In the Society and Policy Making work group four presenters addressed the topic of society and policy making from a different perspective.

Dr. Issa Kalantari underlined the linkages between disparities in access to the benefits that science and technology brings with the international politics of globalization, the immense power of the west of informing the agenda, including the agenda of international organizations, and the critical need for improvements towards accountable governance in developing countries. Dr. Kalantari identified linkages between governance, science and the major questions of our time, including poverty, sustainable development, human rights, peace and security. Dr. Kalantari emphasized the role of citizens in pressing governments to respond to problems that affect their day to day life. Improved participation and influence by the public, and enhancing a meaningful role for civil society and NGOs in developing countries are particularly important. Dr. Kalantari suggested that it is critically important that the UN system focus comprehensively on eradicating corruption – this being a primary obstacle to the improvement of the well-being of the majority of the world’s population. He also proposed that the international community looked at options for an international tax on practices that strip the earth’s resources.

Dr. Douglas Pattie brought his experience from the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, but, today, chose to address strategies to Integrate Traditional and Modern Knowledge. He reminded us that two thirds of our world live in survival economies, and of the importance of focusing on the needs of the majority. He noted, thus far, discussion had focused more on top-down approaches that use high-end technology. He suggested that we need to consider the role of traditional knowledge as central to ensuring the relevance of science and technology. Thus, it is more important to focus on the use of traditional knowledge rather than its protection from an intellectual property perspective. Among his suggestions, he recommends experts listen to local knowledge-holders, adopt a participatory bottom-up approach, with farmer-at center, and identify mechanisms to share TK (or traditional knowledge). Dr. Pattie suggest that in exploring the relationship between policy decision-making and capacity, empowerment is essential.

Professor Akihiro Abe of Tokyo Polytechnic University emphasized that we all can benefit from a better understanding of the entropy equation which chemical scientists are well familiar with, yet ill-practiced in developing to society and policy makers. He suggests that chemical and material scientists can contribute to understanding of science and the limits to the earth’s resources in policy making. He suggested chemical and materials scientists have much to offer broader debates and policy making. Rather originally, Professor Abe identified Peace as a minimum entropy equation.

Professor Abe introduced a proposal for a global project titled Total Study of the Earth- Involving UNU/UNESCO, ICSU and IUPAC in the Age of Science for Society.

As part of this process re recommends that a standing committee for the creation of a collective picture of our planet from the chemistry perspective sponsored by UNU/UNESCO and of the ISCU* International Council for Science (in collaboration with IUPAC*International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry) be established. The project would involve an active observational component with scientifically-
motivated people contributing by observing living and nonliving systems in their surroundings.

The underlying belief informing the project is that peace is essential and needs to be kept in mind when engaging in scientific endeavors.

**Dr. Taeb of the UNU-IAS delivered the presentation for Professor K.R. Sreenivasan of ICTP.** He outlined the history of globalization and suggested that the universal values of science make it, in some sense, a natural ally of globalization. Sreenivasan identifies that while there is emerging resistance to globalization – terrorism, extremism, provincialism, protectionism – technology is developing in a way which cannot be reversed.

He identified the role of globalization in contributing to the brain drain of scientists in the developing world, and suggested that what is key is to enable short term mobility for scientists to develop expertise and participate in exchange of information with overseas experts and institutions, while developing incentives for them to return home. He suggested that thoughtful people now agree that building scientific capacity in all parts of the world is essential.

Professor Sreenivasan identified that intellectual property is potentially a tool for the benefits of large parts of the poor population of the planet, yet identified that currently it is not the poor nor developing countries benefiting most from intellectual property rights nor the technologies to which they relate. Professor Sreenivasan identified that it is important for enhancement of the connection between science and wealth creation.

Finally, and critically, Professor Sreenivasan emphasized that given the earth’s finite resources, poor countries cannot follow the same technological path that industrial countries followed. They must look now for alternative approaches that will put them in a strong position into the future. For this, they need access to science and technology.

**Discussions focused on the need for policy makers and scientists to work together at an early stage.** The Rector of the United Nations University suggested that in discussing globalization people bring different understandings of what globalization means. Analysis of the consequences of globalization in specific contexts must inform effective discussion and the identification of strategic approaches.

**The Challenge for the United Nations System is to facilitate effective and meaningful exchange between policy makers and scientists at an early stage, and in specific contexts.** The dilemma between analytical scientific approach and policy approach is for scientists and policy makers working together, not in general terms but targeted towards specific crucial topics. Each field will have a different type of discourse, needing to bring different people together to come to conclusions. These are steps that can be taken at both the national and international levels.