English for Environmental Content
Working with NGOs and Financial/Multilateral Institutions

Translating Social and Environmental Contents
Melissa Harkin – ATA 57 – San Francisco, CA 2016

About the Translator

Melissa Harkin

- Brazilian, resides in the United States.
- Experienced translator and project manager.
- Specializes in technical translations, especially of legal and environmental contents.
- Worked for several years in other markets (Oil & Gas, Aviation, Pharmaceutical, HR, Construction, Energy, and Environmental).
- Former Greenpeace employee and current social and environmental activist and translator.
- Member of Translators without Borders.
- Current official translator for the DGM Global (Conservation International/World Bank)

Have in Mind

- Phone/Questions
- General notion
- Different actors and stakeholders
- Rio Summit 1992 (Earth Summit or ECO 92)
  - 172 governments participated, with 116 sending their heads of state or government.
  - Some 2,400 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended
  - 17,000 people at the parallel NGO "Global Forum" (also called Forum Global), who had Consultative Status.

Clients' Perspective

- Lack of technical knowledge or field experience
- Poor research
- Legal and international policy lingo
- Adaptation skills (e.g. indigenous people)
- Multidisciplinary knowledge

Introduction

- Unprecedented time in the history of our planet
- Post-industrial economy
- Environmental changes; need to become increasingly aware of the problems that surround it.
- Massive influx of natural disasters, warming and cooling periods, different types of weather patterns
- Need to be aware of what types of environmental problems our planet is facing.
- Sustainability

Major Issues

Pollution (air, noise, water, soil)	Global Warming & Climate Change	Natural Resource Depletion	Waste Disposal
Loss of Biodiversity	Deforestation	Ocean Acidification	Ozone Layer Depletion
Acid Rain	Urban Sprawl	Public Health Issues	Genetic Engineering

Let's not forget

Humanitarian Issues

Human Rights

"Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth... these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment."

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations

We have…

- Studies and Researches
- Projects and Programs
- Laws, Agreements, Treaties, Conventions
- Several parties and stakeholders from different sectors: Civil Society, Companies, Governments, Indigenous People and Local Communities, etc.

We – as translators – need to...

- Convey the same message in different languages (obvious)
- Guarantee the correct interpretation (smooth process, less risk)
- Enable negotiations (COPs)
- Help protect (process, people, planet)

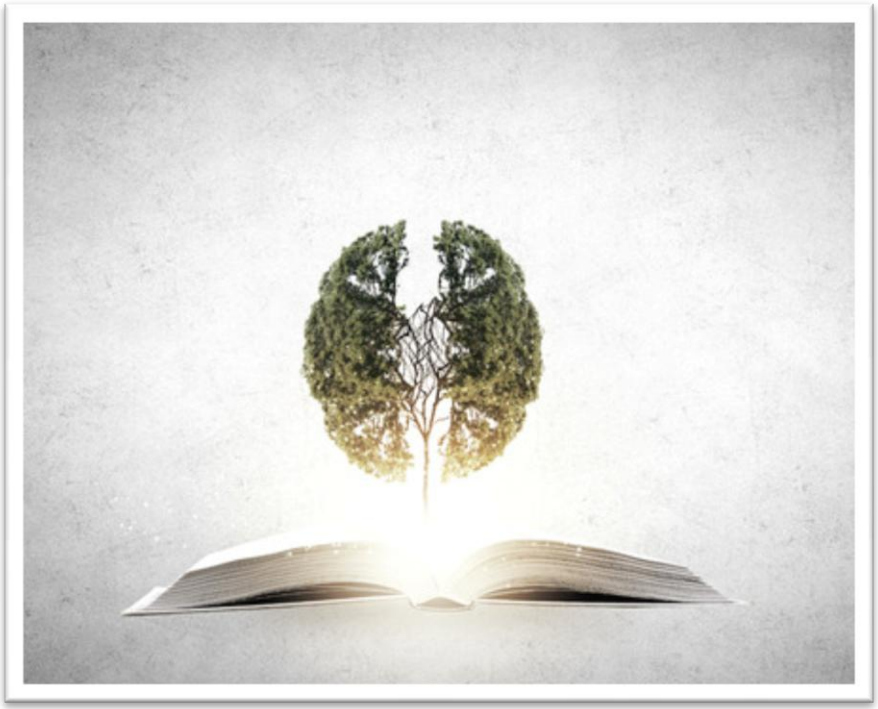
TRANSLATORS WITHOUT BORDERS

#LanguageMatters

"Translators without Borders is working with partners to get cholera prevention messages to the communities most at risk. We are ensuring that messages are in Haitian Creole, the language of the people, **because in a crisis situation #LanguageMatters."**

