

IAIA Biodiversity Section: Minutes of Section meeting (Weds 24 May 2006, Stavanger)

Present: Susie Brownlie, Helen Byron, Andrew Dodd, Lennart Folkesson, Usman Iftikaar, Verina Ingram, Arend Kolhoff, Ross Marshall (in part), Vinod Mathur, Lisa Palframan, Asha Rajvanshi, Bernt Rydgren, Ahmad Saeed, Roel Sloopweg, and Jo Treweek.

1. IAIA07, Korea

On behalf of the IAIA board Ross Marshall (RM) provided an introduction to IAIA07 – the planned themes for which are: growth, conservation, responsibility, plus a pan-Asian focus. RM requested input from the Section on what biodiversity elements might be included within these 4 themes, plus names of relevant contacts to work with the conference organisers asap. See section 5 below.

2. Summary of actions undertaken over the last year

- 2.1 Organised *Biodiversity sessions at IAIA Prague SEA conference* – work lead by Jo Treweek (JT). Positive feedback received on sessions. Presentations available from JT on request.
- 2.2 *CBBIA project* – JT gave a summary of the project which is due to end in December 2006. Outputs from the project available to date: c20 small grant reports, 2 situation assessment reports, training resource materials. Project website to be established as part of the Biodiversity section part of the revamped IAIA website (see further below) – the IAIA website revamp is imminent. Arend Kolhoff (AK) asked about the future of the project. JT stated that the hope is to have a second phase of the project. The precise direction of this will depend on the donor although JT's aim would be to build on the elements of the current project, probably with an increasing emphasis on strategic level assessment and bringing the biodiversity planning community closer to the impact assessment community. The intention would be for the small grants element of the programme to continue – although the call for applications may be made more focussed on specific themes eg testing CBD IA guidance, a focus on biodiversity hotspots. Overall JT suggested that priorities for a second phase of the project would be:
 - Testing and embedding the guidance produced during phase 1
 - Approaches for valuation of ecosystem services and application of these in practice
 - “leadership” for biodiversity in IA as a mechanism for high level engagement
- 2.3 *Biodiversity in Impact Assessment publication* for IAIA Principles and Practices Series finalised and translated into French and Spanish. All 3 versions available on IAIA website.
- 2.4 *Journal of Environmental Assessment Policy and Management (JEAPM) special edition on SEA and biodiversity* published June 2005
- 2.5 *List of key biodiversity/ecological impact assessment terms for IAIA glossary* – compiled and submitted for inclusion in glossary. Thanks to Lisa Palframan for leading on this.
- 2.6 *Further input to continued development of CBD guidelines* for incorporation of biodiversity in EIA and SEA (CBD commissioned the Netherlands EIA Commission to develop these guidelines)
- 2.7 *Section position paper on CBD guidelines* – prepared and circulated. Thanks to Verina Ingram for leading on this.
- 2.8 Organised *B&E stream at IAIA2006* – this year, following a suggestion made at last years Section meeting, support for reviewing biodiversity related abstracts provided to section chair (HB) by a number of section members. HB thought that this system had worked well and suggested that the same approach be adopted for future conferences. While it was positive that there were such a large number of biodiversity related concurrent sessions (10 plus the joint session with the AFF section), the conference programming

resulted in clashes between the biodiversity sessions which reduced the audiences. The majority view was that the Theme Forums were successful at promoting integration/collaboration between different sections. See below for suggestions for IAIA07, building on the experience of IAIA06

2.9 *B&E listserv* – HB reported that she has received good feedback on the items posted to the listserv. Although it is disappointing that more people do not post items to the listserv as a whole. The overall between the B&E and CBBIA listservs was discussed and it was agreed that the 2 listservs be merged into a single listserv which could be called the “IAIA Biodiversity listserv”

