

[Abstracts](#)

---

## **International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change - Industrial Transformation Project**

Prof.dr.ir Pier Vellinga  
Chair, Industrial Transformation Scientific Planning Committee  
Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM)  
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam  
De Boelelaan 1115  
1081 HV Amsterdam  
Tel: +31 20 4449515  
Fax: +31 20 444 9553  
E-Mail: [pier.vellinga@ivm.vu.nl](mailto:pier.vellinga@ivm.vu.nl) (or) [nadia.herb@ivm.vu.nl](mailto:nadia.herb@ivm.vu.nl)  
Web-site: <http://www.vu.nl/IVM/research/ihdp-it/>

The International Human Dimensions Programme (IHDP) on Global Environmental Change is an international, multi-disciplinary, social science programme co-sponsored by the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC). IHDP has selected four major science projects, one of which is the Industrial Transformation Project, based at the Institute for Environmental Studies of the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam.

The Industrial Transformation Project is an international, multi-disciplinary research initiative aimed at:

- Understanding complex society-environment interactions;
- Identifying (potential) driving forces for change; and
- Exploring development trajectories that have a significantly smaller burden on the environment on a global scale.

Industrial Transformation research is based on the assumption that important changes in production and consumption systems will be required in order to meet the needs and aspirations of a growing world population while using environmental resources in a sustainable manner.

To set certain limitations as to what would qualify as Industrial Transformation research, three general characteristics have been outlined. Industrial Transformation research:

- Examines the relations between the societal, technological and environmental change;
- Relates producer and consumer perspectives including the incentives and institutions that help shape these perspectives;
- Focuses on systems and system changes that are relevant in view of the global environment; and
- Is international in scope.

Throughout 1998, eight regional workshops were organised for researchers interested in Industrial Transformation. In these workshops, key research questions were discussed and both regional and global research priorities were identified. On February 24-26, 1999, an Open Science Meeting was held to elaborate the overall research agenda and develop research themes. The enthusiastic participation and productive outcomes of these successful meetings demonstrate the timeliness of this research initiative.

Through a bottom-up consultative process, five research foci have been prioritised: Energy and Material Flows, Food, Cities and Industrial Transformation, Information and Communication, and Governance and Transformation Processes. These foci are being elaborated within the framework of a Science Plan, currently being finalised by an international group of focus leaders and the Scientific Planning Committee.

Our workshop at the 1999 Greening of Industry Network Conference will focus on the research challenges of the Industrial Transformation Project. We will present the progress in thinking and state of the art research of a number of the research foci.