Deliberative Mini-publics and the Global Deliberative System: Insights from an Evaluation of World Wide Views on Global Warming in Australia

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Introduction

In December 2009, more than 25,000 people converged on Copenhagen's Bella Center for the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP-15. They came together to discuss the international response to climate change, to try and influence the discussions, or to observe or report on them. Among the participants were 120 Heads of State empowered to act on behalf of their citizens, supported by delegations of Ministers and bureaucrats. Dimitrov (2010: 18) contends that COP-15 brought together 'the highest concentration of robust decision-making power the world had seen.'

Yet this unprecedented gathering of global decision-makers was unable to deliver an effective global response to climate change. The Copenhagen Accord that emerged from COP-15 was not legally binding and was not formally adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. While climate scientists warn that the rise in global average temperatures must be kept to less than 2° C to avoid dangerous climate change (Allison *et al.* 2009; Rockström *et al.* 2009), and this is the stated goal

of the Copenhagen Accord, the pledges contained in the Accord are not sufficient to prevent global average temperatures from rising by more than 2° C (Dimitrov 2010; Rogelj *et al.* 2010) and perhaps as high as 3.5° C (Kartha 2010). The subsequent United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancun, COP-16, gave formal status to the Copenhagen Accord but did not make it legally binding or increase its emission reduction ambition.

The outcome of COP-15 fuelled existing debates about the ability of current systems of international governance to satisfactorily respond to global challenges like climate change. There is a large and diverse body of literature proposing normative global governance systems. Some, like James Lovelock (Hickman 2010), propose more authoritarian responses to environmental challenges. Frustrated with the performance of the United Nations, some propose the replacement of multilateral negotiations with an exclusive 'minilateralism' (Naim 2009), reducing the number of negotiating nations to a smaller set, such as the Group of Twenty (G20) or major emitters. Others see the extension of market mechanisms delivering more effective global governance of climate change (Pearce 2008; Stripple 2010). Still others are committed to democratisation of global governance, through the institutionalisation of cosmopolitan philosophy (Held 2009), establishment of frameworks for earth system governance (Biermann 2007; Biermann et al. 2010), reform of the United Nations (Figueres 2007), development of new global representative bodies (Raskin & Xercavins 2010) or the promotion of global deliberative politics (Dryzek 2006, 2011; Bohman 2010; Dryzek & Stevenson 2011).

In this paper, our focus is on the potential contribution of deliberative democracy to more effective—and more democratic—global environmental governance. The 'deliberative turn' in democratic theory has 'put communication and reflection at the center of democracy' so that democracy 'is not just about the making of decisions through the aggregation of preferences' but 'also about processes of judgment and preference formation and transformation within informed, respectful, and competent dialogue' (Dryzek 2011: 3). Thus deliberative democracy puts talking, rather than voting, at the heart of democracy (Chambers 2003). In addition to an expanding body of normative theory on deliberative democracy, there is also growing empirical and practical experience with its application to environmental governance (e.g. Backstrand *et al.* 2010) and with the design and implementation of temporary deliberative

institutions (Fung 2003; Chambers 2009; Smith, G 2009; Dryzek 2011). The latter are often discrete, facilitated events that bring together relatively small numbers of ordinary citizens to deliberate, typically on issues that are controversial or defy more conventional decision-making processes. Fung (2003) calls these deliberative events *mini-publics*; they include diverse techniques such as deliberative polls, citizens' juries and consensus conferences, often involving randomly selected citizens (Smith, G. 2009).

Mini-publics offer a practical means to investigate the conditions for facilitating deliberation but the contribution of discrete mini-publics to the normative goal of creating a more deliberative democracy remains uncertain (Chambers 2009; Dryzek 2011). Chambers (2009) argues that an exclusive focus on such discrete deliberative initiatives risks abandonment of larger questions about how civil society relates to the state. Dryzek (2011) is generally supportive of mini-publics but locates them within large-scale political systems where they may or may not contribute to the emergence of more deliberative systems. Our intent in this paper is to examine the role that deliberative mini-publics can play in facilitating the emergence of a global deliberative system for climate change response. We pursue this intent through a reflective evaluation of the Australian component of the World Wide Views on Global Warming project (WWViews).

WWViews was an ambitious attempt to democratise COP-15 by giving people from around the world an opportunity to deliberate on international climate policy and to make recommendations to the delegations meeting in Copenhagen. The Danish Board of Technology (DBT) and the Danish Cultural Institute (DCI) initiated the project as a way of feeding public deliberative opinion into national and international climate change decision-making processes (Danish Board of Technology 2009b). Held on 26 September 2009, with roughly 4,000 participants across 38 countries, WWViews was the first attempt to create a deliberative mini-public at a global scale. The Australian WWViews event brought 100 randomly selected citizens from across Australia to Sydney to deliberate for a day and a half.

As an example of a deliberative mini-public, WWViews provides an opportunity to reflect on theoretical concerns about the role of mini-publics in furthering the cause of deliberative democracy. Further, as a global mini-public, WWViews potentially reveals new challenges for deliberative democratisation of global governance systems.

Therefore, the objective of our evaluation is to draw out lessons for the design of future mini-publics, particularly at a global scale.

We reflect on WWViews from the perspective of one of the National Partners in WWViews, responsible for organising the Australian WWViews event. As such, it is not our intention to evaluate the entire WWViews project across all of the participating countries. Instead, we evaluate the Australian event and our partial experiences of the international project. We do not provide detailed descriptions of the project and its outcomes, except where these are needed to support our evaluation. Full reports on the Australian WWViews event (Atherton & Herriman 2009) and the global WWViews project (Danish Board of Technology 2009b) are available to interested readers.[1]

Normative characteristics of deliberative systems

To reflect on the contribution of WWViews we first need to establish an evaluative framework. To do this we reflect on existing evaluative frameworks for public participation processes in general and deliberative events in particular, and existing approaches to assessing the deliberativeness of socio-political systems. From this we draw a set of evaluative criteria to apply to this case.

