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# The Impact of Selected Foresight Studies

Michael Rader

Institute for Technology Assessment and System Analysis  
Karlsruhe Research Centre  
Karlsruhe, Germany



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## Outline

1. Measuring Impact
2. Findings on Impact
3. Types of Impact
4. How to Proceed



# The Impact of Selected Foresight Studies

## 1. Measuring Impact

- **It is difficult to measure impact of foresight-like studies**
- **Main information on impact of foresight is from official reports and actors**
- **Most frequent use of some policy studies is to reinforce existing views (experience from TA)**



## **The Impact of Selected Foresight Studies**

### **Types of Impact**

- **Impact due to method vs. Impact due to results**
- **Is method/approach selected best way to achieve desired goals?**
- **Have stated objectives been achieved?**
- **Have objectives changed or shifted during the process?**
- **One time impact vs. Recurring impact**
- **Indirect impact of the project**
- **Delayed impacts (vs. Immediate impacts)**



## The Impact of Selected Foresight Studies

### Areas of Impact:

- **Science and technology (policy)**
- **The Innovation System (research, industry etc.)**
- **Society at large, e.g.**
  - **NGOs, consumer organisations, users**
  - **Press, media**
  - **Scientific debate**



## **The Impact of Selected Foresight Studies**

### **Preliminary Findings (1):**

- **In some countries, there has been impact of foresight on national science and technology priorities (CR as extreme case)**
- **Major benefit of many recent exercises is creation of networks to increase cohesion between the science base and users/beneficiaries of science results in society and industry**
- **In some countries, foresight has spawned offspring, e.g. foresight by others**



## The Impact of Selected Foresight Studies

### Preliminary findings (ii):

- **Too early to assess the validity of science related expectations, articles on Delphi underline accuracy of Delphi predictions, but Swedish „Technology Hindsight“ identifies common sources of errors**
- **In most countries, foresight is being continued after first exercise**
- **Reinforcing positions or encouraging policy makers to decide in certain way might also be impact**



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### What to do?

- **Genuine assessment of impact only through additional information from network members**
- **In addition, survey (structured interview or questionnaire) among main actors in each foresight exercise required to measure impact**
- **The impact of recent exercises will only become visible as time progresses**





## The Impact of Selected Foresight Studies

### Conclusions

- **Too early to assess real impact of studies and mainly biased information**
- **There are indications that foresight has had impact on S&T policy,**
- **Benefits of networking often stressed**
- **Some foresight has already spawned „offspring“**