Therefore, we must…

- Have multidisciplinary knowledge
- Understand the content
- Know the language and correct technical terminology
- Know where (and how) to research



Because the content is DIVERSE

Legal

- Guidelines
- Public Policies
- International Agreements

Economic

- Funding
- Economic Impacts
- Economic viability of proposals

Because the content is DIVERSE

Social and Environmental

- Earth Systems and Resources
- The Living World
- Population
- Land and Water Use
- Energy Resources and Consumption
- Pollution
- Global Changes

Because the content is DIVERSE

Earth Systems and Resources

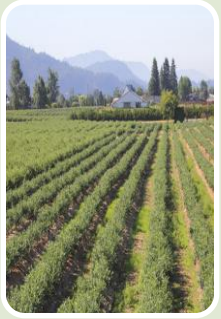
- The Earth
- The Atmosphere
- Global Water Resources and Use

The Living World

- Ecosystems
- Natural Biogeochemical Cycles

Population

- Concepts and Dynamics
- Growth and Impacts



Land and Water Use

- Land and Water Use
- Energy Resources and Consumption

Energy Resources and Consumption

- Energy

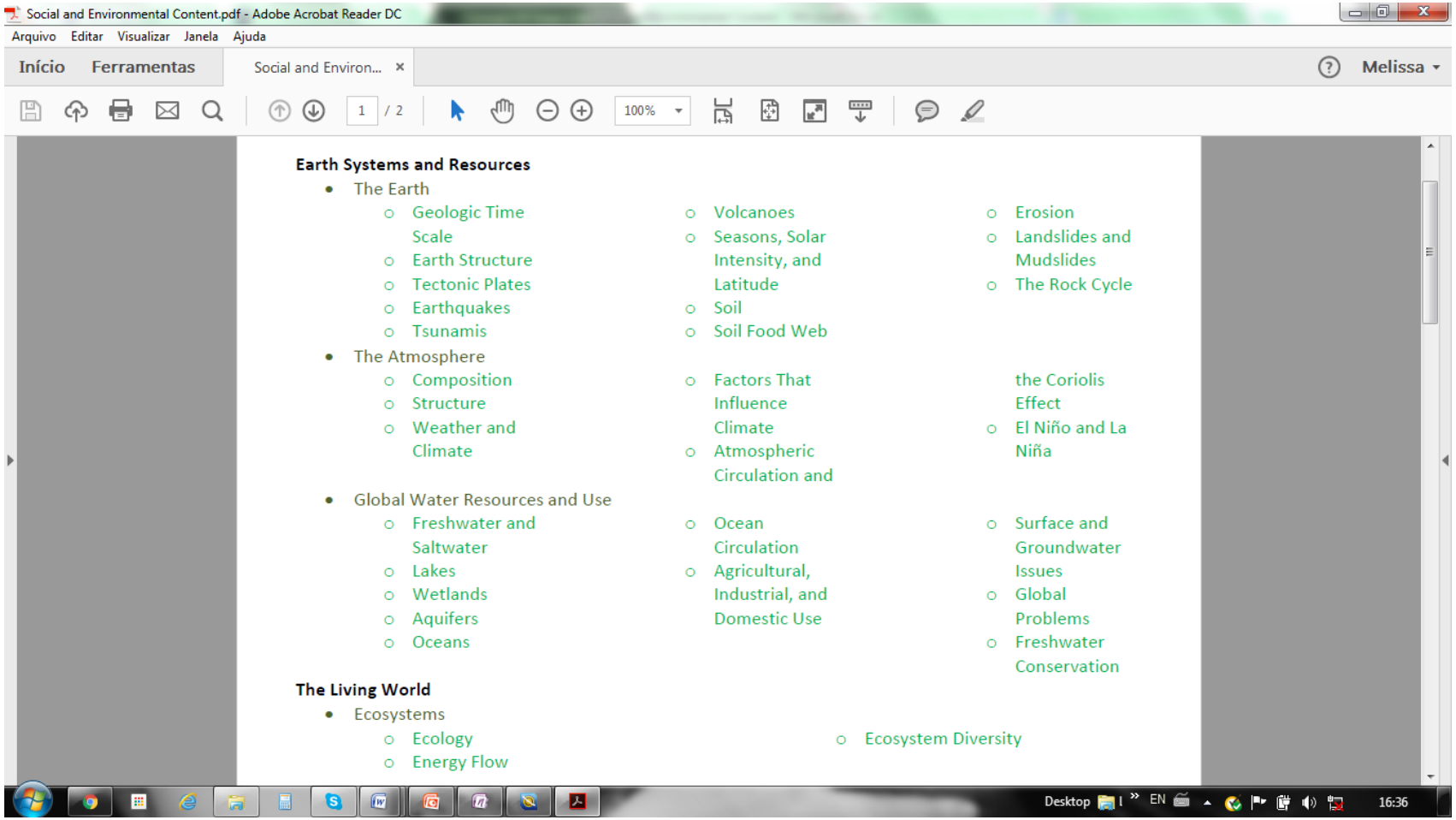
Pollution

- Pollution
- Impacts on the Environment and Human Health

Global Change

- Stratospheric Ozone
- Global Warming
- Loss of Biodiversity
- Climate Change

Because the content is DIVERSE



Example #1

What is Climate? **What is Weather?**

- **Climate** is the description of the long-term pattern of weather in a particular area.
- **Weather** is basically the way the atmosphere is behaving, mainly with respect to its effects upon life and human activities.
