

Building capacity for global environmental problem-solving through citizen participation



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Commentary on:

Technology Assessment and Public Participation

- From TA to pTA

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World Wide Views (WWViews) on Biodiversity - A Case Study of Technology Assessment and Public Participation

Ambitions

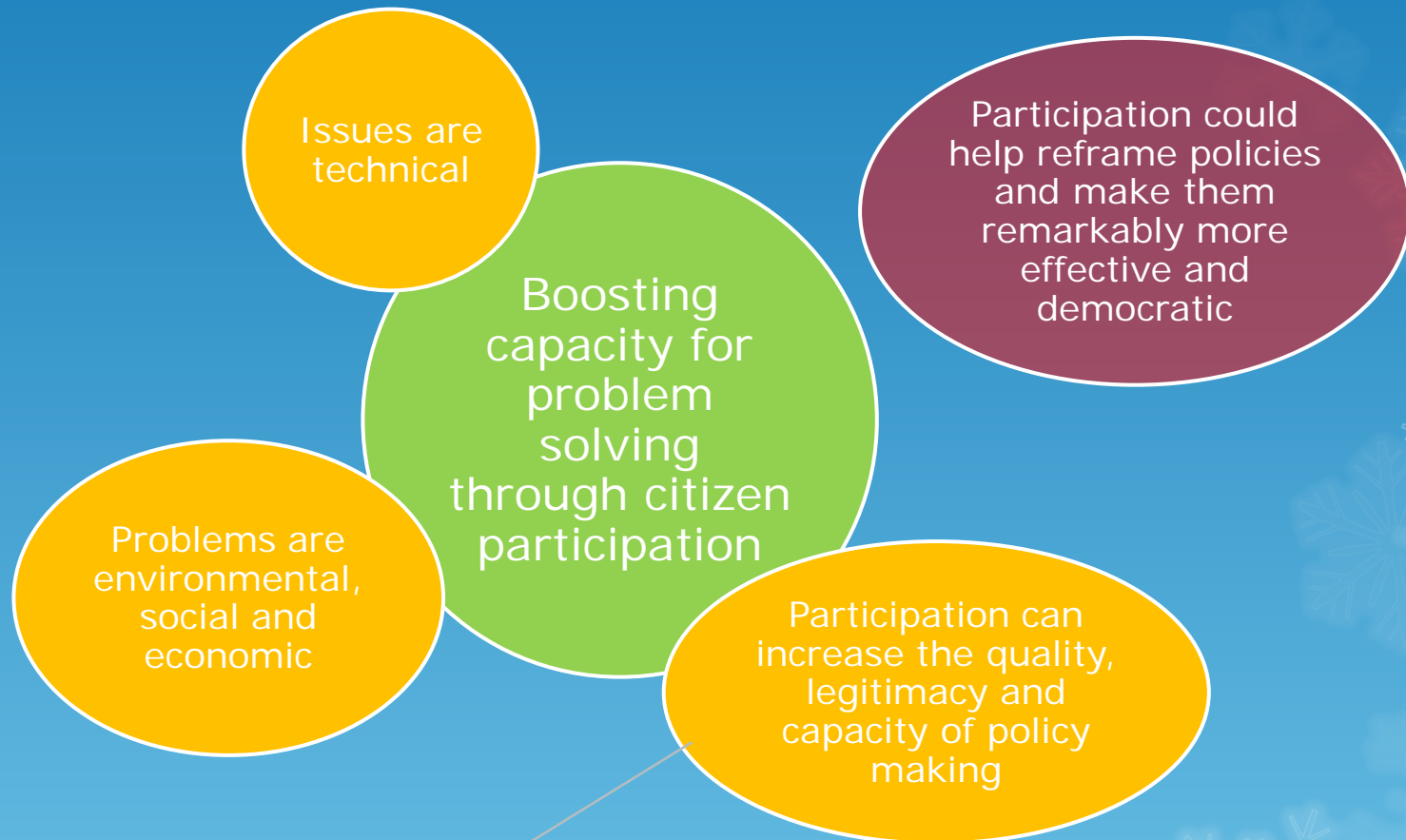
Development of
global citizen
participation

Our primary motivation in this report is to better understand what role (if any) a distributed network such as ECAST can play in conducting and institutionalizing pTA in the U.S.”
(Worthington et al., 2012)

