

Section Coordination Committee:

Midterm report to IAIA Board, October 2009

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Overview:

This document serves as the mid-term feedback report from the sections to the IAIA Board. From this report it is clear that there are some sections that are very active, whilst others are more isolated and engage in less activity. The challenges that the sections face have also been highlighted. Some sections did not provide feedback on their activities, and it will be noted as such in the report. The principle is that when somebody does not reply to a request, in effect, it is a reply. There are multiple possible reasons for not replying – varying from a sense of being over-whelmed, having nothing to say, unimportant issues, to a person simply did not having the time or the priority being to low. It is requested that no judgement should be made about the lack of feedback, but that this should be noted as sections under pressure that struggle to meet their obligations, and therefore need some support. One of the requests to the IAIA Board posted at the end of this report is a request for an opportunity for sections to come together on the day prior to the conference. This would give sections an opportunity to plan together, to learn from each other and to form their own community, something more real than just a virtual community. Although it is very likely that a number of section chairs will not be able to attend such an event, it would be a useful exercise for those that can attend. It is time for sections to do some role-clarifcation and clearly define their roles and responsibilities.

Activities at 2009 Conference:

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

No feedback received

Biodiversity & Ecology

- Pre-conference training course on 'Re-tooling impact assessment for biodiversity'.
- Organised eight conference sessions in total on a range of biodiversity-related topics.
- Collaborated with Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Corporate Stewardship and Risk Management, and SIA sections for conducting joint sessions at the IAIA'09
- Collaborated with Integrated Assessment of Trade Related Policies Section to co-run a session on trade in natural products.
- Continued collaboration between Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and IAIA to develop a formal partnership in order to mobilise biodiversity data from around the world for improved IA practice. Organized a workshop on 'Accessing Biodiversity Information from Local to Global: Using GBIF' to facilitate collection of biodiversity data in formats which make them accessible and re-usable.
- Through its work on the Capacity Building in Biodiversity and Impact Assessment (CBBIA) project, launched the publication of the southern Africa guidance document on biodiversity, impact assessment and decision-making.

Corporate Stewardship & Risk Management

- Two concurrent sessions
- Section Meeting

Disasters & Conflicts

- Sponsored two sessions

Environmental Law, Policies & Practice

- No feedback received

Health Impact Assessment

- Two theme forums and one session addressing specifically health and wellbeing:
 - Safeguarding Community Well-Being and Health
 - HIA in Development Projects
 - Practical Issues in Health Impact Assessment
- Section meeting with the election of the new co-chair
- WHO and IAIA have a memorandum of understanding. The President and the CEO of IAIA meet with the HIA section chair and WHO officer each year to discuss progress.
- Facilitated a special feedback session on draft WHO reference guide "Health Impact Assessment in Development Planning" during the IAIA2009 conference in Ghana

Integrated Assessment of Trade Related Policies

- Section meeting,
- Poster session (Canada process),
- Provide factsheet on IATRP and literature to section meeting attendees.

Indigenous Peoples

- No feedback received

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- No feedback received

Public Participation

- No feedback received

Social Impact Assessment

- Workshop to review the International Guidelines for SIA
- Theme forum: Supply Chains: The Missing Linkages in Impact Assessment Practice
- Paper session: Impact Assessment and Public Participation in Poor Communities
- Paper session: SIA and Sustainable Development
- Panel: Communities, Consultants and Companies: Emerging SIA Best Practice in the Extractive Industry
- Paper Session: The Business Case for SIA

Students and Early Professionals

Coordination, delivery and collection of feedback on SEP activities, including the conference fee waiver scheme, the training course fee waiver scheme and the mentoring and tutoring programme.

Planned activities for 2010 Conference:

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

No feedback received

Biodiversity & Ecology

- Pre-conference training course on 'Mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services in impact assessment for transitioning to green economy'.
- Participation by Section members in a pre-conference training course on increasing tangibility of SEA through valuation of ecosystem services.

- Meetings with CBD and GBIF (amongst others) to ensure progress on proposed and ongoing projects for the coming year (2010-2011).
- Submission of seven conference sessions proposals in total submitted either as section-specific topics or as part of industry/ agriculture themes and/ or as joint sessions with SIA Section, Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries Section.
- Launch of new book entitled "Biodiversity in Environmental Assessment: Enhancing Ecosystem Services for Human Well-Being" planned during the conference. The book is authored by Section members and published by Cambridge University Press.

Corporate Stewardship & Risk Management

- None at this time

Disasters & Conflicts

- Proposed a forum event, are organizing a side event specifically on disaster/conflict impact assessment

Environmental Law, Policies & Practice

- No feedback received

Health Impact Assessment

- Working with WHO to prepare input to conference.
- Meeting between the President and the CEO of IAIA with the HIA section chair and WHO officer to discuss progress on the MoU.

