

Welcome Remarks

by Ian Johnson

Mr. Ian Johnson is currently the Vice President & Head of the Network on Environmentally & Socially Sustainable Development at the World Bank. He joined the World Bank in 1980 as a Young Professional and held positions as Economist, Senior Economist, Principal Sector Economist, GEF Administrator, Assistant Chief Executive Officer and Adviser, and Senior Manager in different divisions of the Bank. He holds a Master of Arts degree from Sussex University (GB) majored in Economic Development and Agricultural Economics, a Master's degree from Harvard University(US), majored in Economics and Education/Health Planning, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from University of Wales(GB).

I am here to talk to you about what I believe is a very exciting course, this Distance Learning Course on Strategic Environmental Assessment, because it is at the core of what we are trying to do in the World Bank, which is to scale up and to scale out our efforts.

What we see in the opportunities that Strategic Environmental Assessment offers us is to move from the project to the program to policy and think of the connectivity between those three areas.

I think this is a very, very important endeavor because it allows environmental issues to be embedded into the mainstream of development, and it allows environment to filter into all aspects of development programs and development policy. And that surely must be our long-term objective.

Many countries are indeed taking on board Strategic Environmental Assessment. We see in the U.S. today, in Europe, in China, many, many countries beginning to think about how to mainstream environment into development planning, into development policy, and of course, not forgetting projects.

So again I welcome all of you to this important course that the World Bank Institute is sponsoring, and I believe it will be a very, very important course for the future of the environment and for your work. So let me welcome all of you now.