Evaluative frameworks for public participation processes (e.g. Burton 2009; Rowe & Frewer 2004; Rowe & Frewer 2000) and sets of principles for community engagement (International Conference on Engaging Communities 2005; NCDD 2009) are readily available. However, few of these frameworks and principles specifically draw attention to the quality of deliberation. One exception is the Brisbane Declaration of the International Conference on Engaging Communities, which identifies integrity, inclusion, deliberation and influence as the core principles of community engagement (International Conference on Engaging Communities 2005). Drawing on Carson and Hartz-Karp (2005: 122) and the text of the Brisbane Declaration, these principles can be expressed as follows:

- *Integrity:* There should be 'openness and honesty about the scope and purpose of engagement' (International Conference on Engaging Communities 2005).
- *Inclusion:* The process should be representative of the population and inclusive of diverse viewpoints and values, providing equal opportunity for all to participate.
- *Deliberation:* The process should provide open dialogue, access to information, respect, space to

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[1] Additional information can be found at the Australian (http://wwviews.org.au) and international (http://wwviews.org) websites.

understand and reframe issues, and movement toward consensus.
- *Influence:* The process should have the ability to influence policy and decision-making.

These principles provide a useful starting point for evaluating WWViews as a community engagement process. However, more specific literature on the normative characteristics of deliberative processes helps to flesh out these principles, particularly the latter three.

Edwards *et al*. (2008) offer a more detailed evaluation framework, developed specifically for deliberative events. They propose and apply 37 evaluation criteria covering inputs (for example, diversity of participants, training for facilitators), process (covering quality of dialogue, participant knowledge and logistics) and outputs (i.e. new discourses and networks developed, and influence over policy). The criteria align well with the four principles above but provide more detailed questions to ask when evaluating a deliberative process, like WWViews.

We believe that these evaluative frameworks are more useful for our current purposes when considered within the context of a normative deliberative system. Mansbridge (1999) introduced the idea of a deliberative system that stretches beyond any single deliberative event and Dryzek (2009, 2011) developed a generally applicable scheme for analysing deliberative systems comprising:

- *Public space*, ideally allowing free communication with few barriers or legal restrictions on what can be said. Designed citizen forums like WWViews occur in public space, as does media commentary, political activism, public consultation and informal conversation. For discussions on global climate change response, global civil society provides an important deliberative arena within public space (Brassett & Smith, W 2010).
- *Empowered space,* 'home to deliberation among actors in institutions clearly producing collective decisions' (Dryzek 2011: 11). These institutions can be formal or informal and include legislatures, cabinets, courts, or international negotiations like those at COP-15.
- *Transmission* refers to 'some means through which deliberation in public space can influence that in empowered space' (Dryzek 2011: 11). Transmission can occur through advocacy, criticism, questioning, support or other means.
- *Accountability,* 'whereby empowered space answers to public space' (Dryzek 2011: 11). Elections are one form of accountability and others can occur through public consultation processes or simply giving a public account that justifies decisions.
- *Meta-deliberation,* 'or deliberation about how the deliberative system itself should be organized' (Dryzek 2011: 12). Dryzek argues that a healthy deliberative system should have the capacity for self-examination and potentially self-transformation.
- *Decisiveness* captures the idea that a functioning deliberative system should be able to make collective decisions that are responsive to the other five elements.

Bohman (2010a) draws further attention to the elements of a deliberative system when he argues that both communicative freedom and communicative power are essential to democratisation. Communicative freedom 'is the exercise of a communicative status,

the status of being recognised as a member of the public. Communicative freedom is transformed into communicative power when it is incorporated into institutionalised processes of decision making' (Bohman 2010a: 432). Communicative freedom is an aspect of Dryzek's public space and the existence of mini-publics is a testament to communicative freedom. However, the transformation of communicative freedom into communicative power is very challenging. Dryzek identifies mechanisms of transmission and accountability through which communicative power could be developed but says little about how citizens in public space can accumulate the power to effectively use these mechanisms. Thus issues of power need to be taken into account in our evaluative framework.

Dryzek (2011) argues that a system has deliberative capacity to the extent that it can accommodate deliberation that is *authentic*, *inclusive* and *consequential*. Deliberation is authentic if it is 'able to induce reflection upon preferences in noncoercive fashion and involve communicating in terms that those who do not share one's point of view can find meaningful and accept' (Dryzek 2011: 10). This notion of authenticity adds a new dimension to the principle of deliberation from the Brisbane Declaration above. Dryzek's (2011) other two criteria, inclusivity and consequentiality, align closely with the principles of inclusion and influence respectively from the Brisbane Declaration. However, Dryzek and Niemeyer (2010: 43) point out that deliberative democracy 'can entail the representation of discourses as well as persons, interests, or groups' and inclusion of diverse discourses may be as or more important than demographic representation (although demographic representation remains important for both procedural fairness (Brackertz & Meredyth, 2008: 11) and as a way to deliver diversity of discourse). This leads to a richer understanding of the principle of inclusion.

Following on from the above discussion, our evaluation of WWViews will proceed in two stages. First, we will situate WWViews as a component within a normative global deliberative system for decision-making on climate change. Second, we will evaluate WWViews against four principles that integrate the above sources:

- *Integrity*: the origins and purpose of the deliberative process should be transparent and the process should be adequately resourced and respectfully facilitated without any attempt to influence the outcomes.
- *Inclusion*: The process should be representative of the affected population and their diverse discourses and provide equal opportunity for all to participate.
- *Authentic deliberation*: The process should support communicative freedom by providing access

> to information, space for open and respectful dialogue between participants and sufficient time for reflection. It should encourage but not coerce reflection on preferences.
> • *Influence and consequence*: The process should develop the communicative power to make a difference, whether by influencing policy and decision-making or facilitating broader sociocultural change (e.g. new discourses or networks).

These four principles capture a normative ideal for a deliberative mini-public. As others have pointed out (Backstrand *et al*. 2010a), real practice inevitably falls short of the deliberative ideal, yet these principles do provide a useful evaluative vantage point for suggesting future progress towards such an ideal.

