10-25-2013

# Communities of fate and the challenges of international public participation in transnational governance contexts

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## Abstract

A trans-national public consultation on climate change was held in 38 countries to provide citizen input to the 2009 UN Framework on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP15) meeting in Copenhagen. The uniform process involving 100 citizens in the participating countries focused on the key policy questions debated by participating countries. Based on the Canadian experience with this consultation and interviews with 13 other project managers primarily from developing countries, this paper explores several areas of tension: the tensions between the goals of uniformity and standardization versus recognition and accommodation of cultural complexities; the global versus local contexts; public 'deficits' versus capacities and capacity-building; the importance of tailoring for policy impacts versus exploring the values behind policy choices; and the complexities afforded by the issue itself. The paper concludes that these tensions are unavoidable in public consultations in transnational governance contexts involving global issues. These tensions need to be explicitly recognized and accommodated, while acknowledging the continuing importance of public consultation experiments in these transnational contexts.

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international public participation in transnational governance contexts**
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**Key words:**  transnational public consultations; climate change; public understanding of science; UN Framework on climate change; Canadian climate change consultation

**Abstract**
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Introduction

> *World Wide Views on Global Warming involved
> roughly 4,000 citizens in 38 countries spanning six
> continents. The citizens gathered in their respective
> nations to deliberate about the core issues at stake in
> the December 2009 UN negotiations on climate change.*

> *They received balanced information about climate*
> *change, discussed with fellow citizens, and expressed*
> *their own views. They did so in day-long meetings on*
> *September 26, 2009.*
> *Final Report:* Worldwide Views on Global Warming-- from the
> World's Citizens to the Climate Policy-Makers

This brief description from the Worldwide Views (hereafter WWV) Policy Report (2010) summarizes the effort led by the Danish Board of Technology to engage citizens from 38 countries in a first transnational consultation involving participants from 6 continents. The International Report stressed the outcome of the deliberations in terms of the votes on the policy questions posed:

- The importance of coming to an agreement at the UN Framework on Climate Change (UNFCC) Conference of the Parties (COP15) meeting in Copenhagen in 2009;
- the importance of keeping temperature increases below 2 degrees;
- reduction of emissions by industrialized countries and fast-growing economies by 2020;
- limitation of emissions by low-income developing economies;
- punishment of non-compliant countries;
- the establishment of an international financial mechanism to assist adaptation and mitigation efforts; and
- provision of technologies that should be available and accessible to all countries.

The process was designed to address the same policy questions that were to be raised at the COP15 discussions. A uniform public participation process was developed to be implemented across participating countries but an attempt was also made to accommodate resource disparities among countries.[1] These and other considerations led to establishment of criteria that guided procedures: the final process had to be cheap and affordable; have a clear policy-making link; be both global <u>and</u> national; have clear and trustworthy results (interpreted as results that would be comparable across countries and regions); have a group of informed citizens; and provide an opportunity for deliberation. [see Worldwide

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[1] The DBT had mounted a major effort to raise funds for partners from developing countries. They were aided by other generous partner countries (e.g., Norway) and development aid institutions (the British Council, the Dutch international agency) but the economic downturn proved to be an important and untimely barrier.

Views on Global Warming Final Report at
http://globalwarming.wwviews.org/node/259.html]As a footnote on the
international meeting of the UNFCC, the outcome at COP15 was a non-binding
Accord with no set targets for reducing GHGs emissions and was pronounced by
many as 'a failure'. The disagreements between the so-called developed and
developing countries were too pronounced to be overcome during that event.
The latter group – previously a bloc of G77 and China (130 developing countries
and China) – also split into sub-factions, with a new bloc emerging consisting of
China, India, Brazil, South Africa (labeled BASIC), and aother subgroup that
included small island developing states and Africa. The interests of these various
subgroups and the differing interests among the rich countries proved too
intractable for resolution during that window in Copenhagen. (see Roberts, 2011)

