



# IAIA 21

VIRTUAL EVENT

**#iaia21**

# Internet surveys in impact assessments and in public policy evaluations

**Claude Saint-Pierre**

*Baies Ltd*

*France*

claude.stpierre@baies-consult.com

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/claude-saint-pierre-a7501628/>

[www.baies-consult.com](http://www.baies-consult.com)



# Public participation in the digital age: what is on-going? Example: France

Before COVID 19

On-line public consultation  
**becoming systematic**

Combined face-to-face and on  
line

2020/21: during COVID 19

**Choice A:**  
The « blank page»

**Choice B:**  
Structured survey tool

**Choice C:**  
Combined on-line tools

« Poll » questionnaire: to avoid

In the near future

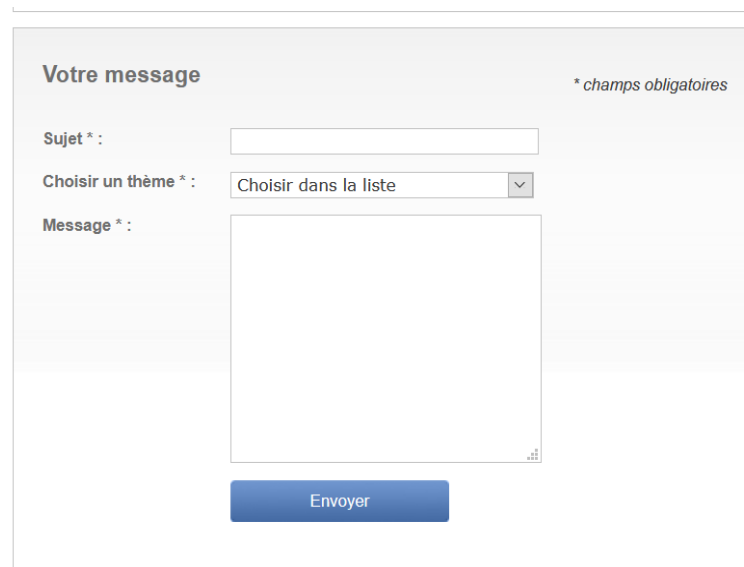
?

# Choice A: The “blank page”

## On-line tool

Background information = whole reports

An anonymous answer is often not possible



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Votre message" with a note "\* champs obligatoires" in the top right corner. The form contains three fields: "Sujet \*" (Subject) with a text input field; "Choisir un thème \*" (Choose a theme) with a dropdown menu showing "Choisir dans la liste"; and "Message \*" (Message) with a large text area. A blue "Envoyer" (Send) button is located at the bottom center of the form.

Example: [www.var.gouv.fr](http://www.var.gouv.fr)

## Types of consultation

**Public hearings on EIAs**  
(on-line addition to traditional public register)

**National consultations**, e.g. by Ministry of environment on environmental regulations

**Consultation** by local authorities

# Why choose the “blank page”?

## Not so much because of COVID!

### Blank page option: some advantages for managers

- Replication of well-known « public hearing » register
- **A questionnaire might be perceived as trying to influence answers**
- **« We do not know what to ask in a questionnaire »**
- « We use this option because others are doing the same »

### Blank page option: Some comments from the public

- « The reports provided as background information are difficult to understand ».
- « It looks like public consultation, but it is not ».
- « Let me copy and paste existing comments to make my voice heard »

Sources: 2  
on-going  
consultations, public  
comments and  
interviews with  
organizers

# Choice B: Structured survey tool, used in consultations on public policy & plans

## Why is typical of surveys in public policy evaluation?

- Participants are invited to contribute to the design of the project, plan, policy
- Does not require reading background documentation, quick to complete
- Often fully anonymous.

**1. Problématique/enjeux identifiés**

**Vous constatez une problématique qui pèse sur la biodiversité, quelle est-elle ?**

**Présentation courte de la problématique :**

Manque de sensibilisation des enfants à la protection des espaces naturels

**Question(s) à traiter/problème(s) à résoudre :**

*Pouvez-vous exprimer les enjeux importants et, le cas échéant, préciser la question à traiter, en vous aidant au besoin des thèmes cités ci-dessous.*

Choix multiples possibles

- Pollution de cours d'eau, de zones humides
- Pollution du milieu marin
- Pollution des sols
- Pollution lumineuse
- Pollution de l'air
- Pollution sonore
- Dérangement d'espèces
- Disparition d'espèces (faune et/ou flore) ou appauvrissement des populations
- Destruction et fragmentation des milieux naturels liées à l'urbanisation et au développement des infrastructures de transport, artificialisation des sols, activités extractives

On-line consultation on National Biodiversity Strategy.  
Thanks to Laurent Barbut, Epices, France, for sharing this case.

