



EDITORIAL by Sander Janssen, Alterra

The coordinator of LIAISE has changed from Jan-Erik Wien to myself, Sander Janssen. I am delighted with this opportunity to act as LIAISE coordinator in close cooperation with Klaus Jacob (FU Berlin) as co-coordinator. My background is of a generalist, with a strong development in systems thinking and some knowledge of agronomy, economics and computer science. I have acquired experience in developing and using impact assessment tools in agriculture and environment by working at Wageningen University and Alterra.

LIAISE has great potential to establish itself as a crucial knowledge hub in impact assessment research and practices. There are efforts on-going on expanding the network with associated partners, with the aim to broaden the expertise assembled in our network. Furthermore, LIAISE is in the process of establishing a post-funding entity. There are several funding models which have been considered including a Centre of Excellence, a consultancy company (LIAISE ltd) and a Joint Policy Support Initiative. These are, of course, not mutually exclusive and we recognise that there is overlap which may form the best space for a post-LIAISE entity to occupy.

Also, the LIAISE infrastructure in terms of a Toolbox is making good progress. The currently developed beta-version will be open to the public early next year. The Toolbox Beta will allow users to enter own data, by registering and filling in forms describing their models and expertise. Furthermore, it will enable users to provide comments and other feedback to support search and selection. (For details, see the "Toolbox updates" series under LIAISE News.) Hopefully, the LIAISE Toolbox will provide a useful and vividly used platform for exchange between experts and practitioners.

Finally, LIAISE as an entity will be embedded in the relevant institutional context, allowing it to liaise with important stakeholders at EU and national level for successful use of its products and up-to-date understanding of the relevant issues in impact assessment and tools.

LIAISE News

JRC - LIAISE Brokerage Workshop on "Modelling Capacities for Policy Support in Europe"

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) and LIAISE jointly organised a workshop on "Modelling Capacities for Policy Support in Europe", which was held on 5 June, 2012 in Berlin, Germany. The purpose of the workshop was to make research aware of JRC modelling strategy and modelling opportunities for policy support; to conduct a stock taking of modelling capacities among research groups in the region of Berlin/Brandenburg; and to explore options and synergies for interaction and the possible role of LIAISE therein.

LIAISE Innovation Report No. 4, 'Ecosystem Services in Policy Impact Assessment'

This innovation report contains an article on "Ecosystem Services in Policy Assessment" by Katharina Helming, Katharina Diehl and Hubert Wiggering (Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research, ZALF). Starting from the concept of ecosystem services and its link with human well-being, as developed in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the authors analyse where exactly in the policy process ecosystem services can be taken into account. The focus lies on the procedures of policy impact assessment, in particular on the EU integrated assessment system.

LIAISE Spring School 2013 on "Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services"

After the success of the first LIAISE Winter School, the next training event for researchers will be the LIAISE Spring School on "Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services". The event will be organised in close cooperation between LIAISE partners UFZ and CEH and will be held in Edinburgh in spring 2013. Dates are yet to be confirmed.

Publications from the LIAISE Network

Proceeding in Parallel or Drifting Apart? A Systematic Review of Policy Appraisal Research and Practice

Policy appraisal has spread rapidly throughout the OECD and beyond, as has the associated academic literature. In this paper, Camilla Adelle, Andy Jordan, and John Turnpenny present the findings of a systematic review of this literature. They assess the extent to which developments in academic research and in everyday appraisal practices have informed to one another. In: *Environment and Planning*, 30/3 (2012)

View from the Top: Europe Must Fight Through Climate Storm

This article by Andrew Jordan reflects on the EU's desire to provide leadership on the politics of climate change on the one hand and the global reality that has unfolded since Copenhagen on the other. Simply setting an example to other countries by adopting a complex package of climate and energy policies has not been enough. Not only are other countries unwilling to follow, they may block the EU's attempts to lead.

Collaborative Environmental Governance: Are Watershed Partnerships Swimming Or Are They Sinking?

The article by Benson, Jordan, Cook & Smith critically evaluates how well the political contracting framework (PCF) explains the emergence of collaborative watershed partnerships, which initially evolved in the United States, in the institutional context of the United Kingdom. In: *Land Use Policy* 30 (2012).

Events

International Conference on Science Communication

The 2012 'International Conference on Science Communication' will take place from 2-7 September, 2012, at the University of Lorraine in Nancy, France. This year's conference is about international perspectives, issues and strategies with respect to science communication. In doing so it will take a closer look on new kinds of dialogue between the producers and users of knowledge from an ethical, political and economic perspective.

IUCN World Conservation Congress

The IUCN World Conservation Congress, held every four years, is the world's largest and most important conservation event. At the 2012 World Conservation Congress, to be held on 6-15 September in Jeju, Korea, leaders from government, the public sector, non-governmental organizations, business, UN agencies and social organizations will discuss, debate and decide solutions for the world's most pressing environment and development issues.