WWViews in a global deliberative system

Dryzek's (2009) conception of a deliberative system was first published in April 2009, when the WWViews process had already been designed. Consequently, the organisers around the world did not have the benefit of this thinking and terminology to conceptualise how WWViews could contribute to a deliberative global system. What follows, then, is not intended as criticism of the project for failing to apply this concept but an attempt to use this emerging concept to open up a broader conversation about the future of global mini-publics. We analyse WWViews as an element within a global deliberative system, which helps to both explain what WWViews sought to achieve and to highlight the challenges it and future mini-publics face.

Public space

The global WWViews project brought together 44 separate mini-publics in simultaneous events run by local organisations in 38 participating countries.[2] Each event involved around 100 participants and together the events brought together a global mini-public of more than 4,000 people. Although the DBT and DCI provided global coordination of the project, the national implementation was the responsibility of partner organisations in each country, which were typically universities or non-government organisations with interest in citizen engagement and democracy.

WWViews took place in public space as an exercise in communicative freedom—a response to the perception of a democratic gap between citizens and policymakers and a need to involve citizens more directly in deliberation on global climate change policy

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[2] Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium (Flanders), Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Saint Lucia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Maldives, Uganda, United Kingdom, Uruguay, USA, and Vietnam.

(Danish Board of Technology 2009b). It did not have any formal decision-making status itself but sought to exert influence on decision-makers. As an exercise within global public space, WWViews entered into a clamorous climate policy debate, populated by multiple competing discourses (Dryzek 2011). Some of the challenges for mini-publics in such a crowded public space include being heard at all, and being seen as a legitimate voice of global civil society. This latter challenge is particularly difficult given the diverse discourses that play out within global civil society (Brassett & Smith 2010).

Empowered space

According to the Danish Board of Technology (2009: 10), the 'target groups for receiving the WWViews results are politicians, negotiators and interest groups engaged in the UN climate negotiations leading up to COP15 and beyond.' The empowered space addressed here is a complex one, comprising decision-making bodies such as parliaments and cabinets within nation-states and formal and informal negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

WWViews sought to influence this empowered space in multiple ways, outlined in more detail below. We believe, however, that the project did not develop sufficient understanding of the mechanisms of this empowered space. For example, despite long lead-time in planning the global project, all of the WWViews deliberative events were scheduled to take place only two months before COP-15, when negotiating positions for many countries had already firmed. Earlier engagement with empowered space at national scales could have increased the potential to influence negotiating positions. Instead, there was a strong emphasis on influencing the negotiations themselves, which was perhaps an unrealistic goal given that negotiators would have limited flexibility to alter their position at COP-15 based on their mandate from national empowered space.

Transmission

The organisers of WWViews were very aware that a mini-public can only influence empowered space if it works to develop a means of transmission to empowered space. Consequently, much effort was put into development of dissemination strategies in each participating country. In Australia, we sought to influence government decision makers by engaging them *directly* with the results and process, and also sought to influence policy *indirectly* by introducing new discourses into public space. The dissemination strategy had three components:

- Political engagement strategy: engaging directly with politicians and policy makers through meetings and provision of reports, and supporting participant outreach to politicians. The goal was to influence politicians and policy makers to at least reflect on their own positions and perhaps adopt positions more consistent with those expressed by the mini-public.
- Media and communications strategy: use of a website, media releases, social media and direct contacts with journalists to increase media coverage of WWViews and introduce the positions expressed by the participants into public debate. This was accompanied by a strategy of communications that engaged directly (via project newsletters and invitations to become involved) with key stakeholders such as environment NGOs, senior bureaucrats and businesses. The goal was to disseminate a new discourse that could shift the public debate and increase pressure on decision-makers within empowered space to deliberate on their positions.
- Research strategy: this included critical reflection on WWViews and provision of information about the WWViews process to business leaders, teaching and learning institutions, professionals from varied fields, researchers, and citizens. The aim here was not to influence empowered space on climate change policy but to build awareness of deliberative mini-publics so that others might consider this kind of approach in the future.

The success of this transmission strategy will be considered in a later section. Here, it is sufficient to point out that the conversion of communicative freedom into communicative power is difficult for a mini-public operating with limited resources in a crowded public space.

Accountability

Following on from this last point, a mini-public convened in public space has few avenues to hold empowered space to account. Elections are the main accountability mechanism in liberal democracies and politicians are unlikely to feel that the views of a mini-public convened on a single issue are going to make much difference to the choices of the voting public. Mini-publics often turn to other forms of accountability, such as asking decision-makers to 'give an account' of how they will respond to the views of the mini-public.

We were not able to persuade any Australian politicians to accept the results from WWViews and make a statement on how they would respond. We did, however, obtain a letter and video message endorsing the event, prior to it being held, from the Federal Minister for Climate Change and Water, Penny Wong. In addition, Australia's Climate Change Ambassador, Louise Hand, spoke in person at the event. This association of politicians with a mini-public opens up the potential to hold them accountable through the public sphere, by pointing out their support for the event and drawing their attention publicly to the results. Nevertheless, this is a weak and tenuous form of accountability and establishment of reliable accountability mechanisms is perhaps the single biggest challenge for mini-publics contributing to the development a deliberative system.

Meta-deliberation

There was no significant reflection in advance about the role of WWViews in facilitating the establishment of a broader deliberative system, except for the optimistic intent that holding a global, linked series of events would raise the profile of citizen deliberation and highlight its potential benefit to policy makers and citizens. This intent was mirrored in the Australian event in which organisers identified two linked but distinct communication messages—the policy preferences of citizens, and the value of such processes for future policy making. One of the purposes of this paper is to contribute to meta-deliberation about the role of events like WWViews in a normative global deliberative system.

Decisiveness

As Dryzek (2011) points out, the global deliberative system has not been particularly decisive in its policy response to climate change, with global emissions continuing to rise and a lack of binding commitments to halt this rise. Given the problems of transmission and accountability identified above, WWViews offered little to improve the decisiveness of the global deliberative system. The position that emerges from analysing WWViews as a component in a broader deliberative system is that mini-publics are excellent examples of Bohman's communicative freedom but due to problems of transmission and accountability they fail to convert that freedom into communicative power. In the case of WWViews, it is very difficult to point to any real influence of the project on the empowered space that decides on climate change policy. We will take up this point again later in the paper.