The Worldwide Views public participation events provide an opportunity
to understand how a global citizen engagement process plays out against the
need to account for cultures and contexts in such a process, and against the
backdrop of the multi-level governance challenges of the issue of climate change.
We focus on the Canadian consultation as a micro-level process but extend our
analytical lens a bit further by exploring the experiences of 12 other partner
countries through the admittedly limited eyes of their project managers. This
analysis is a form of 'grounded globalization' (Burawoy, 2000); that is, it utilizes
micro-level accounts of a macro-level process around a global issue.  We suggest
in this paper that unpacking the complexities of a process like  WWV could
reveal the challenges and limitations of engaging publics on global issues within
a transnational governance context. We develop the paper in three steps: we first
describe the evolution of public participation within a governance and a multi-
level governance context. While considerable research already exists on public
participation in local and national contexts, public participation involving
multiple country participants on a global issue in an international governance
environment has not been carried out. We then provide details of the national
consultation in Canada, one of 38 countries involved in Worldwide Views, as a
way of illustrating the generic process employed in all participating countries.
With the added insights from interviews with 12 other project managers from
nine southern and three European countries, we then discuss challenges that
emerged  based on what we observed as tensions in balancing competing goals
in this public deliberation initiative.

**Public Participation in transnational governance contexts**
Governance has been described variously as distributed decision-making
involving different and larger constellations of actors (Stoker, 1998); a way of

solving societal problems through dialogue (Kooiman, 2000; Jessop, 2000); a 'political project of societal self-steering, making value choices about preferred ways of living' (Meadowcroft, 2009). In a trans-national context, these different dimensions of governance are not simply transposed outward. The global context for multi-level governance presents conditions of more diffused authority, less clearly identifiable loci of accountability, with problems attended to revealing greater complexity, thus making the contours of public participation more challenging to define.

UN policy deliberations on global issues provide one site for understanding multi-level governance contexts. Issues have included biodiversity, climate change, global health, or human rights, to name a few. In these instances, questions of democratic accountability might entail more challenging dimensions including matters of voice, channels of input, representation, and procedural accountabilities embedded in layers of complexity not found within state or local contexts.

At the same time, these transnational democratic contexts are emerging from an extensive layer of interest in and work on the participation of publics in policy debates in local and national sites over the last two decades, as deliberative theorists have encouraged renewed interest in the place of reasoning, the expression of social values, dialogue and persuasion in politics and policy-making (Cohen, 1996; Bohm, 1996; Gutman and Thompson, 1996; Habermas, 1996). These perspectives have made a case for deliberative politics as ideally contributing to the legitimacy of governance decisions, a legitimacy that rests on both procedural grounds and a move towards more democratically legitimate outcomes.

More recently, critics of public participation initiatives have suggested that theorists of deliberative democracy have assumed a culturally neutral and universal process (Felt, et.al., 2008). Subsequent research on public participation has increasingly emphasized the importance of contexts and cultures in understanding how these processes are enacted and assessed (Felt, et.al., 2008; Horst and Irwin, 2010; Einsiedel, Jones and Brierley, 2011). More generally, some have argued that science and technology politics are inevitably bounded by the politics of place and nationhood (Jasanoff, 2005).

In parallel with this more nuanced examination of public participation initiatives, there has also been an interrogation of the notion of citizenship and the variety of its conditions and enactments. On the one hand, citizenship has

been dominantly conceived as connected with the political territory of statehood. This enactment of civic agency in the public sphere is very much culture-bound, where practices of 'citizenship' are embedded in frames of meaning, social practices, communications, and identities (Dahlgren, 2008). Citizenship theorists have argued that such differences ought to be a starting point, a lode of resources that need to be built on (Young, 2004 ; see also Davis and Burgess, 2007; Felt and Fochler, 2010).

The challenge arises when global issues demand citizenship roles that require transcendence of the local, of place, and specific cultural affinities (Isin and Wood, 1999; Gaventa and Tandon, 2010).It is within these evolving settings that global issues are being confronted, with climate change being one such issue. Here, we find an issue with global reach in terms of the problem's scope but reflecting complexities in terms of assignation of responsibility and differential impacts, the latter bound up in part by contexts of more local geographies. In attempting to address this problem, the UNFCC has involved stakeholder organizations alongside national government representatives in the development of policy options and negotiated agreements. Throughout these processes, ordinary citizens have been "left out" or have not played any significant role.

