

# Proceedings of the China-India-US Workshop on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy

## Preface

The Sino-US science policy dialogues began in 1999. The first Sino-US science policy seminar, held in Beijing in October of that year, addressed R&D and the Knowledge-Based Society. Over three days the expert participants analyzed ways in which the production, dissemination and application are linked, with emphasis on the US-China relationship.

The 1999 seminar and the nine seminars, workshops and forums that followed were all part of a carefully planned initiative to address US-China relationships in science and technology policy. This initiative was conceived and supported by the US National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC). It was carried out on the US side through grants to the George Mason University Science and Trade Policy Program. Proceedings of all these events can be accessed at: [http://www.law.gmu.edu/nctl/stpp-us\\_china.php](http://www.law.gmu.edu/nctl/stpp-us_china.php). This has become one of the most popular “Goggle” sites related to US-China Science Policy issues.

Prior to 2008, participation in two of these approximately annual series of Sino-US science policy dialogues was expanded to include participants from third countries. The December 2003 seminar on Science, Society, and the Internet, held at the East-West Center in Honolulu, was a tri-national event which included Japanese participants. The December 2005 seminar on R&D Related to Emerging and Re-emerging Infections Diseases, held at Boston University, included Korean participants.

The July 2008 Workshop on Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy, held at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) in Bangalore, India, was the third such tri-national seminar. This event was supported by the Indo-US Science and Technology Forum with additional support from NIAS and the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The Bangalore seminar was the capstone of what had been conceived of in 1999 as a decade of science policy dialogues. It was arguably the most productive of the three tri-national dialogues in the series, and certainly one of the most productive of the entire series of dialogues that was initiated in 1999. There are at least three reasons for this assessment:

*First*, both China and India qualify as the world’s principal re-emerging economies<sup>1</sup>, and base their re-emergence in large measure on marshalling their science and engineering

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1. It has been estimated that when the Roman Empire was at its zenith, it accounted for approximately one-fifth of the world’s economy. At that time, India is estimated to have accounted for one-third and China for one-fourth. J. Thomas Ratchford and William A. Blanpied, “Paths to the future for science and technology

capabilities which are making them increasingly significant science and engineering players on the world scene.

*Second*, the core of the workshop consisted of three specific case studies in areas of concern to all three countries which participated: 1) Power Generation by Coal, 2) Information Technology, and 3) Pharmaceuticals.

*Third*, the Bangalore participants were dominated by young people. Approximately 50 percent were younger than 40, with perhaps 75 percent less than 30.

One objective of the workshop was to introduce policy experts from each of the three countries to the science, technology, and innovation systems of the other two. A corollary objective was to stimulate subsequent, in depth bi- and even tri-lateral collaborations. Although it is too early to determine the extent to which this second objective was achieved, by the time the workshop adjourned, at least two different groups were already discussing the feasibility of specific collaborative projects.

An objective of the entire decade-long series of science policy dialogues has been to be useful both to policy makers, and to concerned members of the science, engineering, and policy communities. To this end, the George Mason University Science and Trade Policy Program has initiated a web-based policy-briefs program that provides access to relatively short, eight to 10 page briefs about significant current issues that impact the US-China science and technology relationship, each with numerous links to other relevant websites. These policy briefs can be accessed at [www.law.gmu.edu/nctl/stpp/policy\\_brief.php](http://www.law.gmu.edu/nctl/stpp/policy_brief.php). A majority of the existing briefs have been developed by participants in former Sino-US policy dialogues. We anticipate that several of the Bangalore participants will ultimately make their own contributions to this program.

As noted in the preface to an early publication under the Sino-US policy dialogue initiative, identifying and implementing sound science and technology policies is in many ways more complicated than just doing good science. The boundary conditions are more complex and uncertain, with national and geopolitical considerations that are hard to define and are ever changing. People are more complicated than things. Although the challenge is great, it is almost certain that better policies will result from better understanding on the part of policy makers. This is true even if that understanding is incomplete or temporary. We sincerely hope the results of this workshop will contribute to at least some degree of that better understanding.

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in China, India, and the United States,” *Technology in Society*, v. 30, #s 3-4, August-November 2008, p. 212.