

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: CS5.7 Scenarios, time horizons and climate change in IA

Day: Thursday **Date:** 8 May 2008 **Time:** 11.00-12.00 **# Persons attending session:** c.50

Name(s) of Session Chair(s):
Elizabeth Wilson

Contributors:
Jack Krohn, Sanne Larsen, He Xu

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

- Need to handle dimensions (scales and non-linearities) of change in IA
- Perceived difficulties in assessment of climate change impacts
- Infrequent use of scenarios in IA

(b) One or more emerging trends

- Use of future scenarios in IA
- Incorporation of climate change considerations in plans and SEA of plans

(c) Issues relating to impact assessment effectiveness:

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

- Recognition of dynamic/changing baseline
- Use of future scenarios to assess resilience and robustness of PPPs as part of IA

(ii) challenges/barriers to IA effectiveness

- Over-emphasis on uncertainties of climate change
- Over-emphasis on existing processes and procedures
- Lack of horizon-scanning

(iii) how these barriers might be overcome

- Practice in and more experience with use of scenarios in IA
- Training of IA practitioners and proponents
- Shared events with Climate Change impacts assessment community
- Action now – not awaiting regulatory or procedural guidance

(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)

Responding to climate change in IA requires both art (of persuasion, consensus building, shared values and imagination) and science (models, scenarios, social and cultural learning)