

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: CS 7.12 Assimilating social and political processes in IA: African perspective

Day: Friday **Date:** 9 May 2008 **Time:** 08:30 – 10:00 **# Persons attending session:** 30

Name(s) of Session Chair(s)

Robert de Jong

Contributors:

Andrew Watson, Charlie Wolf, Ebenezer Appah-Sampong, Thatayaone Dedede, Robert de Jong

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

Proper public consultation, compliance with legislation, negative influence of political and security issues

(b) One or more emerging trends:

African states are getting their environmental legislation in order

(c) Issues relating to impact assessment effectiveness:

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

Must be done timeously, proper consultation between and amongst teams, proper public participation

(ii) challenges/barriers to IA effectiveness

Political instability, political agendas, monitoring capacity

(iii) how these barriers might be overcome

Better inter- and intragovernmental co-operation and agreements, use the right experts, talk to the right local people, be aware of misrepresentation by community leaders

(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)

Very relevant in the African context. Need to be sorted out/improved by better structuring of IA process. Should be pivoted on the environment in its broadest sense with three components: biophysical environment, social environment, cultural environment, all to be integrated instead of stand-alone assessments