The Worldwide Views project was an important effort designed to fill this void. The conduct of a deliberative process involving citizens in 38 countries allows us to ask the following questions:  what issues, challenges and opportunities are embedded in the processes of public participation in this multi-level governance context, responding to a global issue, and inclusive of 38 different groups of citizens from different countries, cultures and contexts? The need to unbundle citizenship demands of public participation in the context of the potentially conflicting condition of a 'community of fate' on climate change becomes especially critical.
In asking a practical question, we are also posing a theoretical one:  how is participation discursively and institutionally enacted in the context of the construction of a community of fate?

The term *community of fate* has initially been applied to groups in distress who clearly recognize a shared problem. Its construction has also been attributed to policy making processes which attempt to, or can, create a sense of 'community of fate' among people who had never or only dimly thought of themselves as belonging to the same community (Hajer, 2003, 97; see also Williams, 2012).

We next describe this international effort through the micro-level lens of our Canadian consultation.

**Description of Canadian consultation:**

The Canadian process was funded through a public outreach grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to the author as Project Coordinator. The grant allowed for recruiting a demographically representative sample of 100 citizens from across the country[2] and supporting travel of these participants to one site (Calgary). Within this larger process, the team made further provisions for participation by a group of ten aboriginal participants (see Blue, Medlock and Einsiedel, 2011) and linguistic recognition of French-Canadian participants . All materials were in English and French and a French language facilitator allowed for discussion in this language for Quebec participants. The majority of our aboriginal participants elected to stay as a group at the same table and an aboriginal facilitator led this group discussion.[3]

Questions about process, representation, participant roles and identities, were part of the project team's ongoing discussions and reflections throughout. We had made the case to the DBT that we be allowed to modify the background document to include additional information relevant to Canada and that a session on Canadian issues be incorporated. The DBT held to the view that the common process it had laid out be adhered to. The trustworthiness of results was seen to be determined in part by employing the same procedures across countries in order to have comparable results. As described in the organizational manual,

> "The World Wide Views on Global Warming needs to be a highly
> coordinated activity in order to ensure comparability of results across the
> globe and to avoid confusion about the status and composition of the
> WWViews Alliance. The structure of the WWViews Alliance aims at
> delivering the needed coordination, transparency and effectiveness.
> All partners who join the WWViews Alliance accept the rules for partnership."

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[2] This process involved purchase of a census-standardized list of 5000 names from a commercial research firm. Three thousand names were in turn drawn randomly and sent letters of invitation. From the 300 respondents expressing interest in participating, 90 were selected to reflect the census profile and to proportionally reflect the provincial population distribution. Ten spaces were additionally allocated for aboriginal participation.

[3] A more detailed description of this process and the theoretical assumptions behind such procedures are discussed in Blue, Medlock and Einsiedel, 2011.

[DBTmanual, 2009)

The initiative in all countries generally took place on one day. [4] The day was divided into four thematic areas, each of which focused on one or two questions: climate change and its consequences; long-term goals and urgency; dealing with greenhouse gas emissions; the economy of technology and adaptation. Each theme was introduced by a video, followed by small-group discussions of six to eight participants per table led by a facilitator. A series of multiple-choice questions was then presented to the participants to be voted on.

While the WWV procedures were generally adopted by the Canadian team, including use of the original background document, the team thought it important enough to make one important deviation: we included one session devoted to climate change in the Canadian context at the very end of the international process.

We prepared an additional brief background document on climate change in the Canadian context and our participants were invited during the final hour-and-a-half session to discuss the guiding principles adopted by the Canadian government going into Copenhagen which defined the national government's position. The four principles included: the need to balance environmental and economic progress; the need for a 'long-term focus', i.e., target 2050); emphasis on technology development (including renewables and carbon capture and storage); and the importance of consensus in Copenhagen—specifically, the need for the US to sign on to an agreement, and the importance of rapidly developing economies to also reduce their emissions 'in a meaningful way'. The addition of a country perspective distinguished our approach from the other teams. The Italian team similarly decided to devote a session to local climate change issues (Worthington, Rask, and Jaeger, 2012).