Integrated Assessment of Trade Related Policies

None at this time

Indigenous Peoples

- No feedback received

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- No feedback received

Public Participation

- No feedback received

Social Impact Assessment

- Follow up workshop on the International Guidelines for SIA
- Two day SIA training course on: 'Realising the full potential of SIA'

Students and Early Professionals

- Carry out and improve the existing initiatives, to further develop networking/mentoring and professional integration activities.

Ongoing Projects:

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

No feedback received

Biodiversity & Ecology

- Significant inputs to IAIA's Wiki.
- Finalization of workshop proceedings of Beijing meeting (IPIECA, ICMM, CNOOC).
- Working on glossary and key citations for the Section.
- Alerting members to interesting papers, articles, etc. through the ListServ.
- Continued field testing of guidance manuals developed for promoting biodiversity inclusive impact assessment in South Asia and South Africa.
- The Section members have contributed papers to the IAPA journal.

Corporate Stewardship & Risk Management

- CSR listserv, contributions to the terminology on the IAIA website
- Updating the Section description

Disasters & Conflicts

- None

Environmental Law, Policies & Practice

- No feedback received

Health Impact Assessment

- During 2008/2009 - Issued editions of HIA quarterly
- HIA section co-ordinated IAIA-wide peer review of draft WHO reference guide "Health Impact Assessment in Development Lending"
- HIA section members were invited to attend the meeting Strategic Environmental Assessment and Health, from the 8th -9th June 2009 at WHO-Rome offices with regard to drafting WHO guidance. The meeting was chaired by IAIA member Alan Bond. IAIA members gave the following presentations:
 - Introduction to the Workshop by WHO (M Martuzzi, WHO);
 - Status of SEA Regulations: SEA Protocol (N Bonvoisin UNECE);
 - WHO Guidance on health in SEA (M Martuzzi, J Nowacki, WHO);
 - Health in SEA: Views from IAIA (B Cave, UK -participated remotely); and
 - National and sectoral experiences on Health inclusive SEA by R Verheem (Netherlands), M Rosario (Portugal), O Mekel (Germany) and B Cave (UK).
- HIA section chair provided detailed comment on draft document, "Equality in HIA: Strategic issues for WHO" to World Health Organization, Regional Office for Europe [Venice] as part of follow up work to the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health.

Integrated Assessment of Trade Related Policies

None at this time

Indigenous Peoples

- No feedback received

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- No feedback received

Public Participation

- No feedback received

Social Impact Assessment

- Key SIA citations were revised, distributed amongst section members and uploaded on the IAIA website
- Wiki content on SIA was prepared and is now available on the IAIA website
- Workshops on “International Guidelines for SIA” were held in Ghana and will be followed up in Geneva. Workshops conducted on behalf of IAIA South Africa to investigate regional guidelines informed the Ghana workshop, and the iterative process will continue.

Students and Early Professionals

- Study of effectiveness of SEP activities in retaining and attracting members to the IAIA;
- Update of university database;
- Update of mentor database;
- Encourage students to publish in the newsletter’s Impact Assessment research corner.

New Projects:

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

No feedback received

Biodiversity & Ecology

- Promoted collaboration between IAIA and IPIECA for organising the workshop on ‘Biodiversity, impact assessment and the extractive industries’ held in Beijing, China during 23-24th March 2009. The Co chairs of the Section assisted in developing the workshop programme, raised funding support for participation of four section members at the workshop, and prepared the workshop proceedings with inputs from IPIECA, ICMM and CNOOC.
- Collaborating with SIA section on preparing a training course on integrating assessment of social and biodiversity impacts, using livelihoods as the ‘glue’ linking these fields. Trial run of 1-day course at IAIA’s09.
- The following three core projects have been proposed by the section as a follow up to the decisions taken at the Section meeting at IAIA’09
 - Best practicable approaches to biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment
 - Guidance on addressing the effects of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem services in impact assessment; and
 - Capacity building in biodiversity and impact assessment.
- These projects are currently under review by CBD and other potential funding agencies in order to seek financial support for their implementation.

Corporate Stewardship & Risk Management

- Contributed to the IAIA Wiki

Disasters & Conflicts

- None

Environmental Law, Policies & Practice

- No feedback received

Health Impact Assessment

- Preparing a proposal for a side event on SEA and health at the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, Parma, Italy, 2010. In discussion with WHO Rome and with IAIA affiliate in Italy
- Increasing visibility of IAIA among HIA and other health practitioners; also through collaboration with branches and board. For example IAIA material will be distributed in the package for the HIA 09 Conference in Rotterdam.