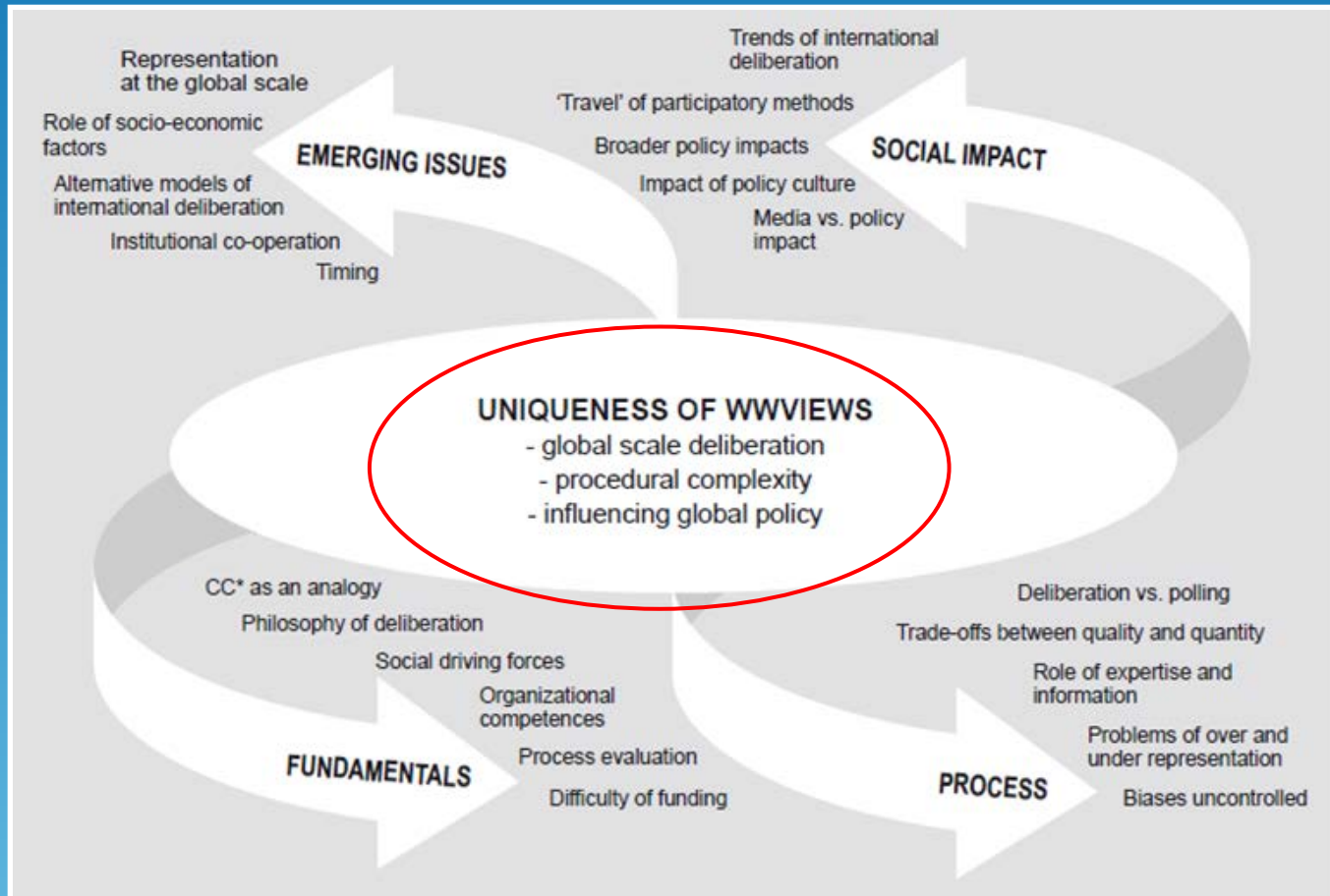
Institutionalization of
participatory technology
assessment in the U.S.

