

DR. ALEX DEHGAN – PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY



Alex Dehgan is the founder of a new startup, Conservation X Labs, and is a senior visiting fellow in the Office of the President at Duke University (effective April 1st, 2014) and will be focused on three major initiatives at the university – innovation and entrepreneurship, globalization, and the tropical biology initiative.

Dr. Alex Dehgan mostly recently served as the Chief Scientist at the U.S. Agency for International Development, with rank of Assistant Administrator, and founded and headed the Office of Science and Technology. As the Agency's first chief scientist in two decades, Dr. Dehgan implemented the President's promise to restore science and technology to its rightful place within USAID. During his tenure at USAID, Alex has been the architect of a number of new Agency institutions, including the position of the chief scientist, the independent office of science and technology, the position of the Agency geographer, and the GeoCenter. Alex built the Office of Science and Technology from scratch to an 80 person office, and \$100 M dollar research program, in less than four years, and leveraged or raised \$500 million dollars, including a \$200 M dollar commitment from the Swedish government to his office. In 2014, this program received congressional approval to become the new USAID Development Lab.

Prior to coming to USAID, Dr. Dehgan worked in multiple positions within the Office of the Secretary at the Department of State and the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs where he developed a science diplomacy strategy towards addressing our most challenging foreign policy issues in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and the greater Islamic world. Dr. Alex Dehgan was the founding Afghanistan Country Director for the Wildlife Conservation Society's Afghanistan Biodiversity Conservation Program. Through his leadership, WCS led efforts to create Afghanistan's first national park, conducted the first comprehensive biological surveys of the country in 30 years, helped develop Afghanistan's biodiversity conservation laws and policies, and curtailed illegal wildlife trade on US and ISAF military bases. Dr. Dehgan holds a Ph.D and M.Sc. from The University of Chicago's Committee on Evolutionary Biology, where he focused on extinction and adaptation of 12 lemur species during environmental change in tropical forests in Madagascar. He also holds a J.D. from the University of California, Hastings, and a B.S. from Duke University. He was chosen as an "Icon of Science" by *Seed Magazine* in 2005, received the World Technology Award for Policy in 2011, and has been recognized through multiple awards from the Departments of State and Defense, and the US Agency for International Development. In 2013, AAAS selected Alex as one of its **40@40 fellows** out of 2,600 AAAS Science Policy Fellows globally for its 40th Anniversary based on individuals who have made exemplary dedication to applying science to serve society, were creative, innovative, and collaborative problem solvers in addressing global challenges, and were uncommon ambassadors for the role of science and technology.