Our participants viewed the government as not doing enough on the climate change issue, expressed the view that climate change action now made economic *and* environmental sense, and that Canada's participation should not be dependent on the US; they were in agreement that energy technology

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[4] The Canadian consultation took place over three days covering Friday afternoon, all day Saturday, and Sunday morning. Participants travelled to Calgary on Friday morning and returned home Sunday afternoon. This was necessitated by the geographic distances involved in this second largest country and our insistence on holding an extra session focused on climate change policy in Canada.

development that included renewables, technologies for energy efficiency, carbon capture and storage, and lifestyle changes would be critical. Some interesting 'inconsistencies' also emerged between these positions and positions on some of the international questions which we were unable to explore further for lack of time. For example, despite acknowledging the need for lifestyle changes, our participants were divided on imposing higher fossil fuel prices and who should bear the responsibility for such an option. Their position was that all countries had to bear this responsibility. This short window provided some insights into our participants' responses to the principles that underpinned the Canadian government's position, principles that were important for public consideration and debate.

As was the case with other country teams, a report was prepared on the Canadian results, sent to the DBT where all results were uploaded to a central site as each team completed its process. It was thus possible for everyone to view the completed results at various points and when all results were in, the site further provided the means to do between- country, between-region, and between-development groupings comparisons. [5]

This brief outline of the procedures followed in the Canadian consultation has been intended to illustrate the general steps undertaken in the participating countries. The addition of a brief Canadian policy context – an intentional deviation from the international process -- was also intended to emphasize the significance of the local context and citizens' perspectives on the national policy position on climate change.

**Interviews with Project Managers:**

Our interviews were carried out with project managers (PM) from 12 countries including 3 northern 'developed' countries, and nine 'developing' countries that included representation from a rapidly developing economy, South America, SE Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and a small-island state. The interviews were conducted by telephone and lasted from 45 minutes to an hour.

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[5] All teams began their consultations at 9 a.m. local time, with the Australian team starting and completing their process first, followed by country teams in sequential time zones, and the U.S. sub-group in California finishing last. The U.S. was one of two countries which deployed more than one group with its five regional meetings; India and Indonesia had meetings in two sites. For comparison of results, see www.wwviews.org/node/287

Our interviewees were guaranteed confidentiality. These interviews explored procedural arrangements (funding, selection and recruitment, facilitation, connections with media and policymakers), overall procedural observations about the consultation and administration processes, views on the challenges and opportunities around the WWV event and their participation, and 'lessons learned'. Interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed. The insights from other participating countries also provided us with another lens to view both the larger process of WWV as well as our own. We recognize this admittedly narrow perspective and the limitations of a filtered view, not having had the opportunity to talk directly to citizen participants in other countries. At the same time, similarities or differences in the collective picture that emerge can provide further insights into the questions of interest in this paper.

There was general agreement that WWV represented an exciting, novel and significant opportunity for citizen voices to be heard. Most of the southern-country project managers we interviewed were interested in participating because of one or several of these reasons: the experience of consulting citizens in their country was novel (in some instances, had never been done); the process itself was novel; and climate change was considered an important issue to engage publics on.

> For us, this was very important, this new mechanism,
> democratic mechanism  to make people participate, to have people's
> participation in this kind of ah process, and that's why we agreed to be
> part of it. Well, okay.  It was new.  It, that was the reason we went on.
> (PM1)

> The greatest opportunity was that it was a meeting of its own kind, a
> unique meeting [yeah] that brought citizens together to talk about climate
> change.   It was the first of its kind in [my country]. (PM7)

This opportunity for social learning was similarly emphasized in two published accounts by organizers from Uruguay (see Bortagaray, Lazaro and Vasquez Herrera, 2012) and St. Lucia (Charles, Pomeroy and Worthington, 2012) and the ripple effects of applying lessons from the Worldwide Views experience to subsequent citizen consultations on energy in their countries.