Evaluating WWViews against norms of deliberative democracy

Above, we identified *integrity*, *inclusion*, *authentic deliberation* and *influence and consequence* as normative characteristics of deliberative democracy against which to evaluate WWViews. This section evaluates WWViews against these norms and discusses lessons that emerge.

Integrity

The origins and purpose of the deliberative process should be transparent and the process should be adequately resourced and respectfully facilitated without any attempt to influence the outcomes.

The organisers of WWViews in Australia sought to be open, honest and transparent

about the objectives of the project, the reasons for involving participants and what the project could realistically hope to achieve. Participants were given information prior to the event about the kind of process being used, why using this kind of process is important, who was responsible for initiating and organising the event and how the information about climate change and climate policy provided to participants was developed. Participants received information about the purpose of the event through newsletters, a website,[3] a dedicated participant support person and information packages. For example, the second newsletter for the Australian event stated that 'a full report on proceedings will be prepared by ISF and disseminated widely to decision-makers and other interested groups in the lead up to COP-15 in December.' It was also stressed to participants that there was no guarantee that the results of the project would influence decision-makers at COP-15.

Beyond misrepresentation of the purpose of an event, the main threats to the integrity of a mini-public are systematic bias in the information provided to participants or facilitation that influences the deliberations in particular directions. To address the first threat, the DBT established a rigorous process for developing the information provided to participants before and at the event. Participants in all countries received the same information—a booklet of background reading material in advance of the event and a set of videos shown during the event—translated into local languages. The material was based primarily on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fourth Assessment Report (IPCC 2007). The DBT established an international Scientific Advisory Board to review the information and the material was tested at an early stage of its development in citizen focus groups in different parts of the world. Partner organisations in each country were not allowed to add to the provided material or develop country-specific information for participants. These processes sought to eliminate any systematic bias in the information provided to participants.

To minimise the risk of facilitation that would influence the deliberations in a particular direction, the DBT sought to recruit partner organisations that were 'unbiased with regards to climate change' (Danish Board of Technology 2009b). Although the Institute for Sustainable Futures is an independent research institute, many of its researchers have commented in the public domain on what constitutes an effective response to

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[3] See: http://wwviews.org.au [Accessed 1 Sep. 2011].

climate change and taken critical positions against government policy on climate change. Therefore, to avoid influencing the views of the participants, the Institute for Sustainable Futures and WWF (one of the sponsors) did not take on facilitation roles during the event. Instead, a neutral lead facilitator was engaged and volunteer table facilitators were drawn from sponsors and other organisations perceived as having a more neutral position on the issue of climate change response. Whether the association of the Institute for Sustainable Futures and WWF with the event was itself enough to influence the deliberation in a particular direction is an open question, and one that we did not set out to test in our evaluation.

Evaluating the integrity of an event that you have designed is difficult. However, we can point to some evidence that the event did have integrity. First, the Australian results on issues such as the urgency of climate change response and the strength of the proposed policy responses did not differ substantially or systematically from those in other developed countries (Atherton & Herriman 2009; Danish Board of Technology 2009b), indicating that the facilitation in Australia did not influence the participants to take a stronger position than their international counterparts. Second, the quantitative evaluation surveys completed by participants and qualitative feedback comments revealed no significant criticism of the way the process was conducted or its objectives. To give one quantitative measure from the survey, 98 percent of survey respondents agreed that 'The event used my time productively.[4] Qualitative feedback indicated that participants felt the event was a good investment of their time, was well run, followed good process and made a meaningful contribution (Atherton & Herriman 2009).

Inclusion
The process should be representative of the affected population and their diverse discourses and provide equal opportunity for all to participate.

WWViews sought to include a representative group of countries in the global project, and to include citizens within each country that reflected the demographic distribution in that country 'with regards to age, gender, occupation, education, and geographical zone of residency (that is, city and countryside)' (Danish Board of Technology 2009: 8). The DBT (2009: 8) also specified that participants 'should not be experts on climate change, neither as scientists nor stakeholders.' Beyond these criteria, the DBT left the

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[4] This combines results for the three answer categories: Absolutely agreed; agreed; or somewhat agreed.

specific details of participant recruitment to the national partner organisations. WWViews did not specifically seek to include a representative set of discourses in the deliberations, as advocated by Dryzek (2011), although there was a tacit assumption that demographic diversity would deliver discourse diversity. We will start by evaluating inclusion within Australia, before broadening to evaluate inclusion at the global scale and then considering Dryzek's challenge to achieve discourse rather than demographic representation.

For the Australian WWViews event, Australian citizens were randomly recruited by a market research company to match national demographic quotas based on Australian Bureau of Statistics data for location, age, gender, ethnicity, income, household composition, employment status and education. The market research company randomly generated 5,000 telephone numbers and recruited a shortlist of 250 people via telephone interviews within this sample. The shortlist of 250 people was sent a complete information pack about the event and a Participant Agreement Form that they were asked to return if they wanted to participate. From the pool of returns, 110 participants were selected to match demographic quotas as closely as possible. On the day of the event, 105 participants took part.

Despite operating from a principle of inclusion, the participant recruitment process specifically excluded some groups and unintentionally excluded others. Dryzek (2011: 156) notes a general tendency for mini-publics to 'disproportionately attract politically active, highly educated, high income, and older participants.' Similarly, Halvorsen (2006: 153) finds that public meetings and other community engagement activities 'frequently generate viewpoints from a group of people older, whiter, more affluent, more educated, and more likely to be male than the citizens within their community.' WWViews Australia was somewhat typical in this respect.

Table 1 summarises the ways in which representation fell short of the demographic ideal. First, children under the age of 18 were excluded to simplify permission and supervision processes. While this is standard practice in many mini-publics it is not ideal, particularly on an issue like climate change that will strongly impact today's young people. As the worst impacts of climate change are projected to occur in the future if action is not taken, the children of today have a greater stake in decisions on climate change and their voice deserves to be included.