- The difference between **weather** and **climate** is a **measure of time**. **Weather** is what conditions of the atmosphere are over a short period of time, and **climate** is how the atmosphere "behaves" over relatively long periods of time.

(Source: NASA)

Example #2

Construction of a Hydro Power Plant

Now What?

Examples #4 and #5

- Is nuclear power renewable energy?
  - Yes, but it is not clean energy, as it produces harmful waste byproducts and relies on extractive industries to procure fuel like uranium.
- Do HPPs affect the environment? What are the disadvantages of HPPs?
  - Yes! Emission of methane and carbon dioxide, disturbance of habitat, installation costs, limited use, divert natural waterway, effects on agriculture, fish killing, disputes between people, breaking of dams, deposition of silt, etc.

Belo Monte dam construction site; Isla Pimental, Para state, Brazil - 2011

Belo Monte dam construction site; Isla Pimental, Para state, Brazil - 2012

Example #6

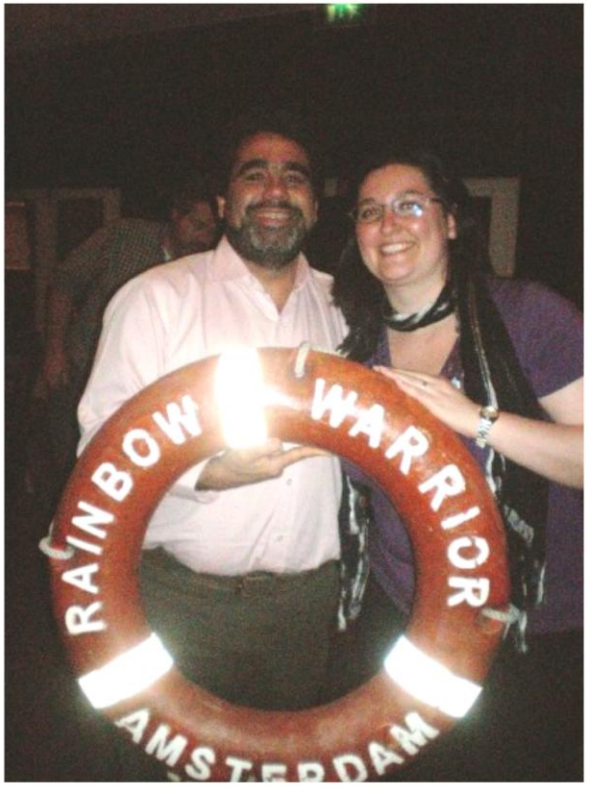
- Dilma Rousseff, Brazil's former President.
- Said Brazil would "stock up on wind".
- Speech writer. Poor choice of words, lack of technical knowledge, insufficient research.
- There are several researches on the subject.
- It is possible to store excess energy from wind turbines.

Where/How to Learn the Content?

Just go to the [official] source!