Another  PM suggested that the idea of "downward public accountability' was very weak in his country. Referring to the internet-connected WWV process, this PM observed that the immediate availability of the results demonstrated

how citizens in other places think about the same problem, and the anticipated influence participation might potentially have on decision-making processes provided an interesting alternative to a perceived shortcoming at the state level.[6] Participation thus opened up a window for understanding a global problem that concerned groups like themselves; "it offered an alternative path to accountability that was missing at the national level". (PM 3)

At the same time, five PMs variously expressed frustration at the very minimal opportunity to engage in what they considered to be an important component of deliberation: sufficient opportunity for capacity building.

While the PM's from the three northern countries indicated they had sufficient funds for this activity (as was the case for Canada), this proved to be a major challenge for all but two of the southern country teams we talked to. Their comments revealed impacts in several areas: recruiting challenges that led to the underrepresentation of minorities, lower socio-economic classes, or other hard-to-reach populations; limited use of the background material (which were often simply summarized briefly) for a variety of reasons; inadequate training of facilitators; reliance on volunteer labour. Unfortunately, the global economic downturn which began in 2008 proved to be a major obstacle to the ability of WWViews to raise a stronger funding base to particularly support initiatives in a number of developing-country partners.

It is not our intent to present a detailed analysis of the procedural aspects of WWViews Canada or the efforts in the various countries represented by the project managers we talked to. Rather, on the basis of this brief description of our experience with the Canadian initiative and our conversations with these 12 project managers, we highlight what we see as the issues posed by this first international initiative. We intentionally frame these issues in binary terms for analytical purposes, recognizing that there are greater complexities than can be reflected in an either-or description.

**Standardization or Non-conformity**

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[6] While results of each country were immediately available online on completion of each country process, participants could not necessarily see or hear other country participants who may have been meeting at similar or overlapping times. A second Worldwide views event on Biodiversity in 2012 introduced a process which allowed participants in two countries to exchange greetings and see each other briefly during the day.

The insistence on a uniform approach to the process was based on the rationale of the ability to compare across national groups on the same questions and to present the overall citizens' group response to the COP15 key issues. This meant establishing a voting process at the end of each theme question which minimized time spent on deliberations.

In comparing voting and deliberation, Chambers (2003) has maintained that

> Voting-centric views see democracy as the arena in which fixed
> preferences and interests compete via a fair mechanism of aggregation.
> In contrast deliberative democracy focuses on the communicative
processes
> of opinion and will formation that precede voting.  Accountability
replaces
> consent as the conceptual core of legitimacy….This accountability is
> primarily understood in terms of 'giving an account' of something. (308)

> Voting and deliberation are, of course, not mutually exclusive and voting
> or
giving consent does not have to disappear. Rather, these processes benefit from a richer and more complex layer of interpretation (Chambers, 2003). In the context of conducting public deliberations, management organizations are constantly having to balance the demands of efficiency and effectiveness and, while both are important, it often happens that one is often done at the expense of the other.

The strict uniformity of procedures was contentious for half of the PM's we talked to. One PM who was discussing their procedures with the facilitators whom they were training observed:

> There were moments it was very difficult…because people here were
> feeling… uhm really like they were being put in a foreign strait-jacket
> and I was questioned quite often on how this material might be misused
> or misrepresented and I think part of that mistrust was because of their
> feeling they didn't really have a voice in the process. (PM5)

One of our Canadian participants also observed: "I enjoyed the discussions. I did not always like the questions being multiple choice. I would have liked to have chosen often an answer that was not listed." (WWViews Canada Evaluation Report, 2009).

This standardized approach similarly marked past European citizen conferences where organizers were noted as erring on the side of "overproceduralization" (Boussaguet and Dehousee, 2009, 787). At the same time, the challenges of dealing with a 10-country deliberation in these European examples suggest that the "tension between managing diversity and the participatory ethos" remains a critical one (p. 787). In the case of our 38-country initiative with over 4,000 citizen participants, the challenges are even more substantial.

**Global versus local tensions**

While the Canadian team chose to exercise flexibility in its inclusion of a Canadian-focused segment, most teams stayed with the program. At the same time, the majority of our southern partner PMs we interviewed shared the view that providing a better opportunity to explore local dimensions of the issue and exploring a more effective way of integrating cultural considerations in the participation process would have strengthened the WWV experience.