For WWViews Australia, the exclusion of children was exacerbated by under-representation of people aged 18–34. Sarkissian *et al.* (2009: 134) note that young people often don't become involved in community engagement approaches because they find them 'irrelevant, a waste of time and boring' and because they do not experience results relevant to their concerns. However, it is possible and important to find ways to engage youth in mini-publics and various guidelines are available for doing so (for example, Ministry of Youth Affairs 2003).

Characteristic	Issues
Geographic location	While all Australian states and territories were represented, including both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, participants from metropolitan New South Wales (NSW) were under-represented (15% of the total compared to the quota of 21%). The event was held in Metropolitan NSW (Sydney) and we assumed that participants would want to stay with their families rather than in a hotel close to the event, and designed our level of reimbursement for these participants accordingly. This lower level of support for out-of-pocket expenses may have contributed to under-representation of these participants.
Age	Participants under 18 were excluded to simplify permission and supervision processes. Participants aged 18-34 were substantially under-represented (19% of the total, compared to the quota of 36%) and participants aged 50-64 were over-represented (31% of the total compared to the quota of 21%).
Gender	No issues – approximately equal representation of males and females.
Ethnicity	Participants born outside Australia were under-represented (18% of the total compared to the quota of 24%). Indigenous Australians were represented in line with the quota.
Household income	No issues – income bands (from under $20,000 to over $120,000) were appropriately represented.
Household composition	Participants in the "other" household category (which includes, for example, share houses) were under-represented (8% of the total compared to a quota of 16%), but families with dependent children and couple/single with no dependent children were over-represented.
Work status	No issues – different types of work status (working, unemployed, student and retired) were appropriately represented.
Education	Participants with highest level of education "some secondary" were under-represented (11% compared to the quota of 16%) and participants with highest level of education "completed tertiary" were heavily over-represented (41% compared to a quota of 24%).

Table 1: Summary of representation problems for WWViews Australia.

Second, following the instructions provided by the DBT, participants that were professionally involved with climate change were excluded. The intention here was to ensure participation by ordinary citizens in a non-partisan forum and avoid a repeat of the partisan debates already prevalent on climate change. Partisan deliberation has different characteristics to non-partisan deliberation and is generally less able to achieve quality deliberation (Hendriks, Dryzek & Hunold 2007). In a random selection process like that used in Australia, exclusion of climate change experts is unnecessary, as few would be recruited and they would have little opportunity to unduly influence the deliberations. However, some of the other participating countries used processes other

than random selection to recruit participants and these processes could have been more open to dominance by partisan stakeholders if such stakeholders were not excluded.

Third, the recruitment process itself inevitably leads to exclusion of some groups of citizens. People not listed in telephone directories or with poor English communication skills would not have been recruited. This is reflected in under-representation of people born outside Australia and people with less formal education in the final group. We would expect people with higher levels of education and stronger English language skills to be more likely to understand what is being asked of them and to feel confident in their ability to participate, making them more likely to take up the offer.

Fourth, while ethnic diversity was sought through the recruitment category 'born outside Australia,' the participants did not fully reflect Australia's ethnic diversity. Participants on the day observed that the group was predominantly 'white' and, although we did not collect specific data on language groups, it appeared that most of the people born overseas were of European origin. This raises questions about the most appropriate recruitment variable to use to capture ethnic diversity, and whether there are significant cultural barriers to participation in an event of this type even within a single country. A more diverse and representative result could potentially be achieved by setting quotas for specific language groups, or countries of origin. As Brackertz & Meredyth (2008: 16) suggest, increasing participation in relation to characteristics that pose a barrier to participation requires thinking about how and where members of these groups already come together, which existing information networks already exist, who they trust, who influences the group, and how other organisations facilitate access.

However, this increases the time and cost for recruitment and potentially adds the need for interpreters, time to build relationships, and time for learning about and communicating through existing networks—making it difficult for mini-publics that are often already stretched for resources and may not have been designed with adequate timelines for engagement of this nature. A further area of research for Australian events could be the framing during recruitment or designing of such events to increase participation of culturally and linguistically diverse participants.

Fifth, as mentioned above, education levels represented at the event did not mirror the distribution within the population; there were proportionally more people with tertiary education and less with only some secondary education. Education levels can be a proxy

for ensuring socio-economic diversity and representation of a range of life experiences, including that of work. Interestingly, income and 'types of work' categories were still representative, and we achieved representation of a variety of household types, despite the under representation of participants with less formal education.

The group that participated in WWViews did constitute a diverse cross-section of Australian society that was demographically representative in most categories. In those categories in which representation fell short of the quotas, it is reasonable to assume that representation was better than it would have been without the efforts to meet the quotas, although it is not possible to prove this. The participants themselves felt that the mini-public was diverse; comments relating to diversity were one of the most frequent given to an open-ended 'what did you like best about today?' question posed at the end of the first half-day session. For example participants said: 'Surprisingly brilliant job of mixing up the cross-section of participants, definitely added to the interest and diversity of discussion,' 'Meeting people from a range of areas and different points of views has been very insightful and interesting' and 'Lovely to meet such a diverse bunch of Australians.' Nevertheless, the important exclusions identified above, most of which are typical of mini-publics, mean that WWViews fell short of an ideal of including the views of all stakeholders in climate change policy.

Additional problems of inclusion and representativeness emerge as we turn our attention to the global scale. If achieving demographic representation is difficult at a national level, as outlined above, then it becomes even more challenging to bring together a group of participants that is reasonably representative of the world demographic profile. In WWViews, the approach taken to this challenge was to recruit a representative group of nations into the project and to ask each nation to identify a representative group of participants within that nation. Recruitment of nations was opportunistic, drawing on networks of deliberative democracy practitioners around the world and requiring organisations to source their own funding to run a national event. There was targeted recruitment of developing nations and specific efforts to secure funding to allow poorer countries to participate. In the end, 38 countries participated, including 18 developed and 20 developing nations. All continents were represented, but there were important regional gaps; most notably, despite attempts to identify suitable partner organisations, there was no participation from the Middle East or Central Asian countries.

