



The role of academics and other experts in SIA

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GOAL

To analyze the role of experts, academics and universities in the adoption of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) in Mexico and to study the formation of an epistemic community.

METHODS

- Content analysis of IAIA Conference Programs
- Participant observation during the authors' involvement on SIA of energy projects.
- Group dynamics during SIA training courses,
- Interviews
- A multi-stakeholder academic forum focused on the adoption of SIA.



1. Institutionalizing SIA without capacity building.

- Constitutional reform (**2013**)
- Hydrocarbons and Electricity acts, (**August 2014**)
- Rules of application of the Electricity Act (**October, 2014**)

Role for experts:

- Consulting advisors for the Energy Regulatory Commission (CRE)
- As Consulting groups advising the Evaluation Committees of the National Center for Energy Control
- Ministry of Energy (SENER) can use outside technical support to assist on the evaluation of SIA presented by project developers

- No role for experts on capacity building
- No role for universities



News from the “black box” of Ministry of Energy

DOMINGO 2 DE ABRIL DE 2017 | 22:58

Búsqueda

EL ECONOMISTA

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COMUNIDADES PLANTAN CARA A PROYECTOS

Energía, en vilo por tensión social

La reforma energética ha logrado atraer nuevas inversiones en el sector; sin embargo, tensiones entre proyectos energéticos y procesos sociales amenazan con descarrilar a la industria.

DANIEL LEÓN RODRÍGUEZ ENE 31, 2017 | 0:29

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- 1 out of 4 of the 296 projects approved by CRE has stalled due to social issues.
- 14 % of the cases are facing legal challenges by communities.
- The Ministry of energy has a load of 1500 SIA studies.

2. Creating international networks and SIA expertise in Mexico



Learning from abroad?



Importing SIA to Mexico as a case of international transfer

- Cognitive, organizational and administrative restrictions
- Few evidences of collaboration towards the creation of an epistemic community
- Low participation of Mexicans on IAIA conferences

FIGURE 1. PARTICIPANTS ON IAIA 2016 (JAPÓN) BY ORGANIZATION (AUTHORS AND COAUTHORS)

