

Impact Assessment as an Instrument of Governance for Strategic Change – Enabling the SDGs

by Prof. Dr. **Maria Rosario Partidario**, on October 16, 2018 at 12:30 p.m.

The next 'Science Talk', organized by the Institute of Systems Sciences, Innovation and Sustainability Research, will be given by Prof. Partidario (University of Lisbon, Portugal, and University of Aalborg, Denmark) on the topic "IA as an instrument of governance for strategic change – enabling the SDGs". Her talk will take place on Tuesday, 16 October 2018 at 12.30 pm in the **meeting room of SIS (Merangasse 18, 1st floor)**. Duration: **Approximately one hour** including discussion. The participation is free of charge and there is no need to register.

SIS offers three to five guest talks each semester, covering its research areas systems sciences, innovation and sustainability research.

Bio-sketch

International consultant and university professor (University of Lisbon, Portugal, and University of Aalborg, Denmark) on strategic assessment for sustainability, in public and private sectors. Long track record on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as an author, trainer and consultant. Author of the methodology "Strategic thinking for sustainability in SEA", available in Portuguese, English and Spanish. Former International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) President and IAIA2015 Lifetime Achievement Award for significant contribution to SEA theory, education, and practice, with notable international influence.

Abstract

Impact Assessment (IA) theory and practice has evolved mainly as a technocratic instrument, driven by the need to provide information to decision-making based on scientific demonstrated evidence and reporting. While a positive balance can be recognized with the use of IA in assisting development processes to integrate environmental and social dimensions, there are still many difficulties and drawbacks. What is claimed is that IA can help to create opportunities for strategic change towards sustainability if it fits better its governance context, within which decisions are taken, and if it is adopted as a governance instrument along with its technical features. IA has the capacity to perform much better and have an improved role in social and environmentally integrated decision-making, and notably in relation to enabling efforts, and the establishment of pathways, towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The importance of learning, the role of knowledge brokerage and the need to accept and deal with complexity are fundamental aspects that will be addressed.