Apart from these gaps, the group of participating nations was reasonably representative of the diversity of world nations. It also included many of the major players in international climate change negotiations, such as the United States, China, India, Brazil, South Africa and several European Union members. However, it is questionable whether this model of national representation, closely paralleling the United Nations model, is the best way to achieve representativeness and inclusion at a global scale. To illustrate, China's population of more than 1.3 billion and St Lucia's population of 170,000 were both represented by a single event, giving the views of St Lucians disproportionate weight when the global results were aggregated.

A more representative model would be to seek to match the global pool of participants to a world demographic profile, using similar techniques to those described above for Australia. This may be an ideal to work towards but would pose substantial logistical difficulties to implement, with many countries lacking the detailed and comprehensive databases required to support such an approach. Although falling short of this ideal, an improvement over the WWViews approach would be to ensure that the number of participants from any country is proportional to the population they are representing and/or that the views expressed in particular events are weighted to take into account the population represented. These proposed changes to recruitment processes might improve global demographic representation but they would likely suffer from the same exclusions that we identified above for Australia. Thus we would expect low participation from the global poor, oppressed or linguistic minorities, young people and those with less formal education.

A possible response is to reconceptualise what inclusion means in a deliberative democratic system. Dryzek and Niemeyer (2010) argue that representation can be usefully conceived as representation of discourses. Diverse discourses exist on issues like climate change and ensuring that all of these discourses are represented in a mini-public may be a more practically inclusive approach than seeking demographic representation.

For example, if there are concerns about directly including children in a mini-public, adult participants could be recruited that can represent the discourses in which children participate. Further, participants could be recruited to represent the discourses of unborn future generations who cannot possibly participate in a current mini-public but have the

greatest stake in climate change response. The marginalised discourses of the global poor and disadvantaged can be brought into a mini-public through specific discourse representation rather than simple demographic weight of numbers.

While the concept of discourse representation is an attractive one, more work is needed to investigate the practical implications for design of mini-publics and the balance between demographic representation and discourse representation. There are important questions about how discourses requiring representation would be identified, how representatives of these discourses would be selected and who should make these decisions. These questions would themselves be suitable topics for deliberation.

WWViews did not make any attempt to identify the discourses that would need to be represented in a mini-public on global climate change response. Nor did it attempt to identify the discourses that participants adhered to. Consequently, it is not possible to evaluate whether WWViews achieved a reasonable level of discourse representation. We can state, however, that participants in WWViews in Australia and internationally exhibited greater levels of concern about climate change and called for stronger action than is typical in public debate as revealed through the media or opinion polling (Danish Board of Technology 2009b). This may indicate that the WWViews mini-publics did not have sufficient representation from diverse discourses as a starting point, or that substantial shifts occurred through the process of deliberation. It is to the quality of deliberation that we now turn.

Authentic deliberation

The process should support communicative freedom by providing access to information, space for open and respectful dialogue between participants and sufficient time for reflection. It should encourage but not coerce reflection on preferences.

Gundersen (1995) describes deliberation as an active process of challenging unconsidered beliefs and values, encouraging individuals to arrive at a defensible position on an issue. For Dryzek (2002: 1), it is a non-coercive, reflective and pluralistic process, allowing 'argument, rhetoric, humour, emotion, testimony or storytelling, and gossip,' through which people arrive at a particular judgement, preference or view. For Carson and Hartz-Karp (2005: 122), as noted previously, deliberation requires 'open dialogue, access to information, respect, space to understand and reframe issues, and movement toward consensus.'

Numerous engagement methods are now available for facilitating deliberation by mini-publics (Fung 2003; Smith, G. 2009). WWViews used a hybrid method that drew on the DBT's several decades of experience in engaging citizens in deliberation within political decision-making processes. The method combined elements of deliberative opinion polling (Fishkin 1997), the 21st Century Town Meeting process developed by America Speaks[5] and the Voting Conference process used by the Danish Board of Technology.[6] Partner organisations were given opportunities to contribute to the development of the WWViews method, which was then documented in a Process Manual (Danish Board of Technology 2009a) that all national partners were expected to follow.

Participants in each country were provided with information to support informed deliberation in the form of written material prior to the event and video presentations during the event. They were divided into small groups around a table, each with a facilitator. The groups discussed a series of pre-established questions directly relevant to the COP15 negotiations in four themed deliberation sessions. Facilitators provided participants with space to express and defend their views and gently encouraged them to question their existing beliefs and those of other participants at their table. At the end of each themed session, participants chose their preferred response to each question from a set of pre-established choices. In a final session, the groups at each table collectively wrote a recommendation to their climate negotiators through a process of consensus building. All participants then voted on their favourite recommendations from those developed by each group.

No attempt was made to systematically measure the quality of the deliberation in the WWViews Australia event, although methods such as the Discourse Quality Index (Steenbergen *et al*. 2003) are available for this purpose. However, it is clear that the process supported more deliberation than the participants would normally engage in on climate change by providing them with information and a facilitated space to engage with other views, consider questions they would not normally consider, and reflect on their own preferences. In a survey of participants, 99 percent felt that the recommendation developed by their group reflected an open and thoughtful discussion

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[5] See: www.americaspeaks.org [Accessed 1 Sep. 2011].
[6] See: http://www.tekno.dk/subpage.php3?article=469&toppic=kategori12&language=dk [Accessed 1 Sep. 2011].

based on diverse views from a diverse group of people (Atherton & Herriman 2009).

Nevertheless, the process could have been more deliberative in some important ways. To make efficient use of limited time and to allow easy quantitative comparison of results across different countries, the four themed sessions required participants to express their views by voting on a set of predefined questions with multiple-choice answers. The use of predefined questions and answers closed down opportunities for participants to reframe issues or express responses in their own words. The limited set of available responses may not have adequately reflected the real diversity of opinion within the participating group. In addition, the voting process resorted to aggregation of views rather than seeking to move discussions towards consensus. This meant that participants could opt out of reflecting on their views or having them challenged by other participants, as they did not have to participate in reaching a consensus. These process limitations were consciously addressed through the inclusion of the final session in which participants worked together in small groups to develop a recommendation to the COP-15 delegates. This process did encourage consensus and allowed participants to express themselves in their own words.

