



EDITORIAL by Sander Janssen and Jacques Jansen (ALTEERRA)

As LIAISE is entering its final year of gathering evidence on impact assessment (IA) for sustainable development (SD), a future vision on IA for SD – and in particular in relation to tool use in the process – is gradually emerging. From the evidence in LIAISE it becomes clear that IA is increasingly used in evaluating the impacts of decision ex ante as part of a structured policy process, at multiple levels of government, stakeholders groups, business, and international organisations. This requires good collaboration and interaction between the decision making organisations (i.e. Government, business, development organizations) and research groups in the field of IA.

It is widely recognised that in the actual use of IA in policy development, the decision making organisations are in the lead. This however is not sufficient; also guidance is needed on how to effectively shape the collaboration and interaction between IA researchers and IA users. This can be filled in on an operational and on a strategic level. On the operational level the key word is 'Knowledge Brokerage' to ensure that the existing scientific knowledge reservoir is effectively used in a specific IA process. On the strategic level the question is how to increase and expand the existing knowledge reservoir in a way that it is better suited for being used in IA for SD.

On both levels three keywords emerge to improve the contribution of the research community to the process of IA for SD. First, it must be truly **transdisciplinary**, in involving stakeholders in a participative fashion in the whole process, instead of consultative in only involving them for legitimation. Second, it must be **integrative** in drawing knowledge and perspectives from all dimensions of sustainability and from across scientific disciplines directly from the start, instead of focussing across a limited set of disciplines that are within easy reach. Third, it must be both **short and long term**, with a slight emphasis on the latter. This implies that long term benefits and adverse impacts must have a similar weight and importance as those visible on the short term such as division of resources and geographical issues.

For research, the above three keywords have implications - also - for the **design of tools**: 1) Research must yet develop the knowledge brokerage tools to adequately work with stakeholders in all their perceptions in all phases of the process; 2) research must develop the tools and methods to integrate the different dimensions of SD from the start, irrespective of the current disciplinary typology in research, as these methods and tools are not yet available; 3) research must adopt an appropriate long term perspective in its methods, focus, and its own organization.

Currently research has yet to develop a mechanism for strategic reflection on the methodological issues with respect to impact assessment for sustainable development. This is where LIAISE sees a future role for itself. The final year of LIAISE will thus focus on describing the overall evidence base as best as possible, on strengthening the vision as sketched here and on creating a future entity that is appropriate to consolidating the activities and achievements.



All the items marked with this icon are related to LIAISE Offspring: Early Career Scientists Support Forum

LIAISE News

LIAISE Toolbox Update No. 8: Launch of the Toolbox Beta Version

The LIAISE toolbox contains descriptions of different types of knowledge which can be used in the context of policy impact Assessment. With this toolbox we aim to provide two different services: 1) a library of models, methods, good practices, experts and 2) a community platform to collaborate in the field of Impact Assessment. The LIAISE Toolbox beta version is now launched and operational!

LIAISE Spring School in Edinburgh - A Great Success

From 15-19 April, LIAISE organised a Spring School in Edinburgh, Scotland, on "Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Assessment and Valuation Tools". 14 participants with 11 different nationalities and with backgrounds ranging from soil research to economics spent three intense days of lectures and group projects. The success of this Spring School, which had received four times more applications than places could be allocated, can be seen in the quality of the excellent lectures and group activities, and the contribution each of the participants made by sharing their views, ideas and experiences from their respective backgrounds and scientific disciplines.

LIAISE Annual Meeting 2013 in Tallinn, Estonia

The LIAISE Network of Excellence held its 4th Annual Meeting in Tallinn, Estonia, from 25-28 March, 2013. The meeting was hosted by SEI Tallinn. It was another option to further consolidate the LIAISE community, to update on the developments and achievements during last year and to jointly discuss and harmonise the future course of action with a special focus on possible LIAISE activities in the post-project funding phase. The Open Day on 26 March was used for outreach to external groups and projects that are interested in the community of IA researchers and practitioners.

Publications from the LIAISE network

An Integrated Modelling Platform for Agro-economic Commodity and Policy Analysis (iMAP) - A Look Back and the Way Forward

This report describes the rationale and performance of the integrated Modelling Platform for Agro-economic Commodity and Policy Analysis (iMAP), hosted by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre. iMAP was created in order to provide a scientific basis for policy decision-making addressing a broad range of issues linked to the economic assessment of the Common Agricultural Policy and related topics such as trade, energy, environment, and climate change.

Special Symposium on Nature, Science, and Politics, or: Policy Assessment to Promote Sustainable Development

This special symposium explores how the construction and utilization of scientific knowledge in policy making and its impact in the policy process itself can be better understood. There already exist a large number of concepts to theorize the science-policy interface and interaction. The symposium addresses how science and politics interact in practice, especially in the field of sustainable development. It assembles empirical and conceptual contributions that make use of various approaches to science-politics-policy interaction from science and policy studies that shed light on the issue of evidence and knowledge construction and its use in policy making.

