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Eric Britton

"One of those outstanding innovators whose work will have the greatest likely future significance and impact over the long-term... and likely become or remain "key players" in the technological drama unfolding in coming years." – World Technology 2002 Environment Award citation.

Born in Mississippi, Francis Eric Knight Britton studied the physical sciences at Amherst and Columbia College, and later the PhD program of the Graduate Faculty of Economics at Columbia University (PhD Cand.), with a dissertation on technology, economic development, job creation and public policy in the Italian South. Over this period he was an Amherst and Columbia Scholar, and later in the Graduate Faculties an International Fellow, winner of the Dante Alighieri Prize, and recipient of a doctoral research grant from the Italian government as well as a Fulbright Fellowship.

In parallel with teaching economics and working on his dissertation at the University of Rome, Eric founded EcoPlan International in 1966, an independent forum of observation, reflection and counsel on issues involving technological change as it affects people in their daily lives. Over the years in his for-profit work he has initiated, participated in, and carried to completion a wide range of advisory assignments and research and demonstration projects aimed at providing decision counsel to government, business and the volunteer sector on thorny issues of technology, economy and society.

The geographic focus of his work extends to more than thirty countries, with advisory assignments in cities ranging from the compact Westport CT and path-breaking Ahmanson Ranch project in CA, to advisory work in places as far ranging as Adelaide, Bilbao, Bogota, Bridgeport, Paris, Perth, Saigon, Sao Paulo, Taipei, Toronto, and Zurich. He has served as high level consultant to the United Nations, European Commission, ILO, OECD, and a long list of national and regional government agencies, bilateral aid programs, and as a visiting lecturer at US and European universities.

Eric devotes considerable time to pioneering public interest projects involving new technology, sustainable development and social justice. A common theme in his work is the strategic adaptation of technologies, products, and institutional structures to changing technological, resource and environmental requirements (and perceptions). The vehicle for this work is an open cooperative founded in the early seventies, [The Commons: Open Society Sustainability Initiative](#).

Over the last decades he has created and supported more than twenty international group problem-solving networks which bring together thousands of people and groups around the world that are looking into new and often unusual ideas for sustainability and long term economic viability in cities. One of the most active of these is the [New Mobility Agenda](#) originally created in 1988 and for which you can find full information at <http://www.newmobility.org>. He is a founding editor to the [Journal of World Transport Policy and Practice](#), and in March 2009 of [World Streets](#).

In June 2002 Eric was awarded the prestigious [World Technology Environment Prize](#) for outstanding achievement. Over 2001-2002 he served as chair of the international jury and senior advisor to the [Stockholm Partnerships for Sustainable Cities](#), a program with which he maintains a long term interest. In 2000 he and Enrique Peñalosa, then mayor of Bogotá Colombia, were co-awarded the [Stockholm Environment Challenge Prize](#) for 'outstanding socio-technical innovation'.