One PM argued that some of their citizens' concerns were those bounded by the local so the idea of a common global concern was a strange notion their participants had some difficulty imagining.

> "The time and geographical horizons of people from so-called lower socio-economic tiers do not extend very far. Their concerns are with the next week, month, next season at most. Their geographical concerns are local. To get them to think in terms of hundreds of years of history [on climate change], on the long-term future, the nation, the world, would have been impossible to achieve for the consultation." (PM 4)

A number of PMs expressed dissatisfaction with what they perceived to be cultural insensitivity of the procedures drawn up. As one pointed out,
> "When you have an international process, you have to find a way that is expressible enough for the vastly different realities." (PM 2)

Another commented:
> "In [my country], we are very much a speaking culture, meaning that you know, you wouldn't, a normal [country person] wouldn't read 40 pages on something. No, no, no, far from it! (PM 3)

The frustration with not being able to sufficiently attend to issues closer to home was also expressed by our Canadian participants. As one observed:

"I loved being able to talk about the subject with other concerned
citizens. It may have been good to have more time to get into
more details on Canadian policies". (WWVCan Evaluation, 2009)

**The complexities of climate change**
      Another dimension that came to the fore revolved around climate change
as the focal issue. The Final Report for all countries highlighted the
overwhelming solidarity of all groups on policy positions but masked the
"wickedness" of the climate change problem (Lazarus, 2009).[7]

      Several interviewees referenced the environmental challenges in their
countries which they connected to the climate change issue. Two project
managers discussed the greater frequency and intensity of hurricanes and
flooding, a third pointed to melting glaciers while a fourth referred to more
intense drought and water shortages in their particular localities. Despite some
potential confusion between impacts of weather and climate, several observed
that discussion of these local conditions would have helped to engage their
participants more deeply. Organizers from St Lucia, one of a group of
participating island states, pointed to their common and unique concerns around
their extreme vulnerabilities and more limited adaptive opportunities in their
published reflections ( Charles, Pomeroy and Worthington, 2012).

      Three PMs emphasized or made reference to different responsibilities for
the climate change problem and how this was given short shrift. While this was
one of the areas discussed and voted on by all participants, one PM observed that
it would have been helpful to discuss this differential responsibility further. The
procedures, she argued, simply glossed over the different "climate debts" and
the different responsibilities of different groups of countries (PM5).

      One of the PMs whom we interviewed by e-mail wrote a lengthy
observation
on this very point:

      The global approach is not for the most vulnerable, it is for those with

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[7] "Wicked problems" have been described as being difficult to define, have many
interdependencies and are often multi-causal; often lead to unforeseen consequences,
and typically have no clear solutions. The phrase and its associated challenges were first
described by Rittel and Webber, 1973.

the biggest carbon footprint. I would argue there would have to be a two-tier approach …so that we can elicit views and concerns from (a) different vulnerabilities and (b) different carbon footprints. I would hold such events

in (my country) simultaneously, and focus each on geographically suitable concerns and time horizons…A more intense approach suitable to the different cultural and physical environments would elicit more usable and useful knowledge. Such consultations and knowledges must make a difference locally. (PM4)

The overarching framework which global issues like climate change fall under entails imagining a community of fate; at the same time, how does one account for the reality that such a fate is in fact experienced differently? Such are the dilemmas and interesting  challenges posed by collective global problems like climate change.

**Deficits versus capacities**

The starting point for much of the literature on public participation or the public understanding of science has been a critique of the deficit model, associated with publics framed as empty vessels waiting to be filled with received wisdom. An important outcome of this position has been the recognition of expertise resident in many publics – from the expertise of the wide range of social practices (from occupational to experiential wisdom to the expertise of hobbyists from informal engagements with science) to the inherent wisdom of cultures (e.g., the acknowledgment of traditional or indigenous knowledges). Such acknowledgments have broadened interpretations of who performs knowledge-producing activities to what sorts of knowledges gain recognition.

