

Global Environmental Assessment Project

based at

Harvard University

University Committee on the Environment

sponsored by

**NSF, NOAA, DOE, NASA, EPA, NIGEC,
and others**

Project Objectives

- **Deepen critical understanding of the relationships among research, assessment and management in the global environmental arena**
- **Enhance communication among scholars and practitioners of global environmental assessments**
- **Illuminate contemporary choices facing the designers of global environmental assessments.**

Participants

- **Core Faculty and Staff**

Bill Clark, Director

Barbara Connolly

Nancy Dickson, Assoc. Dir.

Robert Frosch

John Holdren

Jill Jaeger

Sheila Jasanoff

Robert Keohane

James McCarthy

Ronald Mitchell

Edward Parson

Daniel Schrag

- **Pre-Doctoral, Post-Doctoral, & Faculty Fellows (~21 to date)**

- **Faculty, Research, & Fellow Affiliates (~17)**

Activities

- **5 year project begun in 1996**
- **Fellows' Working Paper Series**
- **Practitioner & Scholar Workshops**
- **<http://environment.harvard.edu/gea>**

Issues

- **Climate Change**
 - IPCC
 - US National Assessment
- **Tropospheric Air Pollutants**
 - Acid Rain
 - Ozone
- **Stratospheric Ozone**
- **ENSO Events**

Defining Assessment

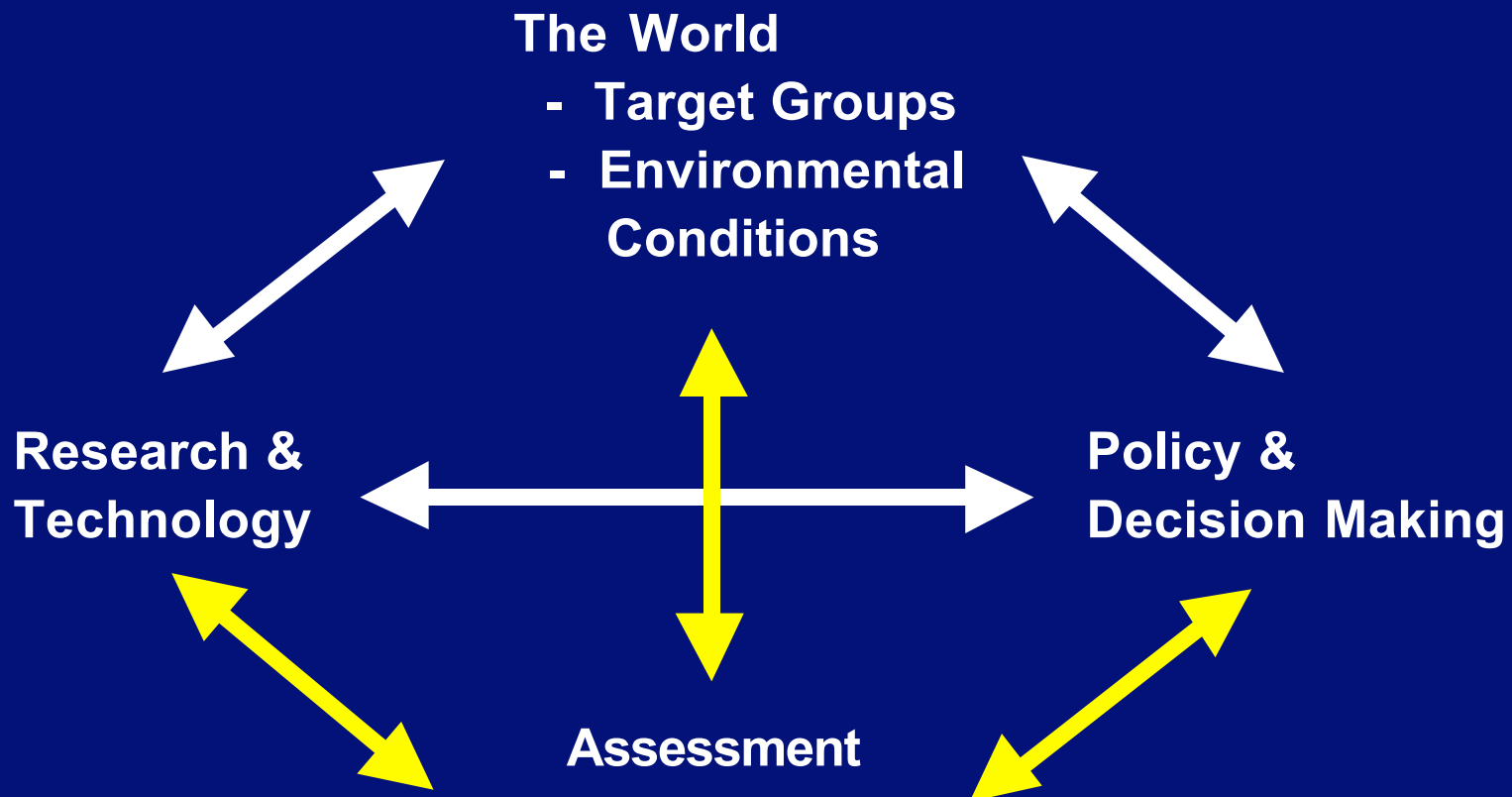
The Bridge Between Science and Policy

- **As a report**
- **As a social communication process**
- **As an information and decision support system**

Defining Assessment

- **Systematically synthesizes existing knowledge**
- **Develops a science- and technology-based understanding for policy makers**
- **Produces identifiable products**
- **Authorized by identifiable institutions**

A Conceptual Framework



Effective Assessments

- **Contextual Determinants**
- **Historical Context**
 - issue cycle
- **Social & Institutional Context**
- **Issue Characteristics**
 - value conflicts, spatial & temporal scale
- **User Characteristics**
 - interest, capacity, openness

Effective Assessments

- **Contextual Determinants**
- **Institutional Design**
- **Science/Policy Interface**
 - boundary organizations & objects
- **Participation**
 - “Segmenting the legitimacy market”
- **Uncertainty & Dissent**
 - risk, uncertainty, & indeterminacy

Effective Assessments

- **Contextual Determinants**
- **Institutional Design**
- **Elements of Effectiveness**
- **Saliency**
 - relevance & value
- **Credibility**
 - authoritativeness
- **Legitimacy**
 - fairness & openness