Conference: Biodiversity and Society

The Conference "Biodiversity and Society: Societal dimensions of the conservation and utilisation of biological diversity", which is organised by the Graduate School on Social Sciences of the Georg-August University, Göttingen aims to provide a scientific contribution to the discussion on the diverse and complex problems associated with biodiversity conservation. The conference will be a platform for exchange between renowned keynote speakers from academia, junior researchers, and representatives from the business and political sectors. It will take place 14 to 16 November, 2012.

Conference "Design and Dynamics of Institutions for Collective Action"

The conference "Design and Dynamics of Institutions for Collective Action" will be held from 29 November to 1 December, 2012 at Utrecht University. A core question of the conference will be how the regulation and the design of these institutions responds to the environment they function in and what makes them into dynamic and resilient institutions.

Conference on "Environmental Communication: Participation Revisited Openings and Closures for Deliberation on the Commons"

The International Environmental Communication Association (IECA) and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) are calling for papers for the 12th Biennial

Policies

- **Resource Efficiency: New European High-level Advisory Group**

Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik launched the European Resource Efficiency Platform to provide high-level guidance and advice on policy measures designed to transform the European economy towards a more sustainable growth path. The primary task of the Platform will be to determine how to achieve the milestones and vision set out in the Commission's Roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe, including the ultimate vision of decoupling resource use and its impacts from economic growth.

- **EU Ministers Agree on Seventh Environmental Action Plan Conclusions**

Environment ministers meeting in Luxembourg on Monday, 11 June agreed on the content of the EU's seventh environmental action plan (7EAP). The European Commission will publish a draft of the plan later this year. The final text of the Council Conclusions agreed says the 7EAP should focus on three areas: better implementation of existing environmental legislation; the transition to a green economy; and new initiatives for issues not well-addressed by current legislation, namely climate adaptation, biodiversity, sustainable cities, and chemicals.

- **Rio+20 Ends in Disappointment**

Delegates and observers at the Rio+20 Summit have expressed disappointment at the lack of clear commitments and timetables from the international community to achieve sustainable development. The European Parliament Green Group complained that "all we have witnessed is three days of empty rhetoric and greenwash from world leaders". Matthias Groote, chair of the European Parliament's environment committee, said that the summit had "failed to make a significant leap from words to action". Many described the text as disappointing.

- **Global Environment Outlook (GEO-5) published**

The fifth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO-5) has been published by the UNEP. It warns that despite over 500 internationally agreed goals and objectives to support the sustainable management of the environment and improve human well-being, the world continues down an unsustainable path.

Training

- **Sussex Energy Group at SPRU Launches New MSc Energy Policy for Sustainability**

The Sussex Energy Group launches a new MSc "Energy Policy for Sustainability" as of autumn 2012. This MSc provides broad-based, interdisciplinary social science training for future energy policy professionals working in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. The focus of the MSc is the opportunities, challenges and constraints associated with making the transition to low-carbon energy systems in both the developed and developing world.

- **Course "Mathematical Tools for Social Scientists"**

The course 'Mathematical Tools for Social Scientists' taking place from 17-21 September, 2012 in Cologne, Germany is designed to bridge the gap between school-level mathematics and mathematical knowledge need to understand advanced statistical data reduction techniques in depth. In the scope of the course essentials of e.g. the algebra of vectors and matrices, solving linear equations etc. will be revised in order to lay a basis for the understanding of the mathematical background of derivatives of matrix and vector functions, etc.

Links

- **Final Report EU - Project Soilservice**

The final report of the EU-Project 'Soilservice' is now available on the website of Lund University. The report analyses negative impacts of agricultural practice in the EU on soil quality and biodiversity. In doing so, it aims to provide a basis for future policy-making in the scope of Common Agricultural Policy and Environmental Policy.

- **World Atlas of Resource Use Published**

The Sustainable Europe Research Institute (SERI) has produced the first complete world atlas of resource use - "Green economies around the world? Implications of resource use for development and the environment". This study looks at the history of global resource flows around the world, revealing the development of resource use and resource efficiency for all countries in the last 30 years.

- **Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) Report - "Enabling the Transition to a Green Economy"**

The UK Environmental Audit Committee has published a report on its "Green Economy" inquiry. This Report is intended to provide the clarity and certainty to the business community to innovate, invest and grow in a sustainable way. Read the full report here: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmenvaud/1025/102503.htm>

- **"Ecosystems News" - Newsletter Published by the Ecosystems Knowledge Network**

The first edition of "Ecosystem News" has been published by the Ecosystem Knowledge Network, which is part of UK Defra's work to promote an "ecosystem approach". The network is a resource for anyone wanting to share knowledge or learn about the practical use of an ecosystem approach.

Jobs & Funding

Please visit our website for opportunities in the field of Impact Assessment and Sustainable Development. You are invited to send your vacancies, research programs, events or other relevant content to liaise@feem.it



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