- Technical Visits
- United Nations
- World Bank, IFC, IDB, Equator Principles.
- NGOs
- Technical books
- Academics (courses, published researches, journals)
- Accredited media outlets (respected/specialized)

Technical Visits



United Nations

- UNTERM
- Undata
- UNV (Volunteer)
- Resources for different audiences
- Programs
- One Pagers
- United Nations Visitor Center
- Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish (German and Portuguese)
- National UN websites

United Nations

- Multilingual tour guides from 15 countries, speaking 12 languages, with up-to-date information about the work of the United Nations.
- Tours are offered in the United Nations' six official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish). Based on availability, tours in other languages such as German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean and Portuguese are also offered upon request.
- Visit the newly renovated General Assembly Hall, the Security Council Chamber, the Trusteeship Council Chamber, and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Chamber in the renovated Conference Building.
- Learn about how the United Nations addresses issues such as disarmament, peace and security, human rights, and the Millennium Development Goals.

World Bank, IFC, IDB, Equator Principle

The World Bank

- Translation Resources for Language Vendors
- World Bank Translation Style Guide
- Check national development banks as well, such as BNDES, CDB, etc.
- Terminology Resources
- Online termbases from sister organizations

International Finance Corporation (IFC)

- Resources for different audiences
- English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, Russian, Chinese, and Arabic
- **Environmental and Social Performance Standards and Guidance Notes**

World Bank, IFC, IDB, Equator Principle

Inter-American Development Bank (IADB or IDB or BID)

- Resources for different audiences
- Courses
- Reports

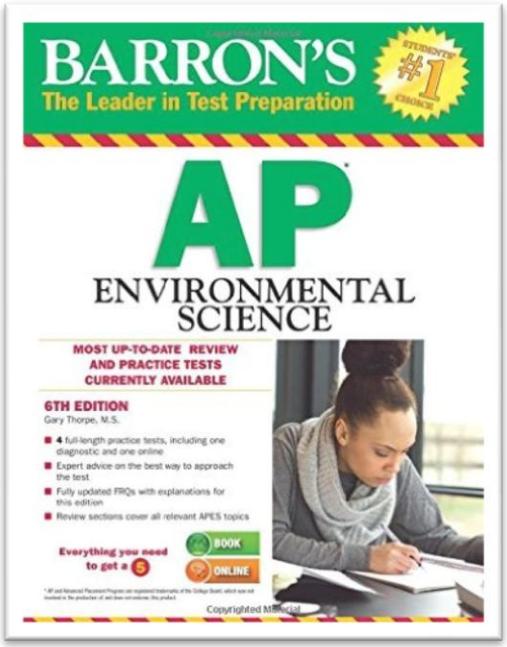
Equator Principles

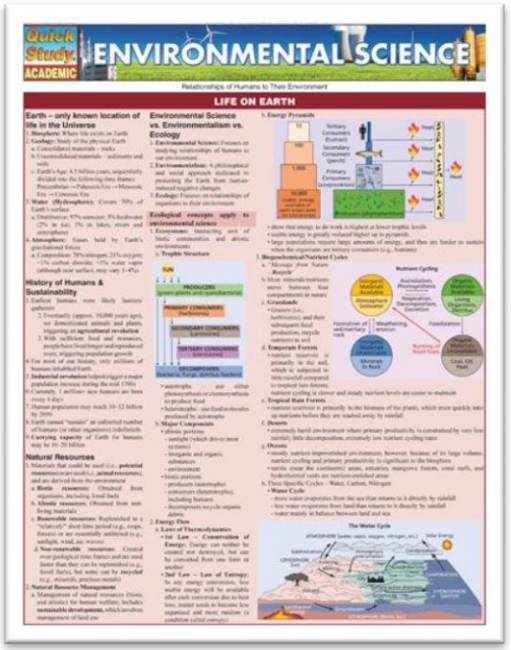
- Risk management framework, adopted by financial institutions, for determining, assessing and managing environmental and social risk in project finance.
- Environmental and Social Assessment, Applicable Standards, Environmental and Social Management System and Equator Principles Action Plan, Stakeholder Engagement, Grievance Mechanism, Independent Review, Covenants, Independent Monitoring and Reporting, and Reporting and Transparency.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)

- Not-for-profit organizations
- Independent from states and international governmental organizations
- Usually funded by donations, but some avoid formal funding altogether and are run primarily by volunteers

Technical Books

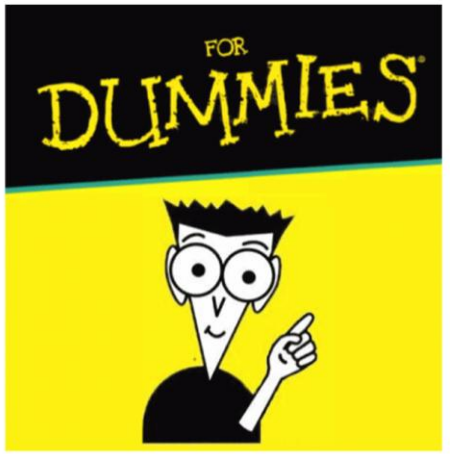




- Clean/Renewable Energy
- Climate Change/Global Warming
- GHGs
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Fresh Water Protection and Availability