At the same time, the consequent stigma of 'ignorance' has unfortunately been exceedingly widespread in the STS literature, replaced by another romanticized caricature of the knowledgeable lay individual. The idea of capacity or capabilities from a structural perspective has provided a useful lens for refocusing on the issue of capacities. As Amartya Sen has argued in promoting the capabilities approach to human development, several conditions are critical to address when discussing individuals' capabilities: first, the opportunities within society are not necessarily evenly distributed. There are individual differences in access which also need to be recognized and there are further differences in the ability to transform resources into activities of value (Sen, 1993, 1999). Sen's work has been noted for recognizing human

heterogeneity and diversity as well as being attentive to group disparities, such as disparities by gender, class, or race. In this context, by drawing attention to practical reason and deliberative democracy in the shaping of public choices and goals, his emphasis on human agency and participation  has rested on the premise that different societies may have different values, aspirations, capabilities, or notions about how to get to the 'good life'.

This capabilities dimension affords a more nuanced view of the complexities of "ignorance" or "public deficits" with regard to issues like that of climate change. Information provision in the form of a background document, videos during the event provided one way of remedying insufficient acquaintance with the subject of climate change. Indeed, without some education, many of the policy questions would have been indecipherable to our participants. At the same time, several project managers stressed the importance of capacity building of participants, a process these development practitioners -- and the international development literature more generally-- have considered critically important in doing community development, something that just was not possible within the short time-line.  "It's very very important to 'capacitate'…it does not make sense to ask people who are not familiar with what they are talking about to discuss well a topic". (PM 1). Another stressed the differences in comfort levels with deliberations and the need to prepare participants for these processes as part of 'capacity building' (PM4).

This sense of insecurity about their capacity to deal with the issue's complexities was also evident among our Canadian participants when over half reported they "did not feel completely prepared to respond to the questions (we) were asked to vote on". (WWViews Canada Evaluation Report)

These observations offer a reminder that promoting communicative competencies and social learning has to also take into account the ways deliberative participation can be skewed by inequalities of resources, access, and entrenched relations of power (Fischer,  2007, 184).

**Impacts versus values**
The strong focus on questions linked to the international policy forum and the voting procedures employed occurred to the detriment of exploring the values that underpin policy choices. Such questions included the temperature targets to be aimed for and by whom, who should bear the financial burdens and how, or technological mechanisms required. Some unusual outcomes which may

have benefitted from further elaboration or deeper understanding of their contexts include these striking findings:

- In Delhi, India, only three in ten participants said they were "very concerned with climate change" while 83% in Bangalore had the same opinion.[8]
- Canada and Australia, two countries with somewhat similar political cultures and economies, had diverging views among participants on short-term
  targets for Non-Annex 1 countries with substantial economic income and/or high emissions (countries such as China, India and Brazil): Almost a third more Canadian participants than Australians said they ought to have the same targets (44% vs. 28%). In these instances, the reasoning behind particular positions and the values that might underpin these choices canbe more enlightening than voting positions.
- While almost two-thirds of Canadians said they were "very concerned" about climate change, a minority, or fewer than half of participants from similar high-income countries said they were similarly "very concerned".

The standard against which many public participation events have been held to has been the standard of influence on policy.[9] However, not finding impacts "should come as no surprise in complex policy-making processes where numerous influences mingle" (Dryzek and Tucker, 2005). In the case of WWV, several political opportunities were in place: COP15 was occurring in Copenhagen, with the Danish Minister of Environment acting as conference chair, and the DBT organizer of WWViews with its extensive repository of participatory technology assessment expertise and experience was "connected" to the official sponsors. Two elements, however, posed difficult counterweights: the first was the timing of the WWV event, occurring just a few months before

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[8] The experiences of WWViews-India have been described more fully elsewhere (Bal, 2012), emphasizing some of the challenges of representation, inclusion and diversity and the weak institutional conditions for governance in that country that may account for minimal attention to deliberative traditions and consequent lack of input into policy decisions.

[9] This, is, of course in relative terms, recognizing that there is also a considerable research literature on conditions of deliberation and impacts on participants or planners and sponsors.

the international meeting itself, suggesting that this may have been too late to be sufficiently noticed by the large number of decision-makers at the meeting. Second was the scale of divisions among and between groups of countries on the issue, exposed in entrenched national and multi-lateral regional positions taken during the COP15 meetings, suggesting minimal  likelihood of taking serious account of more unified international citizen positions.

