

28<sup>th</sup> 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:** CS5.4 The Art and Science of Public Participation in Impact Assessment

**Day:** Thursday    **Date:** 8 May    **Time:** 11.00-12.00    **# Persons attending session:** 70

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

**Contributors**  
Anna McLauchlan, Bert Enserink, Vassie Maharaj, David Atkins

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

- what are good criteria for evaluating public participation practices
- participatory monitoring after project implementation
- adjusting your participation process/anticipating cultural factors

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

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

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

- participatory monitoring
- conflict resolution

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

- cultural differences
- non-supportive cultures for public participation

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

**(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)**

It proves hard to define a good set of evaluation criteria for public participation practices as historical, political and cultural factors largely determine the room for implementation of participatory practices and involvement of stakeholders and public policy making. The PPBPP work as guiding principles by giving direction, but the practice needs to be adapted to local circumstances and culture in order to be successful.