A second point to note is the impact of the pace of the deliberations. The process established by the DBT in consultation with partner organisations encouraged national organisers to fit the entire process into a single day. Again, this was meant to maximise the issues that could be covered while keeping costs down to make the process more accessible around the world. For the Australian event, we added an extra half-day to the process to provide more time for deliberation. However, each deliberation and voting session only allowed 45 minutes for participants to discuss the information provided, the questions and the possible responses. This is not sufficient time to fully reflect on and think through the consequences of decisions. This is perhaps echoed in some of the voting results. For example, 31 percent of Australian participants supported greenhouse gas reduction targets of more than 40 percent by 2020. Such targets would have a substantial impact on energy prices and bills in Australia. Although table facilitators relayed many participants' stories of weighing up the personal impacts of increased prices versus their responsibilities to future generations, it is unlikely that all participants had time to make these personal connections to an issue; those that did would have had little specific information on the magnitude of personal impacts.

Making such connections was further hindered by the decision to focus all of the information provided to participants on the international negotiations. Provision of country-specific information was not allowed. This decision was made both to reduce time requirements and to ensure that participants from around the world received the same information to inform their deliberation. However, there is strong evidence that people are more able to connect with the issue of climate change and more likely to change their behaviour if they see it as a tangible, local issue, rather than an abstract, global issue (CRED 2009). In addition, the implications of international decisions only become apparent by shifting focus to the national level. Participants in WWViews had no opportunity to reflect and deliberate on how their decisions would play out in their own countries and the results are consistent with low awareness of national and local impacts. Future global-scale deliberative democracy processes on climate change will need to find ways to connect issues across scales, from global to local and vice versa.

The difficult question that needs to be asked here is whether bigger is necessarily better for global mini-publics. The choice to use standardised questions and responses, to limit the length of the event and to avoid country-specific discussions certainly reduced costs and allowed countries to participate that would not have been able to do so otherwise, but deliberative quality was sacrificed to achieve this. While in Australia we have anecdotal evidence that the scale of the project gave it a point of difference when trying to get the attention of decision makers (and potential funders), it is unknown whether the sheer number of people and countries involved made the project any more influential. A longer, smaller process, perhaps prioritising good discourse representation rather than number of participants, could have delivered greater deliberative quality without sacrificing the potential to influence.

The organisers also justified standardisation of the questions, answers and process as a way of supporting comparability of the results across participating countries. We question whether comparability is sufficiently important to justify the resulting loss of deliberative quality. Indeed, we question whether comparability is even possible across different cultural and linguistic contexts. In the case of WWViews, all the decisions made to achieve comparability and standardisation were undermined by allowing (appropriately) local translation of the information materials and local design of participant recruitment processes. We contend that authentic deliberation requires

process flexibility to account for differences in culture, resources, democratic tradition and political system (Dryzek 2011). For example, different cultures have different expectations about regularity of breaks, allowing time for religious practices and how men and women should interact. A more flexible and culturally responsive process would have delivered greater deliberative quality without having to sacrifice potential for comparability or influence. Our final evaluative discussion addresses this question of influence.

Influence and consequence

The process should develop the communicative power to make a difference, whether by influencing policy and decision-making or facilitating broader sociocultural change (e.g. new discourses or networks).

A starting point for evaluating the influence of a mini-public is to understand what influence the project sought to achieve. Ostensibly, WWViews sought to influence the outcomes of COP-15 and measured against this ambitious aim it was a failure. The outcomes of COP-15 fell far short of what the participating citizens demanded and there is no evidence that WWViews had any influence on negotiating positions at COP-15. In reality, most of the organisers had more modest aims for the project. In Australia, we certainly sought to influence the positions held by politicians and other decision-makers in relation to climate change, but we also sought to build discursive awareness of deliberative democracy and the potential of mini-publics. There is no definitive evidence that the former objective was achieved, but there is some evidence that the latter was achieved.

As noted above, WWViews Australia developed a dissemination strategy that sought to influence politicians, bureaucrats and the media to adopt the positions advocated by the mini-public. We sought face-to-face meetings with Australian Government climate policy-makers and negotiators, other influential bureaucrats, and politicians from the three major political parties (the Australian Labor Party, the Liberal-National Coalition, and the Greens). Gaining access to key politicians and climate change negotiators during the period of the dissemination efforts (Oct.–Nov. 2009) was difficult. Key individuals had limited availability due to the demands on their time of preparation for COP-15 (including attending preparatory talks elsewhere) and the (thwarted) passage through Federal Parliament of domestic climate change policy. Meetings were ultimately held with public servants in the Department of Climate Change (one of

whom was on the COP-15 negotiating team), some advisers to Ministers and Shadow Ministers, the Australian Greens Deputy Leader and the Lord Mayor of Sydney (Herriman, White & Atherton 2011). Reports were also mailed to all Federal politicians (both Houses), all State Government Ministers and selected State Government MPs, and senior Federal and State civil servants, including Federal climate negotiators.

While we hope that at least some of the politicians that received reports read them and are now a little bit more familiar with deliberative mini-publics, there is no evidence in the public domain that WWViews Australia had any influence at all on their views on how to respond to climate change. If anything, the views expressed by politicians now are less consistent with the outcomes of WWViews than they were at the time it was held, as the politics of climate change in Australia has become more partisan and oppositional in the intervening period. Further evaluation of the influence of WWViews would require investigative research with key politicians and decision-makers, which has not been undertaken.

The lack of apparent influence on climate change policy is perhaps not surprising, and it could be argued, in hindsight, that the strategies that the global project established and that we employed in the Australian context were politically naïve. First, we assumed that it would be possible to influence negotiating positions two months out from COP-15, when these positions had already firmed through the preceding ten months of negotiations. Second, we assumed that a one-off event like WWViews could create enough noise in the public space to hold those occupying empowered space accountable. In reality, sustained pressure over a longer period is more likely to deliver communicative power. WWViews did not even deliver enough communicative power to secure meetings with some of the key participants in empowered space, let alone to influence their positions.