“World Wide Views on Global Warming (WWViews) aimed to give a broad sample of citizens from across the Earth the opportunity to influence global climate policy. An overarching purpose was to set a groundbreaking precedent by demonstrating that political decision-making processes on a global scale benefit when everyday people participate.”
(DBT, 2009)

Common terrain



Problem: participation at the global level is abstract



Local issues go straight to the heart



Solution:
new models of multi-level
governance

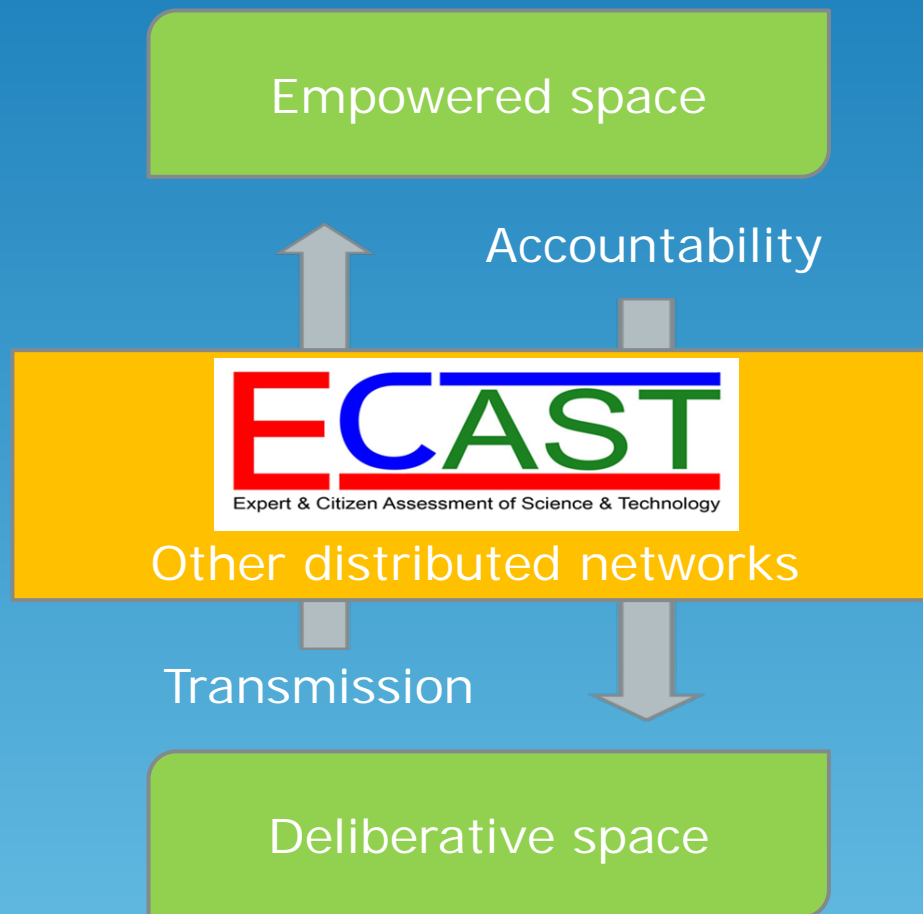
From local to global

WORLD WIDE VIEWS ON
Biodiversity 

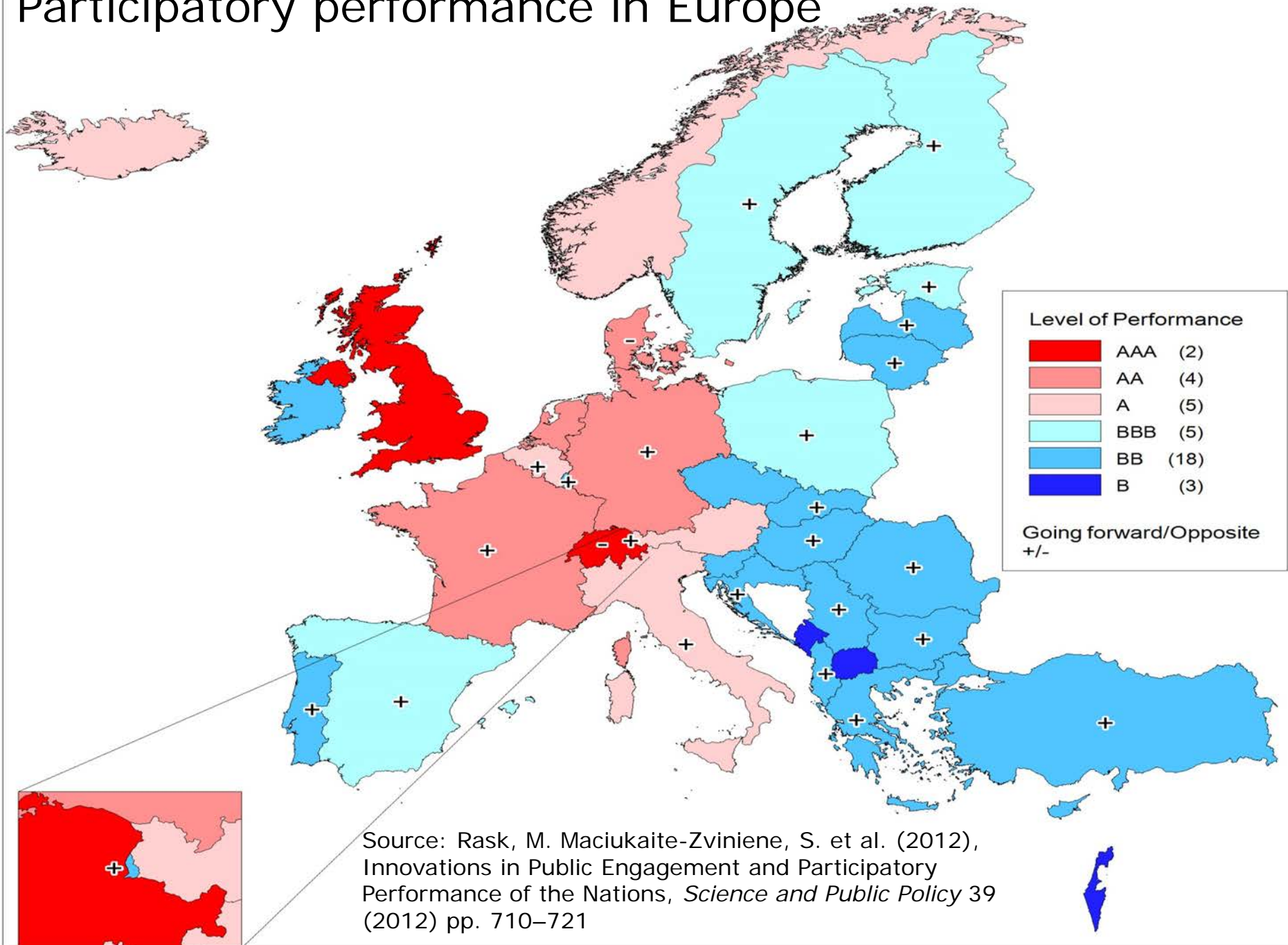
ECAST
Expert & Citizen Assessment of Science & Technology



From deliberation to decision making



Participatory performance in Europe



Case Finland

- Finnish Institute for Deliberative Democracy (DDI) founded in September 2012
 - A network that creates a contact point between scholars, practitioners and policy makers
 - Include members e.g. from
 - NCRC with 20 years of experience with focus groups and other participatory workshops
 - University of Vaasa, which has organized 17 deliberative citizen panels at the municipal and local level during the last 4 years
 - Finnish and Swedish folk high schools with curricula in civic activism and participation
 - Ministry of Justice with its e-democracy and open government projects

Conclusions 1 - collaboration

- ECAST is not alone in advocating pTA!
 - EPTA will be an important collaborator; new pTA actors are emerging on the European map (e.g. the Fondation Sciences Citoyennes (est. 2002), Vivagora (2003), and the Sciences et Démocratie (2005) in France) - [www.masis.eu]
- WWViews is unique in institutional development
 - WWViews Biodiversity was a equilibrium in the Tàpiesian sense, and needs to be rebalanced in the following respects:
 - scientific robustness, increased deliberation, multi-level governance
- Research collaboration within the WWViews Alliance should be strenghtened
 - to evaluate - but even more importantly, to study and develop the transnational deliberation concept

Conclusions 2 - Capacity

- The influence of the national environment in developing pTA capacity is vital, since it shapes how specialized skills and resources are developed, how opportunities are perceived and deployed, and how resources are mobilized in rapid and efficient ways: *
- Participatory resources
 - regulations supporting PE activities; **community of practitioners**; institutional infrastructures supporting participation, e.g. e-governance portals; **links to educational institutions**; upgrading of participatory skills and procedures; funding opportunities.
- Demand conditions
 - national culture of public debate and criticism; **level of public education**; **stage of institutional development of a nation**; saturation of a participatory market; level of techno-scientific controversy; social capital.
- Related and supportive factors
 - activity of NGOs and civil society movements; **networking and coordination between participative actors**; **availability of examples of success**.
- Governmental strategies and approaches
 - strategies and ideas of citizen participation; **history with deliberative and participatory processes**; competing national priorities; international pressure