

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

Day: Wednesday **Date:** 7 May 2008 **Time:** 14:00-15:30 **# Persons attending session:** 36

Name(s) of Session Chair(s)

Ralf Aschemann

Contributors

Tanya Burdett, Alex White, Anthony Jackson

(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