The idea of impacts as defined in terms of impacts on policy also fails to recognize the role of political and symbolic impacts that citizen consultation events can have, especially in contexts where there are minimal  opportunities for, or  traditions  of, citizen engagement and deliberations.

For our Canadian participants, the excitement about participation had as much to do with learning about their fellow citizens' views as  the engagement process itself and the uniqueness of a global event. However, this interest was tempered by their skepticism about being heard by national policy makers (Worldwide Views Canada, 2009, p. 7).

The worry about legitimacy of outputs – perhaps as measured against impacts – needs to be appropriately balanced by input legitimacy (Skogstad, 2003) and again, in a transnational context, the balancing act becomes more complex.

**Whither transnational public participation…**
We began this essay with a discussion of the practical dimensions of the Worldwide Views architecture, recognizing that the questions of discourse and argument are practical ones (Fischer and Forrest, 1993, p. 4). These questions do not separate the actual acts of deliberation from their institutional and performative conditions. Through this case study, we have focused primarily on the latter, understanding that an important interplay occurs between both elements.

In discussing this innovative effort at providing a platform for publics from 38 contexts and cultures to consider the important global challenge of climate change, we have highlighted tensions among the varied goals of public participation that appear to be more pronounced in this particular context.

We discussed the tensions among alternative deliberation arrangements: between standardization and voting and effectiveness criteria for deliberation;

among the twin goals of input and output legitimacy; in accommodating local dimensions, along with a focus on an overarching goal of addressing global challenges, and the inherent complexities of the global issue at hand. These made for a challenging mix of discursive and institutional demands. The climate change issue pushes toward a regard for membership in a global community of fate but also reflects the challenges of, and exposes the divisions around, potential solutions. In turn, the questions around potential solutions are complex – affixing responsibility, determining who pays how and when, determining what mix there ought to be between market and government solutions or approaches. They inevitably have to be considered at least initially around conditions of place, time, and historical perspective. Questions further arise just as we move away from the single-point social perspective and regard multiple perspectives on the global condition. These complexities and differences remain very much in the shadows when one reads the international Final Report, with the common desires of citizens worldwide highlighted: that a global deal should be made in Copenhagen; that long-term average temperatures of less than 2 degrees should be targeted; that higher reduction targets should be imposed but should also be fair and proportionate (Danish Board of Technology, 2010)

At the same time, it is important to note that the Worldwide Views initiative has been an innovative social experiment focusing on global issues and as such, offers important learning opportunities that can arise from the challenges discussed earlier. These lessons can include – though are not limited to -- the following:

- One deviation from the highly centralized structure was the more distributed funding model employed. We expect that more decentralized and networked approaches can be experimented with in the future. This includes discussion materials that may have a common and centralized component but allows for inclusion of local content and the deployment of on-line approaches to compliment face-to-face participation.
- Increasing deliberation time and linking deliberations with voting outcomes help provide important context for vote-based decisions. Such contextual information does not necessarily have to be sent in to the coordinating unit at the same time as voting outcomes but may be provided by project teams up to a week after the event. There may be important trade-offs to be made here including the possibility of having fewer sessions -- say, four instead of five within the day.

- ■ Incorporating or allowing  time for capacity building can strengthen confidence and enhance participation. Such preparation can range from the use of a wider variety of learning approaches, from on-line methods to visual representations and other culturally specific forms of engagement.

This discussion of the WWV experience has been a process of unbundling the exercise of citizenship and agency in the context of national and global governance contexts and issues. Modalities and processes of global consultation still need to be thought through and reworked. The idea of a community of fate and the climate change challenge can in principle provide a platform for understanding the role of publics in transnational governance contexts. The WWViews initiative has provided a tentative first step. As with other steps that will likely follow, they are to be regarded as on-going social experiments in the efforts to build a more robust transnational public sphere and to construct new narratives of citizenship that  bridge the particularities of place with the demands of a constructed global common good.

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