Farm Type Effects of an EU-wide Direct Payment Harmonisation

In this study, the authors analyse how three scenarios involving different levels of harmonisation of common agricultural policy (CAP) decoupled payments in the EU affect the distribution of farm income across regions and farm types. They use the farm type extension of the common agricultural policy impact (CAPRI) model, which captures farm heterogeneity across the EU.

Policy Reform and Agricultural Land Abandonment in the EU

This paper examines the potential impact of agricultural and trade policy reform on land-use across the EU focussing particularly on the issue of land abandonment. Using a novel combined application of the well established CAPRI and Dyna-CLUE models it estimates the extent of change across Europe under removal of Pillar 1 support payments and trade liberalisation.

Events&Calls

Call for Papers - Marine Economics and Policy Related to Ecosystems Services

John Gowdy and Paulo A.L.D. Nunes are calling for papers for their special issue on "Marine Economics and Policy Related to Ecosystem Services: Lessons from the Mediterranean, Black and Caribbean Regional", which is expected to be published in the Journal "Ecosystem Services" by the end of 2014.

● **2nd RESPONDER Brokerage Event "Sustainable Housing in a Post-growth Europe"**

The 2nd RESPONDER Multinational Knowledge Brokerage event on 'Sustainable Housing in Post-growth Europe' will take place from 6-7 June, 2013 in Barcelona, Spain. The main objective of the conference is to explore policy options and open research questions on sustainable housing.

● **RegioResources 21-2013: A Cross-disciplinary Dialogue on Future Perspectives for a Sustainable Development of Regional Resources**

RegioResources 21 started in 2011 to establish a permanent cross-disciplinary dialogue on sustainability features in planning, decision and policy making on multiple scale levels. The 2013 conference, which will take place from 18-20 September, 2013 in Catania, Italy, focuses on ecosystem services. How can ecosystem services be mapped and assessed for providing useful decision support for planning at local to regional scales? How can ecosystem services assessments be integrated in land use planning frameworks at different scales from urban to landscape?

● **Science for the Environment Conference - Mapping Knowledge Needs For Future Horizons**

The 2nd International Conference in Aarhus, Denmark "Science for the Environment Conference" will take place from 3-4 October, 2013. The conference aims to identify knowledge gaps for the Climate Action and Resource Efficiency Challenge in Horizon 2020. The organisers of the conference call for abstracts within three major themes: climate action, resource efficiency and green economy.

Policies

● **EU Launches European Innovation Partnership**

The EU has launched a European Innovation Partnership (EIP) to help secure raw material supplies. The Innovation Partnership brings together, among others, EU countries, companies, researchers and NGOs to promote innovative solutions to Europe's raw materials challenge.

● **EU Adaptation Strategy: Strengthening Europe's Preparedness Against Natural and Man-made Disasters**


The European Commission presented a package advancing action on climate change adaptation on 16 April, 2013. The package includes the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change and a Green Paper on insurance in the context of natural and man-made disasters.

Training


● **Training on Social Impact Assessment and Management**

This course provides an overview of leading industry practice of SIA consistent with IAIA's International Principles for Social Impact Assessment. The course addresses current issues and topics that are relevant to the business of managing the social impacts of planned interventions.

● **Istanbul Quantitative Lectures - Summer School 2013**

 This year's Istanbul Quantitative Lectures summer programme, to be held from 1-12 July, 2013, offers two courses: "Social and Political Survey Research" and "Structural Equation Modelling". Language of instruction is English. Early Registration (reduced fee) until 1 May, 2013. Due to a limited class size of 30 participants per course, early registration is recommended.

● **Belpasso International Summer School on Environmental Economics "Frontiers in Economics of Natural Hazards and Disaster Risk Reduction Financing Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Adaptation"**

 The objective of the Belpasso International Summer School, which will be held from 1-7 September, 2013 in Belpasso/Sicily, Italy, is to provide advanced training for young researchers who are also EAERE members from all over Europe and beyond on European issues of environmental and resource economics. This year, the School's topic is "Frontiers in Economics of Natural Hazards and Disaster Risk Reduction. Financing Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Adaptation".

Links

● **Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Research in an Age of Austerity - SDRN Review of the UK Sustainable Development Research and Policy Landscapes**

The Sustainable Development Research Network (SDRN) has recently undertaken a review of the UK research and policy landscape for cross-cutting sustainability research covering the issue of research funding, the institutional context for professional learning and careers, as well as capabilities for policy and innovations.

● **Science for Environmental Policies: Choosing between Established and Innovative Policy Measures**

Policy decisions often have to choose between a new option that could bring high potential improvements, but more uncertain results, and another option that is less promising, but has better known results. The study proposes using 'info-gap theory' to inform policy decisions where these dilemmas exist. What is deemed to be 'acceptable' is defined by the decision maker, and the robustness answers the question of how wrong can we be in our data, models and understanding for an action to still lead to an acceptable outcome.

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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