Building a Science Diplomacy Education Community: Perspectives from Young Actors in the Field
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SESSION ORGANIZER & PANELIST
Jean-Christophe Mauduit, Graduate Student, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and Former Research Scholar, AAAS Center for Science Diplomacy

MODERATOR
Marga Gual Soler, Project Director, AAAS Center for Science Diplomacy

PANELISTS:
Aditya Kaushik, Graduate Student, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy
Dennis Schroeder, Graduate Student, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and Former Iran Country Director, DAAD
Malgorzata (Gosia) Smieszek, Researcher, Arctic Centre in the University of Lapland, and International Arctic Science Committee Fellow

This session featured graduate students of diverse background currently pursuing an interest in science diplomacy. Moderator Marga Gual Soler started the session with the official launch of the Science Diplomacy Education Network (SciDipEd). The aim of this network is to create a global community of students and educators interested in formal and informal science diplomacy education. Through the network members can share resources, education materials, course syllabi, conferences, and internship opportunities.

Jean-Christophe Mauduit discussed how his background brought him into science diplomacy and how this ties in to his current work at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (Tufts) and his career plans. He obtained his PhD in Astronomy from the Paris Observatory and is currently enrolled in an MA in international relations at the Fletcher School. As a Ph.D. student and through his postdoctoral work for the European Space Agency “Gaia” satellite mission and the NASA Spitzer infrared satellite, Dr. Mauduit was active in several science outreach programs and campaigns. During his postdoctoral work and as a project officer for the International Astronomical Union, he had the opportunity to work in highly international groups and across several different countries. This exposure to international scientific development and cross-country collaboration was a crucial driver for him to transition into a career in science policy and diplomacy. At the Fletcher School, Jean-Christophe co-founded the Fletcher Science Diplomacy club and is working to co-create with Aditya Kaushik the first science diplomacy education track in the country.

Aditya Kaushik is also a graduate student at Fletcher, focusing on international organisations and science diplomacy. He comes from a background in electrical engineering and worked as a support and data analysis engineer at MathWorks before venturing into science diplomacy. Kaushik talked about his past experiences at the UNDP working on green economies and green employment in the Central Asia and East European region. Some of the core skills of science diplomats highlighted by Kaushik include knowledge in international relations theory; understanding of economics and sustainable development; conflict resolution; negotiations training; and a basis in international law.

Malgorzata (Gosia) Smieszek is currently a doctoral candidate and researcher at the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland (Finland). She talked about her background in political science and how her current research requires coordination of experts in many different fields at the International Arctic Science Committee. She discussed the Arctic as a prime example of science diplomacy: it requires strict coordination of scientific efforts, due in part to the large financial and logistical challenges involved in working under such extreme conditions. She described a lack of dialogue and sometimes even a lack of respect between natural or “hard science” researchers, social scientists, and political scientists as a challenge to science diplomacy.

Dennis Schröder received his bachelor and master’s degrees in history, education sciences and literature. He is currently enrolled in Harvard Kennedy School’s Mid-Career Master of Public Administration program. His entry into science diplomacy occurred through his work at the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). From 2010 to 2013 Mr. Schröder worked as a DAAD liaison officer in post war Sri Lanka, an experience that in his own words “first influenced me to explore science diplomacy’s full potential.” While he was sent to Sri Lanka to focus on exchange with Germany, he immediately harnessed the opportunity to identify areas and avenues to provide capacity building towards the development of the country. Mr. Schröder led projects that established research partnerships between professors across communities previously in war with professors in Germany, bolstering the post-war reconciliation process while increasing opportunities through local and foreign technical expertise. From 2013 to 2016 Mr. Schröder was the country director for DAAD in Iran. In this role he served as a liaison between both countries and a facilitator of educational and scientific partnerships. Schröder indicated an important distinction between science diplomats (primarily scientists) and facilitators of science diplomacy. He also stressed the need for stronger crosstalk between both, namely: “Science diplomacy emphasises the value of science in diplomacy, but scientists need to acknowledge the complexity of policy-making and negotiations in this process.” He said he believed some of these skills should be embedded in a scientist’s training.

SESSION KEY POINTS
• On campus science diplomacy groups are crucial to expose students from different disciplines to the field.
• A science diplomacy study track requires a balance between scientific training and training in international relations, law, economics and negotiation.
• More crosstalk between disciplines is necessary as science diplomacy continues to grow.
• The role of political and social scientists must not be overlooked in the process of shaping science diplomacy.