# Structured surveys are appropriate for both impact assessments and public policy evaluations

## Using public policy evaluation surveys in impact assessments

- Scoring questions, including a « does not wish to answer » option
- Some open questions
  
- A logical structure
  - **Public policies:** goal, outcome, activities, resources, obstacles, solutions
  - **Impact assessment:** values, impacts and risks, benefits and opportunities

# Choice C: Combined on-line tools

## On-line tools

Whole reports provide background information

A non-technical summary of choices is provided

Platform for public questions

Platform for public comments

Questionnaire

Institutional stakeholders' contributions

## Types of consultation

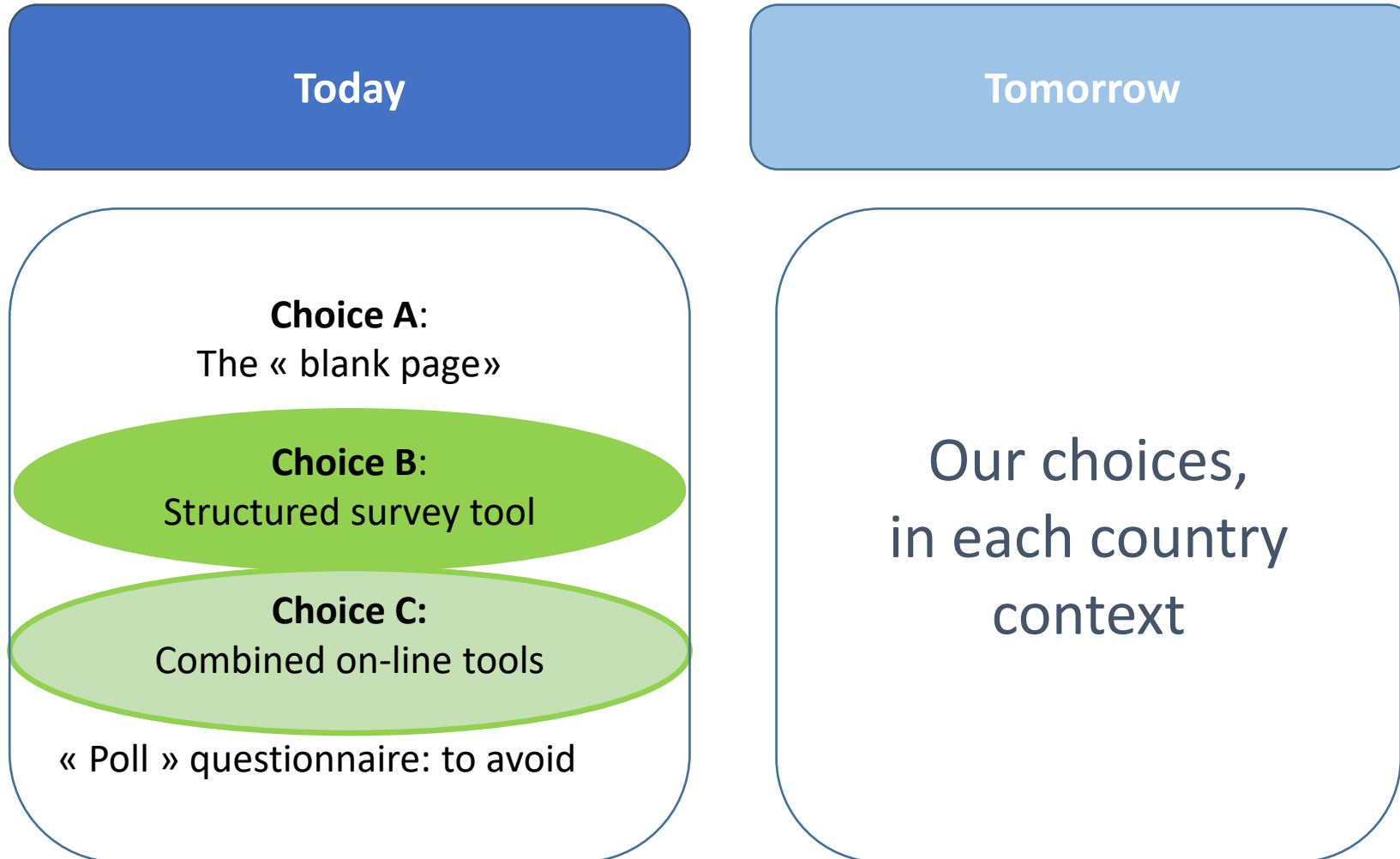
### High profile consultations

- Investment size
- Magnitude of impacts
- Challenge for social acceptability

Sustantial budget for participation



# The way forward in public consultation?



# Additional resources

## Choice B: Structured surveys

Public consultation on the national nitrate program – completed – questionnaire available in consultation report - <https://programme-nitrate.gouv.fr/participer/telecharger-bilan-concertation>

Consultation on the national biodiversity strategy: questionnaire for communities (public consultation questionnaire coming up soon): <https://propositions-territoires.biodiversite.gouv.fr/activate/1>

## Choice C: Combined on-line tools

French National Commission on Public Debate - on-going and recent projects under public consultation: <https://www.debatpublic.fr/projets-en-debat>

**These resources are in French – Open and translate on line: this is the digital age!**



# *Let's continue the conversation!*

Post questions and comments via chat in the IAIA21 platform.



**#iaia21**

**Claude Saint-Pierre**

*Baies*

*France*

claude.saint-pierre@baies-consult.com

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/claude-saint-pierre-a7501628/>

[www.baies-consult.com](http://www.baies-consult.com)