# Session Chair's Report

**Session number and name:** CS1.5 Mobilization of the public for participation in environmental impact assessment

**Day:** Tuesday  
**Date:** 6 May 2008  
**Time:** 1600-1730  
**# Persons attending session:** 70

**Name(s) of Session Chair(s)**  
Bert Enserink

**Contributors**  
Nick Okello, Richmond Amoako, Alma Koka, Garry Middle, Charlotta Faith-Ell

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**(a) Three current issues in application of assessment processes discussed in this session**

- incomprehensible nature of the language used in IAs
- how to go about (expected) rewards for participation
- how to partner with the public; how to inform, involve, and create level playing field

**(b) One or more emerging trends**

- more transparent procedures

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**(c) Issues relating to impact assessment effectiveness:**

**(i) dimensions of IA effectiveness (i.e. what are the characteristics of effective IA?)**

- participatory and valuing and using local knowledge

**(ii) challenges/barriers to IA effectiveness**

- language
- focus on either on environment (opponents) or on economics (proponents); no integration

**(iii) how these barriers might be overcome**

- partnering, field assessments, technical backup for public. Minimize political abuse

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**(d) Comments on the Art and Science of Impact Assessment (i.e. the relative importance and interplay between science and values/politics/subjectivity in impact assessment)**

Professionals and politicians seem to hinder public participation in impact assessment by creating own jargon, a lack of transparency and strategic behavior; good participation should overcome these barriers.