



Murdoch
UNIVERSITY

MURDOCH RESEARCH REPOSITORY

This is the author's final version of the work, as accepted for publication following peer review but without the publisher's layout or pagination.

The definitive version is available at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2013.872843>

Morrison-Saunders, A. and Retief, F. (2014) Editorial: Welcome to a roundtable discussion on strengthening impact assessment. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 32 (1). p. 1.

<http://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/21126/>

Copyright: © 2014 IAIA

It is posted here for your personal use. No further distribution is permitted.

Welcome to a roundtable discussion on strengthening impact assessment

Editorial:

Morrison-Saunders A and F Retief 2014 Welcome to a roundtable discussion on strengthening impact assessment, *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, **32**:1, 1-1,
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2013.872843>

Angus Morrison-Saunders and Francois Retief

This issue of *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal (IAPA)* commences with a 'roundtable' (or discussion forum) suite of papers. This journal has previously employed roundtable approaches (Benson, 2003; Ross et al, 2006) whereby an informed, but deliberately provocative Discussion paper, is used to incite some reflection and debate from scholars working in the field. The Response papers received from these scholars are published in their own right, in this case, as stand-alone works (a departure from former roundtable approaches in *IAPA*). The authors of the original Discussion paper then prepare a Riposte which wraps up the formal suite of publications.

Previously published roundtable papers in *IAPA* have attracted significant interest (reflected through citations) and help to broaden the scope of debates to reflect different worldviews of a variety of authors, including those establishing the subject area for debate, and those invited to respond. A key strategy to facilitate a broader debate is to identify respondents who are likely to have differing views to the position set out or are known to hold strong views on impact assessment matters, along with others who are more removed from the field of debate to take a more objective view.

In partnership with Alan Bond, Jill Gunn and Jenny Pope, we prepared the initial Discussion paper on the subject of strengthening impact assessment with an emphasis on integration and scoping. We initially sent this paper to over 20 long-standing members of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) community along with an invitation and call for expressions of interest. This list included all current members of the *IAPA* Editorial Board, as well as several current members of the IAIA Board. Our list was dominated by fellow impact assessment scholars with long-standing research credentials but included some high profile consultants and regulators too. We ensured that our list spanned different branches of impact assessment or fields of expertise (e.g. SEA, SIA, HIA amongst others) and we attempted to ensure representation across major regions of the world.

Over a dozen people responded to our invitation, and we subsequently encouraged some partnering of respondents to manage the total number of Response papers to be prepared and published whilst maximising the international input to the discussion. Not all initial respondents were able to complete a paper, and it turned out that the Response papers that appear in this issue are almost all from academics and well established IA researchers. In total there are 17 authors representing 6 continents and around a dozen nations involved in the roundtable suite of papers. We invite our readers to join the debate either through submission of papers to the journal that pick up on any of the key themes that emerge from the roundtable discussion or through contributions at forthcoming IAIA conferences.

IAPA continues to attract high quality submissions from all around the world and which are wide-ranging in regards the aspects of impact assessment that are examined. The remainder of this issue are individual papers that showcase contemporary challenges and innovations in impact assessment in a range of settings and circumstances.

References

Benson, J (2003) Round table: What is the alternative? Impact Assessment Tools and Sustainable Planning, *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, **21**(4): 261-280

Ross W, A Morrison-Saunders and R Marshall (2006) Round table: Common Sense in Environmental Impact Assessment: It is not as Common as it Should Be, *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, **24**(1): 3-22