

Governing the Governance of Emerging Technologies

Wendell Wallach and Gary E. Marchant

Abstract: Emerging technologies create unique governance challenges because of their wide range of applications, multiple types of risks and concerns, inherent uncertainties, and rapid pace of development. Traditional regulation by one or several government agencies will not suffice but will need to be supplemented by various types of “soft law” measures designed and implemented by non-governmental stakeholders. There is a need for some sort of coordination between these multiple governance mechanisms likely to be in place and needed for any emerging technology. We propose the creation of Coordinating Committees for each emerging technology, serving as an “issue manager” to coordinate existing regulatory instruments, identify governance gaps and overlaps, and to serve as the focus for public, media and stakeholder engagement with the technology. We suggest that robotics or synthetic biology would be a good choice to trial test the Coordinating Committee proposal.