Integrated Assessment of Trade Related Policies

- Provided information for IATRP for the IAIA Wiki

Indigenous Peoples

- No feedback received

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- No feedback received

Public Participation

- No feedback received

Social Impact Assessment

- None

Students and Early Professionals

- Introduce a student best paper competition

Challenges to the section:

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

No feedback received

Biodiversity & Ecology

- Apathy of Section members: the Section is essentially 'driven' by a core group of five people, with some support from a few others.
- The co-chairs of the Section do not have the financial means to continue 'driving' the Section unassisted; this factor threatens to undermine co-ordination and 'energizing' of the Section.

Corporate Stewardship & Risk Management

- Participation from members of the Section, Retiring Chair (who was requested to continue by those who attended the Section Meeting) with no replacement.

Disasters & Conflicts

- Low membership and low recognition by general IAIA membership

Environmental Law, Policies & Practice

- No feedback received

Health Impact Assessment

- Dip in activity of section members between conferences
- Proliferation of conferences – two major HIA conferences each year

- Need to increase membership from other continents
- Need to increase support for young and emerging professionals
- Absence of projects and resources to maintain activity between conferences
- Poor performance of, and restricted access to, the IAIA listserv – there are other listservs that carry far more traffic and which are better sources of info/discussion

Integrated Assessment of Trade Related Policies

- Lack of participation from members that have expressed interests in Section and need for new section co-coordinator

Indigenous Peoples

- No feedback received

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- No feedback received

Public Participation

- No feedback received

Social Impact Assessment

- Limited participation from section members – most activities are driven by a core group of people.

Students and Early Professionals

- Students are transient and the SEP section is young. Consequently, there is little cohesion and commitment to implementing activities. This year there is no SEP representative on the board; this is likely to further affect the overall SEP strategy, particularly in terms of the implementation of SEP activities and the growth of SEPs as a group. The SEP representative on the board is key for the SEP section and for its existing and future members, as it provides continuity and the medium- and long-term commitment to the achievement of SEP goals and delivery of activities. Although this ensures consistency with the representativity of the other sections on the board, it does not consider the different nature of the group, as the SEP section does not represent an Impact Assessment area/theme. Other challenges include: clarification of the duties between the SEP chair and the SEP representative on the board, in terms of coordinating and managing SEP activities (this is the first time that the two are distinguished). With the retiring SEP representative on the board, there's a need to find a SEP chair (suggestions are already with HQ).

Relationship with other sections:

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

- No feedback received

Biodiversity & Ecology

- Collaborating with SEA, Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, SIA and Corporate Stewardship and Risk Management Sections on issues of mutual interest.

Corporate Stewardship & Risk Management

- Biodiversity and CSR focused on common themes at IAIA '09 (e.g., Business and Biodiversity Offsets)

Disasters & Conflicts

- None

Environmental Law, Policies & Practice

- No feedback received

Health Impact Assessment

- Preliminary links with SEA section members

Integrated Assessment of Trade Related Policies

- IATRP has been approached for possible joint session on agriculture, fisheries and forestry, and biodiversity in Geneva IAIA 2010 but IATRP section coordinator will not be at conference and members of section are not actively participating.

Indigenous Peoples

- No feedback received

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- No feedback received

Public Participation

- No feedback received

Social Impact Assessment

- None, there is an increasing interest amongst IAIA members in the area of SIA

Students and Early Professionals

- As SEPs are likely to be future members of the IAIA and of many of IAIA's sections, a strong co-ordination and better support is needed from all its sections to ensure that SEP activities are successful (particularly the mentoring programme) and that SEPs remain interested in the IAIA (e.g. through its sections) and renew their memberships, after they've finished their studies.

Requests to the board:**General:**

- The Sections would like to maintain visibility at the annual conference, and would like to request section tables at the meet and greet function.
- The Sections would like to have a workshop on the general functions of the sections before the conference in Geneva. An afternoon meeting has been requested on the programme. This will assist the sections with face-to-face planning. It is also an ideal opportunity to re-assess the roles, responsibilities and activities of sections, as it would be much more creative to do so face-to-face when everybody is focussed on a mutual outcome than via e-mail.
- The sections would like to know the status of the requests for new sections – with special reference to the proposed "Oil and Gas" section.
- The sections would like to know the status of an IAIA-web-based section chair forum, as it is not fair to use the resources graciously provided by Ben Cave indefinitely.
- The sections would like clarification on our role in the development of the Geneva Conference Programme. We would appreciate written feedback via our section chair forum from the organising committee.

Specific sections:

- The SEP section is the only section within the IAIA that does not group people based on impact assessment area of interests. Members of the SEP are students, people that are new or relatively new to the IAIA or to Impact Assessment. The request to the board is that during the conference, the SEP section meeting is NOT scheduled at the same time of all other section meetings. This is to allow SEPs to attend a section of their interest, and meet and network with IAIA members that share their interest.
- The HIA section would like to change their name to the Health Section.