The conversion of communicative freedom to communicative power is a critical challenge if mini-publics are to achieve any influence within deliberative systems. Deliberative theorists tend to underplay the difficulty of challenging existing power structures (Brassett & Smith 2010) and there has been little thinking to date about how mini-publics can be designed to increase their likelihood of achieving influence. As noted above, one of the key strategies for making WWViews an influential and consequential project was to maximise the credibility and perceived legitimacy of the

event with policy makers through rigorous standardisation and broad participation. The intent was to make the WWViews method above reproach and the weight of numbers compelling. Unfortunately, as also noted above, deliberative quality was sacrificed in favour of this model of influence, yet it is doubtful that either standardisation or the numbers involved delivered any more influence.

One of the reasons that standardisation is unlikely to help to deliver greater influence is that different countries have substantially different political systems and, as a result, the appropriate role for mini-publics differs across countries (Dryzek 2011). Dryzek (2011) distinguishes between four different types of state based on their orientation to social interests; that is, whether they include or exclude interests, and whether they do so actively or passively. The path to achieve influence is very different in each type of state. Actively inclusive states, like Denmark, work to create formal channels for public participation in decision-making, including mini-publics. There is a tradition of public deliberation and decision-makers are expected to heed the results of mini-publics. In contrast, in a pluralist (passive-inclusive) state like the USA (or Australia), there are few formal opportunities for participation but all are free to advocate their interests and achieve influence. Being heard above the resulting clamour is difficult. Any voice, including that of a mini-public, becomes just another voice at the bargaining table; there is limited potential for influence unless this voice is loud and persists over time, which is rare for mini-publics. The pathways to influence are different again in exclusive states.

WWViews did not take into account these political differences in its process design. Rather, the design was modelled on processes that work well in actively inclusive Denmark but may be less suited to other types of state. Future attempts to convene global mini-publics would do well to avoid standardisation in favour of developing country-specific deliberative designs that are tailored to achieving the type of influence that is appropriate in each country.

While there is no evidence that WWViews Australia influenced the positions taken by decision-makers, there is some tentative evidence that it did contribute to a stronger discourse on deliberative democracy in Australia. Television, radio and print media covered the event, nationally and locally, exposing new audiences to the idea of deliberative democracy. The Lord Mayor of Sydney, after a meeting about WWViews, went on to chair a session on citizen participation at the Copenhagen Mayors' Summit

during COP-15. Finally, in her 2010 election campaign, the Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced plans for a Citizens' Assembly on climate change (Morton & Arup 2010), which would have been the first time the Australian Government had convened a mini-public to directly inform policy. Given the work done to inform politicians about WWViews, it is possible (although not proven) that communication about WWViews helped to make the idea of convening a mini-public sufficiently plausible for a political announcement. Unfortunately, the plan was later abandoned following media and public criticism (Franklin 2010), so it seems there is a long way to go before mini-publics become an accepted part of the Australian political landscape.

Conclusion: The future of global mini-publics

The outcome of our evaluation of WWViews is decidedly mixed. The event was delivered with integrity, was reasonably successful at bringing together a representative group of citizens from around the world to deliberate, and received substantial media and practitioner attention. WWViews demonstrated that it is feasible to convene a global mini-public and that citizens are capable of deliberating on complex global issues. For the Australian organisers and participants, feedback on the event was almost universally positive.

On the other hand, as a transient event, its contribution towards the emergence of a global deliberative system for climate change response was limited and it achieved little influence on global climate change policy. In part, this was due to the lack of attention to appropriate pathways and strategies for achieving influence in different countries. The quality of deliberation was compromised by attempts at standardisation that seem misguided in light of cultural and political differences between the participating countries. Despite these negatives, we continue to believe that global mini-publics can make a contribution towards a more deliberative global governance system on climate change and other issues. Future global mini-publics have the opportunity to learn from WWViews, so it is worth summarising the key lessons here.

First, if a mini-public is to contribute towards a global deliberative system then the quality of deliberation is paramount. This means that events must allow sufficient time for reflection on preferences and that methods relying on voting on pre-determined responses should be avoided. Participants should be given as much opportunity as possible to frame issues in their own terms, formulate their own responses and express

these in their own words.

Second, representing discourse diversity instead of, or in addition to, a demographic profile may be a more appropriate goal for mini-publics, particularly at a global scale. Identifying the discourses that need to be included and finding suitable discourse representatives will be challenging but potentially offers a more feasible pathway to legitimacy for global mini-publics. Further, through discourse representation it may be possible to find innovative ways to use special representatives to incorporate the presumed discourses of future generations, or even other species.

Third, where global mini-publics are made up of smaller national mini-publics, flexibility to respond to cultural and political differences is critical. Mini-publics are more likely to deliver authentic deliberation and to achieve influence if they have freedom to respond to the local cultural and systemic context, even if this means the results from different countries are not directly comparable. Strategic thinking about how best to achieve political influence needs to be at the heart of mini-public design.

Fourth, mini-publics may be more likely to achieve influence if they are long and loud, forcing empowered space to be accountable. One-off events can potentially be loud, in that they may get a lot of media attention, but the effect quickly dissipates without sustained action. Processes that bring mini-publics back together for multiple events over a longer period of time have greater potential to build discursive momentum and influence empowered space. In other words, designers of mini-publics need to consider their role in building a movement for change that can accrue sufficient communicative power to force a response.

Finally, there are many other ways in which a global mini-public could be convened and these need to be explored. WWViews essentially mimicked the United Nations system by convening discrete mini-publics at a national scale and simply aggregating national results. An alternative way to convene a global mini-public would be to involve participants from across the globe in a single process, where the views of the rich can be challenged by those of the poor and the full global implications of decisions become clear. WWViews insulated participants in each country from each other, missing an opportunity for cross-cultural deliberation.

Global mini-publics are certainly not the only way to democratise systems of global governance, or even the only way to bring more deliberation into global governance. There is space for more deliberation in all elements of the global deliberative system, whether through new permanent or temporary institutions, reform of existing institutions, or the messy debates of global civil society. What is critical, if we are to develop governance systems that can effectively respond to climate change, is that we continue to experiment with diverse approaches to democratisation and learn from the successes and failures.

Acknowledgements

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