

28th Annual Meeting of the International Association for Impact Assessment
THE ART AND SCIENCE OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT
IAIA08 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

(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

(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 (opponenets) or on economics (proponents); no integration

(iii) how these barriers might be overcome

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

(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.