

Press Release

Climate Policy 2005 and Beyond – Japanese / German Impulses

On 1 November 2005 the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) of Japan and the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy of Germany hosted a conference: “Climate Policy 2005 and Beyond – Japanese / German Impulses”. Financed by the Environment Ministries of Japan and Germany and the State of North Rhine Westphalia in Germany, participants examined the experiences in fighting climate change in both countries and discussed further co-operation.

“This conference has an ambitious programme”, said Vice-Ambassador Stefan Gallon from Germany, “but the task of averting climate change is equally ambitious”. “We can do it!” replied Prof. Peter Hennicke, President of the Wuppertal Institute. “A global reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the range of 50 percent is technically and economically feasible. We can achieve drastic increases in energy efficiency and replace almost all uses of fossil fuels with renewable energy.” The participants of the conference explored the lessons learned by the introduction of an eco-tax and of emissions trading in greenhouse gases for companies in Germany. “Japan is committed to reach its targets under the Kyoto Protocol”, said Hikaru Kobayashi, Director Global Environment Bureau and attending on behalf of the reelected Environment Minister Koike, “and an eco-tax should be one of the means to achieve this.”

The conference also considered the contribution of civil society to fighting climate change. “The technology systems in our countries are good”, stated Dr. Hermann E. Ott from the Wuppertal Institute, “but the social systems are equally important. Business, local communities and the environmental groups can provide the necessary means for changing our societies.” Companies like BP and Hitachi, communities like Kanagawa Prefecture and the city of Hannover and Friends of the Earth, an international environmental organisation, showed examples of actions and co-operation against climate change. The conference was part of the “German Year in Japan 2005/2006” – certainly one of the highlights of its scientific programme, according to Vice-Ambassador Gallon. It was also a highlight of the long-established and fruitful co-operation between the Wuppertal Institute and IGES, concluded Prof. Akio Morishima, President of IGES.

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (<http://www.iges.or.jp/>) and Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy (<http://www.wupperinst.org/>)

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