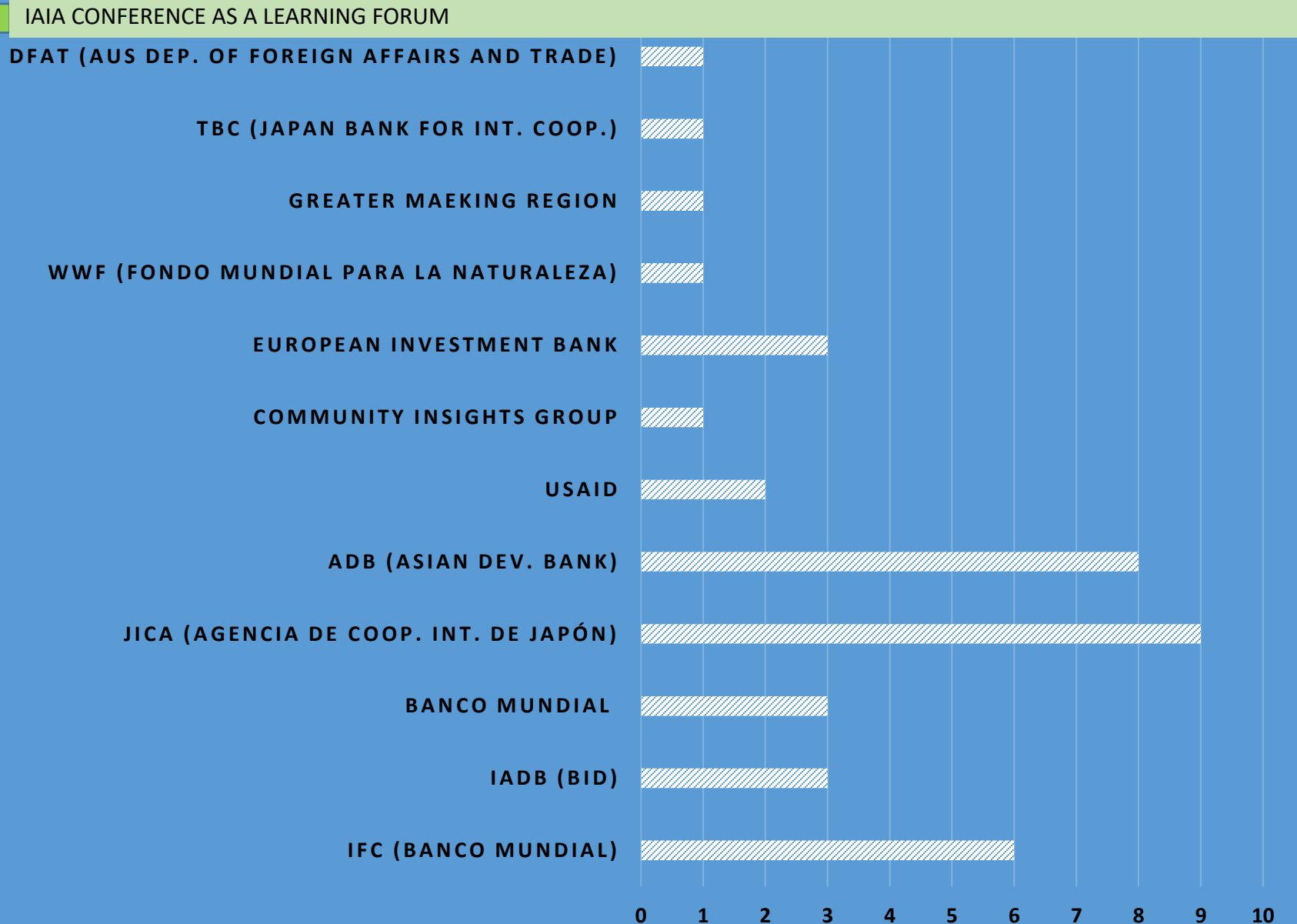
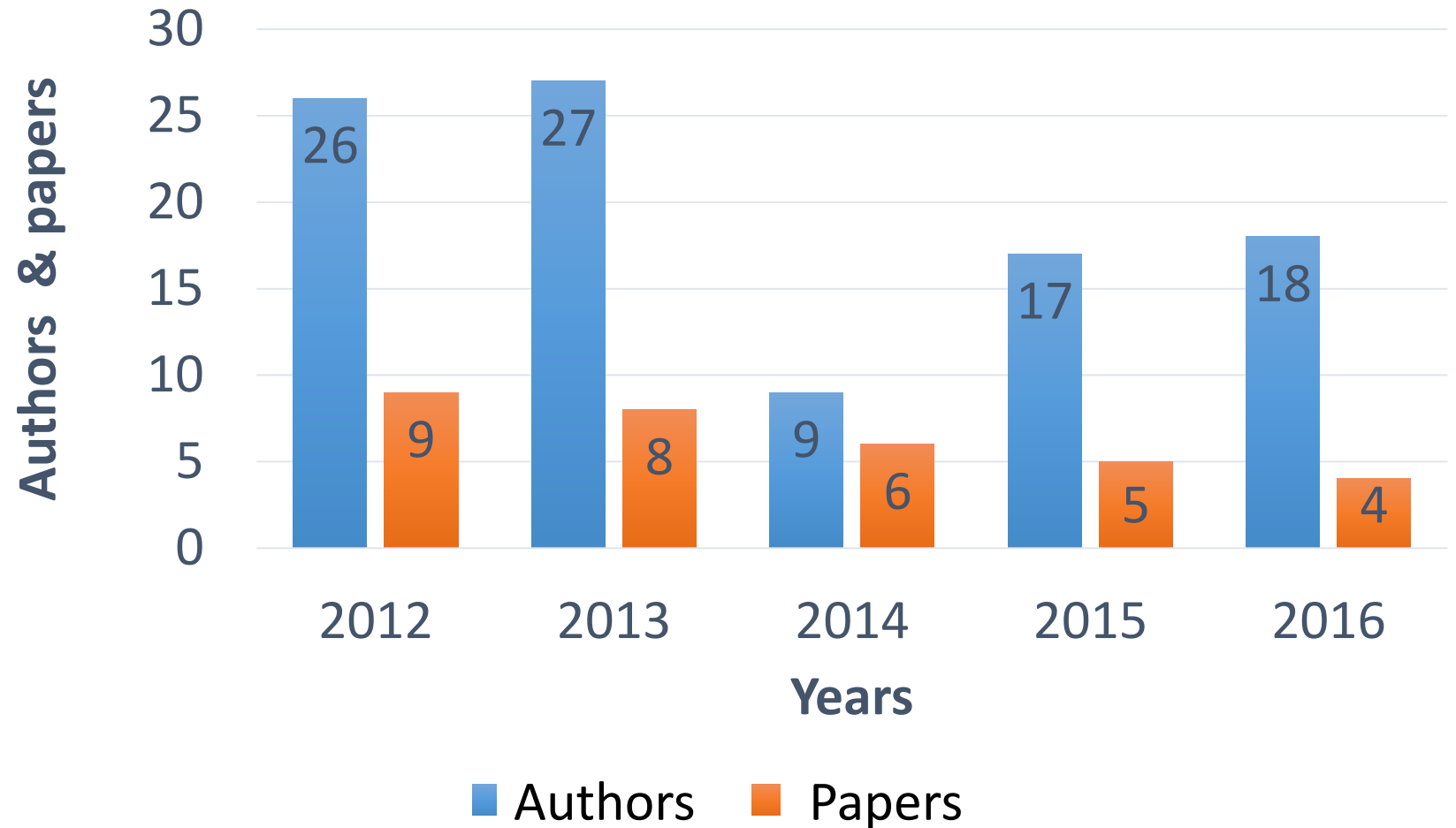




Figure 2. Participants and papers presented by experts from Mexico on IAIA annual conferences 2012-2016





3. The role of experts and academics on SIA adoption

- **Institutional problems:** poor definition of how to present SIA, SIA as a simple checklist, there are no incentives for the use of best practice.
- **Organizational problems.** The ministry of energy has a heavy load of SIA studies and low capacity.
- **Academic barriers:** universities have not reacted to the new legislation to offer some form of certification of SIA expertise.



What else can be done by SIA experts and universities?

- Create opportunities for specialized training (There is only one case of formal university training course)
- Offering new opportunities for debate about current practice and future of SIA in Mexico
- Collaborate in creating learning platforms and to engage young professionals in learning more about SIA and its use as a negotiation tool for multiple stakeholders



What else can be done by SIA experts and universities?

PARTICIPANTS IN A WORKSHOP (NOVEMBER 2016) Identified additional contributions

- **Helping professionals to use a multidisciplinary approach for SIA**
- **Help to make SIA an empowerment tool for communities**
- **Help to increase the use of SIA studies to serve as the basis for informed dialogue.**
- **Increase the offer of specialized training opportunities in universities.**



FINAL WORDS

- Institutionalization of SIA is a great opportunity for the formation of an epistemic community in Mexico.
- Experts, academics and universities now have the responsibility to collaborate to transform the practice of SIA into a tool for decision making and consensus building and to avoid converting these studies into simple bureaucratic procedures.