the section conveners to get things done. There appears to be a tension between letting sections know there is an IAIA project going on and seeking the participation of section members, and assuming that sections are able to make an input.

The basic organisational issues appears to be - let the sections know about a project but do not assume section input without consultation. Basically, all IAIA projects should be planned and implemented on the basis of available volunteers - sections should not be regarded as the automatic source of volunteers.

Support for the Glossary project was a specific issue raised by two sections.

The role of sections in organising conference streams

Sections have played an important role in organising streams at conferences. However, conference organising can fall on section conveners by default, preparing themes and workshop proposals, vetting abstracts, etc. Coordination and integration between streams remains a perennial issue.

As with IAIA projects, conference programme organisers should not assume that section conveners will also be their conference stream organisers. Instead, sections should be involved in identifying leaders of a conference stream in their topic area. Ideally this should be done for the next year at, or soon after, the current conference. Any input to conference organisation should be acknowledged in the Programme.

The number of sections

Consolidation of sections was our strategy in 03/04. Current sections are a mix of assessment types, eg SIA, SEA and topics or themes, eg, Disasters and Conflicts, and Trade Related Policies. Is this mix appropriate? Are there opportunities to bring some sections together or to create new sections?

The role of listservers

Sections communicate mainly via email, with conveners maintaining a list of interested people. Many in IAIA will not be on those lists. On the other hand, few members appear to use the listservers so these may not be the best alternative. Other possibilities include the IAIA website, newsletter and Journal. How can we improve/expand communication within sections?

Access to outputs from section projects

SIA section members noted two outputs from SIA section projects - key citations and SIA bibliography - were placed on the members only section of the IAIA website. On checking, I see that other key citations, the new glossary, etc are also there. Is restricted access what sections envisage for their outputs? The committee should address this question as a broad policy issue in relation to section outputs.

Action plan for 2004-5

To develop at the committee meeting.

IAIA Sections - summary of sections and strategies, April 2004
 (Table with some updates from mid '03 report)

IAIA Section	Convener and contact info.	Objectives	Strategies/activities
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Thomas Fischer	Promote strategic environment assessment Support practitioners and researchers Provide help through SEA listserv Briefly review your action plan or project background: Stimulate debates on SEA listserv Reply to external and internal requests Support action on SEA	Suggested a special edition of 'European Environment' on SEA (will appear in 2004); call for papers on SEA listserv. Action on a SEA training course for China with (together with Elvis Au). Providing regular SEA related articles in IAIA newsletter.
Indigenous Peoples	Bob Tai and Amy Emerhi	To build the IP section by encouraging and organising participation by IP in IAIA'04 and developing an IP programme to make Vancouver 04 a great success with IPS integrated throughout. To share knowledge and give assistance where possible.	Organise joint sessions with the SIA section to and support IP participation throughout IAIA'04. Develop the IP data base including IAIA'04 participants who want to be involved in IP Section. Complete demographic impact assessment. Develop TOR for the section committee and a structured process for further meetings
Social Impact Assessment	James Baines		SIA Guidelines project (Theo Hacking, Jo Ann Beckwith) to develop a data base of guidelines documents. SIA bibliography (Frank Vanclay) now on line at IAIA website. IAIA'04 coordinator for SIA stream (Jose Manual Palma-Oliveira). Initiative with IP stream for IAIA'04. SIA key citations update (Rabel Burdge) completed October '04.
Environmental Legislation, Institutions, Policies and Impact Assessment	José-Luis Salazar Nightingale Rukuba-Ngaiza	Provide a forum for: - improving the development & implementation of environmental legislation on IA - the role of environmental information in enforcement of environmental laws - capacity building and institutional strengthening for the judiciary and enforcement officers in playing an integral role in implementing the EA process.	Devise mechanisms for improving capacity in the implementation of EIA legislation, strengthen or assist relevant institutions to work with existing capacity to efficiently respond to environmental information requests. Undertake activities (like roundtables, seminars etc) for IAIA' 04

Biodiversity	Helen Byron, UK	<i>No contact - need to check in Vancouver if this section still functions</i>	
Environmental Management Systems	Debra Zanewich	Better define the EMS Section is to ensure current IAIA membership interests are being addressed. Capitalise on growing interest to build a sustainable core team so that the section can begin actively contributing within the global forum. Become more active in promoting the use and contributions of EMS within impact assessment. Encourage learning from practical applications of EMS within IA with ongoing discussions on research findings, theoretical approaches, etc.	Establish a list server to promote email discussion Develop a goal and strategy for this Section in consultation with interested IAIA members Build a core team for the EMS section Have a stronger presence at IAIA '04 by promoting formal conference sessions
Integrated Assessment of Trade-Related Policies	Clive George Bernice Goldsmith	To promote the adoption of impact assessment of trade-related policies and to further good practice within the context of IAIA.	<u>2003-4</u> Collaboration with Biodiversity Section on Workshop at IAIA04. Preparation of a Preliminary Discussion paper: Assessing the Biodiversity Impacts of Trade: Principles and Practice. Discussion paper is posted on IAIA Conference Web page. <u>Plans for 2004-5</u> Continue working with the Biodiversity/Ecology section on the Principles and Practice Plan to approach the Public Participation section to discuss collaborating on sessions for IAIA'05. Support and collaboration on the Glossary project.
Health Impact Assessment	Lea den Broeder Suphakij Nuntavorakarn	Further HIA, by stimulating learning and mutual exchange of experiences and knowledge. Work towards integration between HIA and other types of impact assessment.	Development of international principles of HIA (2003-2004) Subgroup on HIA evaluation (starting 2003, ongoing) Upgrading health listserv Integration - joint session with SIA (IAIA 04) . Session on integrative approaches (IAIA 04) Amendments to IAIA material and website to incorporate HIA (2003-2004) . Preconference HIA training for EIA / SEA practitioners (IAIA 04)

Urban Impact Assessment	Markus Eggenberger		
Disasters and Conflict	Charles Kelly	<p>Promote the use of IA in disasters and conflicts. The Disaster Management section hopes to evolve into a Disasters, Conflict and Other Crises section.</p> <p>While disasters in their various forms have not received much attention in IAIA, disasters do cause impact, so there should be some home in IAIA for these events..</p>	<p><u>2003-4</u> Prepare a short piece for the quarterly newsletter Efforts to get papers presented at the IAIA 03 meeting were frustrated by a lack of interest.</p> <p><u>2004-5</u> To be discussed at IAIA 04. Likely key topic will be how to increase interest in disasters and conflicts among "developmental" impact assessment community.</p>
Public Participation	Desmond Connor	<p>Stimulating networking amongst PP professionals, promoting best practices in PP, stimulating NGO participation and increasing individual active participation at annual conferences</p>	<p>Lead the Public Participation section for Vancouver. Draft a "Best Practices in PP" outline to circulate to Marrakech conference participants then to IAIA section members et al. The revised version will be reviewed at the Van. conference. Also recommended a special issue of the journal</p>