Academics
(courses, published researches, journals)

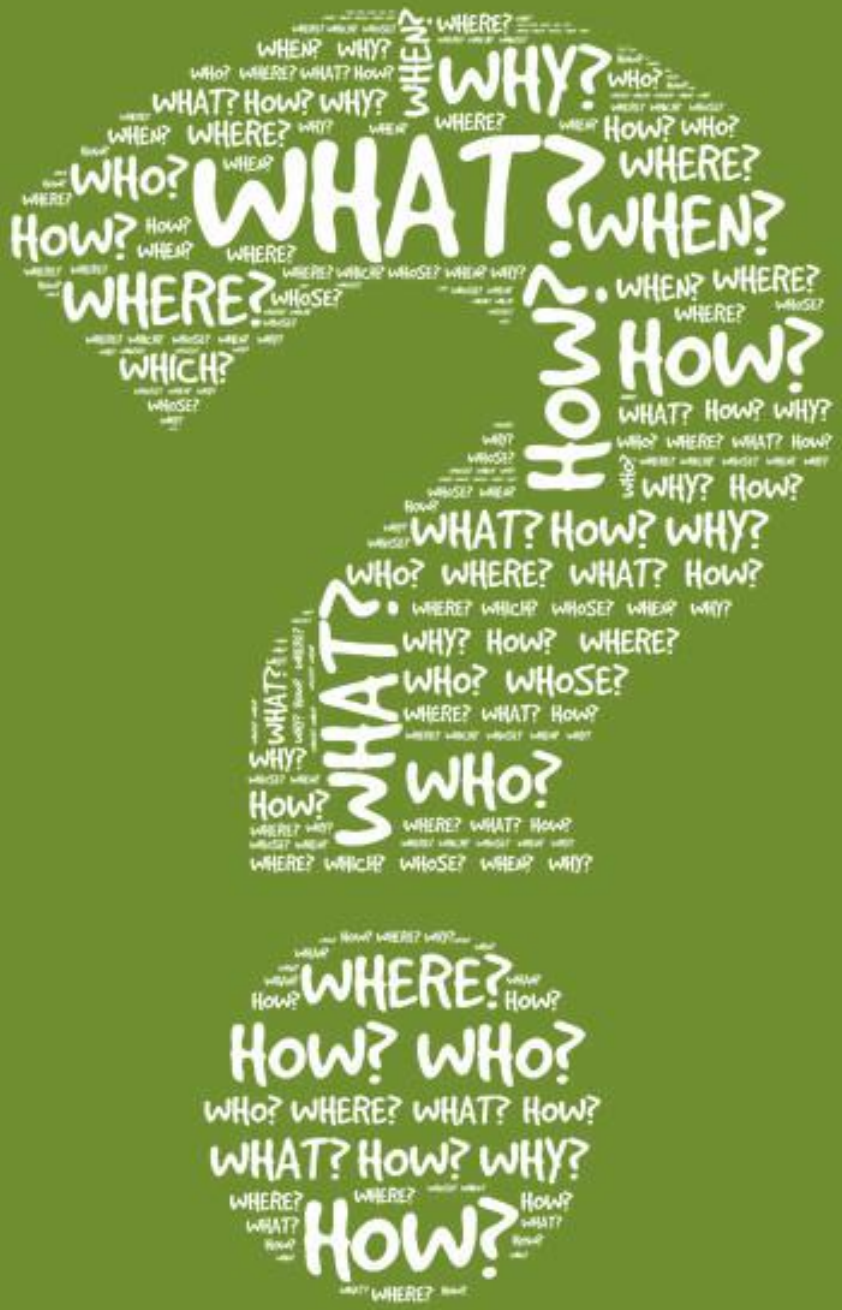
coursera



Accredited Media Outlets
(respected/specialized)

How to Get Started

- Volunteer
- Approach potential clients and offer limited free services
- Special rates
- Blog
- Network
- Local/small NGOs and community groups
- Graduate students
- Campaigners


WHAT?
WHEN?
WHERE?
WHY?
WHO?
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WHICH?
WHOSE?