

Science and Technology Assessment in the Islamic Republic of Iran

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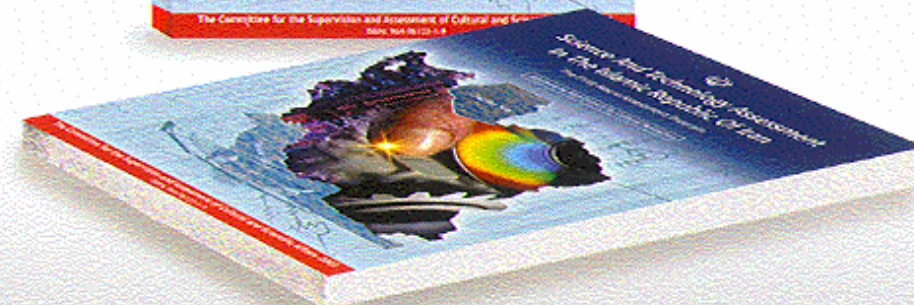
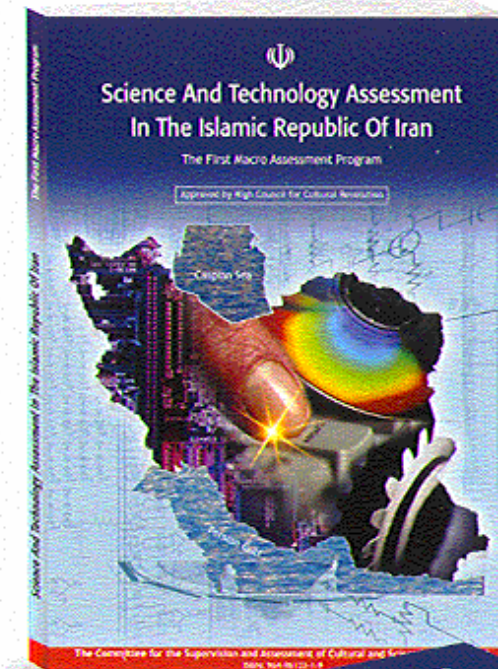
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Science And Technology Assessment In The Islamic Republic Of Iran

The First Macro Assessment Program

Approved by High Council for Cultural Revolution



Foreword

The ever increasing importance of science and technology, as the basis of social and economic development, has assigned a special status to topics related to science and technology, i.e. the philosophy of science and technology; the prediction of the status of scientific and technological research endeavors in the future and finally the management of science and technology.

Amongst the above items, the assessment of science and technology has special features which make it distinct from the other items. This assessment program aims at providing a clear and factual picture of the status of science and technology in each country and analyzing the factors involved using scientific methods.

The assessment program is more than a mere illustration of facts. It, in fact, also provides a kind of evaluation and judgement as it tries to shed lights onto the future using experiences received from the past. Therefore, this kind of assessment is an introduction to the research status of Iran in the future as it is an inseparable part of policy making and devising procedures and programs concerning science and technology. Thus, such an assessment might well be labelled as an applied branch of science with a lot of advantages and uses. In fact, these advantages have made assessment an important process in any kind of development, and this well justifies why different countries, international organizations and private institutions are using it so often and are benefited its results.

The history of the assessment of science and technology goes back to four decades ago. Such assessments are, nowadays, made consistently in industrial countries by private and governmental sectors. In recent years, some developing countries have also started such endeavors. Some international institutions issue such reports consistently. Nevertheless, such endeavors are at their early stages in Iran. Apart from the useful reports dealing with cultural, educational and research activities, in Iran, the approval of the indices related to the assessment of science and technology by the High Council for Cultural Revolution, last year, was a turning point in the identification of Iran as a country that pays a lot of attention to such assessment programs.

In fact, the major indices of science and technology made it possible to carry out such an assessment program. Later, the assessment process was determined and the data were collected, ranked and processed. Then, the indices were set and illustrated in the form of tables and figures. Finally, the analytic study of such indices together with the SWOT analysis of the system of science and technology designed a rather comprehensive method for writing Iran's Macro Report on the Assessment of Science and Technology.

The present report provides a clear picture of the status of science and technology in Iran and includes basic suggestions for improving the current situation. No doubt, the implementation of these suggestions will require systematic cooperation and coordination between / among the people in charge of the county's research, educational, cultural, economic and political affairs who are at work in different organizations. The implementation of such suggestions will hopefully take place during a long period of time. For this reason, a number of other short-term implementable suggestions were proposed separately to the High Council for Cultural Revolution to resolve some of the most demanding problems affecting the domain of science and technology in Iran.

Despite the great care taken in preparing the current report, the final version may still have certain problems, which we believe are due to the newness of such endeavors and the unavailability of certain suitable grounds. The unavailability of a comprehensive system for Iran's statistics and scientific information has been one of the major shortcomings in this regard. Nevertheless, we are so pleased that the first assessment report on the status of Iran's science and technology has appeared in a format and with a quality comparable to those issued at the global scale.

I would like to issue my sincerest thanks to my colleagues in the Committee for the Supervision and Assessment of Cultural and Scientific Affairs, who played an important role in composing the final version. I am also thankful to the outstanding scientists as well as the senior directors of science and technology whose critical readings of the first draft enriched the final version.

Also my sincerest gratitude goes to the ministries and the affiliated organizations for providing us with the information needed.

It is hoped that the implementation of the suggestions made in this report can remove at least some of the problems encountered in enhancing the status of science and technology in the country. It is also hoped that the publication of such reports can be continued, even more qualitatively, using the critical views and justifiable comments of Iranian outstanding scientific figures.

Sadegh Va'ezzadeh
Head of the Council

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