Session number and name: CS2.8 Application of SEA and the EU SEA Directive (1)

Day: Wednesday  
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Time: 14:00-15:30  
# Persons attending: 36

Name(s) of Session Chair(s)
Ralf Aschemann

Contributors
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(a) Three current issues in application of assessment processes discussed in this session
- Need to add value and focus on likely significant effects
- Reasonable alternatives need to be valued and emphasized
- Does SEA simply operationalise sustainability?

(b) One or more emerging trends
- integration of ESE
- greater emphasis on social and economic effects
- SA undertaken mostly by consultants
- In Scotland, more than 1/3 of SEA’s generated have been for spatial plans

(c) Issues relating to impact assessment effectiveness:

(i) dimensions of IA effectiveness (i.e. what are the characteristics of effective IA?)
- better quality plans
- public engagement and consultation
- independent assessments (as opposed to self-assessments)
- integrated engagement activities

(ii) challenges/barriers to IA effectiveness
- taking into account results from public consultation
- no clear distinction between plans, policy & programme (PPP)
- significance and weighting of factors and impacts
- failure to front-load SEA onto PPP

(iii) how these barriers might be overcome
- have clearer guidance documents to distinguish between PPP
- start early & plan ahead
- hold government accountable on policies
- engage public in the scoping stage

(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)
- engagement in public will result in values being incorporated into IA