



# DUPONT SUMMIT 2012

..... Pressing Issues Amid the Political Maelstrom

December 7, 2012 \* Carnegie Institution for Science, Washington, DC  
Sponsored by the American Public University and the George Mason University

The Policy Studies Organization

## Panel Speakers

Mahmud Farooque, PhD, *Arizona State University*

Darlene Cavalier, *Science Cheerleader*

Gretchen Gano, *Arizona State University*

David Sittenfeld, *Museum of Science Boston*

Richard Worthington, PhD, *Pomona College*

Mikko Rask, PhD, *Finland National Consumer Research Center*

Naba Barkakati, PhD, *U.S. Government Accountability Office*

Rachelle Hollander, *National Academy of Engineering*

## Topic

### **"A Distributed, Collaborative and Non-Partisan 21st Century Approach to Technology Assessment: From Concept to Practice"**

US science policymakers use the moniker "Jeffersonian science" to refer to research that serves a dual purpose: furthering basic knowledge, but in the service of societal problems. Scholars and analysts have cultivated this argument to motivate particular federal R&D investments in scientific research.<sup>1</sup> Similar arguments for influencing the trajectory and composition of technological development have emerged in camps concerned with usability, sustainability, and environmental impacts. Among these is the idea of technology assessment (TA): a practice intended to enhance social understanding of the broad implications of science and technology and to link this knowledge to policymaking. From 1972 to 1995 the United States led the world in institutionalizing TA practice by creating the Office of Technology Assessment to provide expert scientific and technical information to Congress, before defunding the office in 1995. *(Continued on next page)*



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Parliamentary TA agencies in Europe adapted OTAs expert model to include broader citizen participation, or pTA. European pTA methods have been tested and proven in the U.S. at least 16 times by university-based groups and independent non-profit organizations. There are compelling reasons to re-establish a national TA capability, incorporating both expert and participatory methods. The Internet and Web 2.0 capabilities can help a new TA institution be more effective and cost-efficient than was previously possible.

This panel describes recent efforts to pilot a distributed, collaborative and non-partisan 21st century approach to pTA that integrates citizen participation, deliberation, expertise and assessment into government policy making, management, research, development, informal education and dissemination at the national and international levels. Experts and Citizens Assessing Science and Technology (ECAST) was officially launched at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in 2010, where Loka Institute founder Richard Sclove presented his report *Reinventing Technology Assessment: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model*.

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ECAST's largest project since its formation is the U.S. coordination of World Wide Views on Biodiversity, a global citizen consultation on biodiversity policy that took place at 34 sites around the world on September 15, 2012, hosted by the Danish Board of Technology. This deliberation brought citizen voices into the UN Convention on Biodiversity's 11<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties (COP 11) held in India. WWViews on Biodiversity (WWViews2) was the second global citizen consultation in history, the first being World Wide Views on Global Warming in 2009. The United State hosted four sites in Massachusetts (Museum of Science, Boston, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst); Colorado (Colorado School of Mines, Denver Botanical Garden); Arizona (Arizona State University, Arizona Science Center); and Washington D.C. (Consortium for Science, Policy and Outcomes at Arizona State University, Virginia Tech, and the Koshland Science Museum).