3. **Section Chair**

- HB reported the level of interest in the Section chair role which she received following her call on the B&E listserv
- It was then proposed and unanimously agreed that Asha Rajvanshi (AR) and Verina Ingram (VI) act as the new co-chairs of the Section. This agreement will be put to the B&E listserv for endorsement following the conference [now done].
- AR and VI to review the section tasks and agree how to divide these between them; also to discuss handover arrangements with HB
- AR and VI will be supported in their role by the section core group (currently Andrea Athanas, HB, Peter Croal, Nick King, AK, David Le Maitre, Lisa Palframan, Dave Pritchard, Roel Slootweg, and JT. It was proposed and agreed that Susie Brownlie and Vinod Mathur be added to the core group. HB also suggested that the new co-chairs might consider putting out a call on the listserv to see if there are further people interested in joining the core group

4. **Summary of actions planned for coming year**

4.1 *Update of Action Programme for biodiversity in impact assessment* – phase II of this covered 2004-2006 and needs revision. The CBBIA project has taken some of the activities forward. It was agreed to revise the Action Programme with input from the Section. Possible activities could include: analysing how the OECD DAC SEA guidelines address biodiversity issues, possible Section guidance on biodiversity and PRSPs, work on climate change and biodiversity and potential role of IA in analysing/addressing this, biodiversity offsets/trade-offs, genetically modified organisms

4.2 *Organise B&E stream at IAIA2007 annual conference* – this issue was discussed in some detail – see below.

4.3 *Continued input into the IAIA CBBIA project* – to ensure continuity HB to continue as section representative on the CBBIA project Steering Committee for the duration of the current phase of the project (to December 2006). If funding is obtained for a second phase of the project, this arrangement to be reconsidered.

4.4 *Update position paper on CBD guidelines* – and encourage section members to promote this

4.5 *Input to Biodiversity section part of revised IAIA website* – it was agreed that the CBBIA website should be part of the Biodiversity Section of the website. HB to prepare an initial proposal for the content of this for AR/VI and JT to take forward.

4.6 *Working with Biodiversity related conventions* – the section currently has good links with CBD and Ramsar and has had some links with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). It was agreed that the new section co-chairs would aim to consolidate the links with these conventions including seeking to strengthen the current Section Conventions contact points network and also consider whether it would be worth establishing links with other conventions.

4.7 *Biodiversity and trade principles* – work on this has previously been undertaken by the Biodiversity and Trade sections. JT to establish the current position on this and lead the Biodiversity Section input

5. Input to planning IAIA07

Suggestions for IAIA07 generally:

- Cap the number of sessions for each Section – promote more cross-Section sessions, opportunities for discussion and networking
- Keep presentations shorter (along model used for biodiversity sessions at the Prague conference) to increase the time for discussion
- Strong plea for more emphasis generally on the outcomes of individual sessions being presented/feed into plenary sessions
- Suggested keynote/plenary speakers – on the topic of environmental growth
 - Jared Diamond – author of “Collapse” which examines examples of the collapse of civilizations due to environmental over-exploitation
 - Parthadas Gupta (economist) – wrote a review of Jared Diamond’s book in a recent issue of “the environmentalist”
 - These 2 speakers have different perspectives and so it would be interesting to invite them both to give different viewpoints

Biodiversity sessions in IAIA07:

- IAIA06 had a large number of concurrent sessions on biodiversity related issues
- At IAIA07 the biodiversity section would like to try a different approach and seek to have papers on biodiversity integrated into other streams within the conference e.g. streams on growth, conservation, responsibility, EIA/SEA methodologies, sectoral development e.g. infrastructure, etc
- In addition, the biodiversity section would plan to organize 1-2 sessions with a biodiversity specific focus – suggested topics for these are “biodiversity offsets” and “thresholds, acceptable limits for change”. The intention is that these sessions be largely devoted to discussion

HB subsequently provided the conference organisers with a brief note of the above ideas for IAIA07 plus Biodiversity Section contacts at the Sections Coordinating Committee (SCC) meeting. HB also mentioned the Biodiversity Section’s aim to have an integrated approach at IAIA07 at the SCC meeting, where it received support. The chair of the SCC intends to establish an email list for the Section Chairs to enable more interaction between these especially in relation to conference planning.

*Minutes taken by Susie Brownlie and typed up by Helen Byron
12 June 2006*