

Science, policy and law

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Over recent decades, science has become increasingly influential not only with respect to political and economic decisions, but also individual rights and the administration of justice. As a result of the interaction between science, policy and law, a new type of relationship has been established between "scientists" and the rest of the world. In a democratic and liberal society, the uncertainties of science and the emergence of (more or less overt) conflicts of interest of various kinds require the political decision-takers and the judiciary to act with greater caution and respect, to guarantee basic individual human rights. Transparent, complete and accurate information is required to protect the individual, and society itself, as the primary goods of every society, and must be based both on an increasingly broad expansion of consultation with the world of science, and on the consequent wider participation of citizens in the decision-making process.