

International Symposium 2007

Prospects and Challenges of Combating Global Warming in Asia



English version

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Panelists:

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Opening Remarks

Prof. Hironori Hamanaka

Chair, Board of Directors

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Hamanaka, chair of the board of directors at the IGES. To the guests, the panelists and audiences of this symposium, I would like to extend my gratitude on behalf of the organizers.

The IGES received the signatures of various governments and international organizations for Charter for Establishment in December, 1997. In the same year, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted at the COP-3 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Kyoto. In the next year, in March of 1998, the IGES was established, so this year is the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the IGES.

Since its establishment, we have been conducting various strategic research projects in 3-year cycle, aiming towards sustainable development of the Asian Pacific. We have expanded our organization through establishing domestic/overseas branch offices such as the Kansai Research Center which was established in 2001, with support from Hyogo Prefectural Government.

Also, we have made various efforts to reflect the fruit of our research in policy-making process. The efforts include submitting our reports on the Environment Congress of Asia and the Pacific (ECO ASIA), having side events at the Conferences of Parties to the UNFCCC, and supporting the Asia 3R Conference.

Since April of last year, seven projects have started as the 4th phase strategic research projects. The Kansai Research Center has implemented Business and the Environment Project as one of those strategic research projects.

For the past 10 years the change in the Asian region has been drastic, as we can see in economic development and population increase which have incurred serious environmental impacts. The Asian region is one of the areas causing such global environmental issues, but also an area which is greatly affected by these problems.

Countermeasures against environmental problems in Asia are taking shape both domestically and internationally. Governments, research organizations, NGOs, companies and citizens will play an important role in solving these global environmental issues. The IGES would like to contribute to tackle such problems by promoting solution-oriented policy research in cooperation with various parties in Asia.

This symposium is held in commemoration of our 10th anniversary, but at the same time, it is a relay symposium for the G8 Environment Ministers Meeting which will be held in May in Kobe. We are honored to have this symposium.

We are grateful to have Prof. Suzuki as the director of IGES Kansai Research Center and the coordinator of today's symposium who is an authority in the energy and resource area and the Vice President of the University of Hyogo.

Explanation of the objectives of the symposium by Prof. Suzuki will be followed by 2 keynote speeches regarding China and India's efforts against climate change. We invited panelists from India and China who have profound knowledge in this area.

After above explanation and speeches, there will be a panel discussion with regard to Asian countries' approaches and prospects to global warming. I certainly hope that the discussion become exciting.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my gratitude and also my wish for the health and further development of all of you here today. Thank you very much.

Message from the Guests

Tomio Saito

Vice Governor of Hyogo Prefectural Government

Good afternoon, everyone. I am Saito, the Vice Governor of Hyogo Prefecture. On behalf of host prefecture, I would like to give a hearty welcome holding Kansai Research Center International Symposium 2007 here in Hyogo. Also I would like to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the IGES.

Recently almost everyday we hear about environmental problems especially global warming on TV and in newspapers. Not only policy-makers, researchers and experts in NGOs and NPOs, but also ordinary citizens are increasingly giving higher attention to environmental problems. Hyogo prefecture is making great efforts to enlighten its citizens and disseminate its information on environmental issues domestically and internationally in cooperation with research institutes including IGES Kansai Research Center.

G8 Environment Ministers Meeting will be held in Kobe, Hyogo from May 24 to 26 this year. We will actively develop our environment-related projects such as regenerating nature project including releasing the oriental white stork and Environment Fair in KOBE in cooperation with companies. Also we are having Commemoration Relay symposiums to gain momentum toward the Ministers Meeting. Today's symposium is one of the relay symposiums.

Ahead of G8 Toyako Summit in July, Environment Ministers Meeting is expected to have global warming as main discussion theme. In that sense, this symposium is really timely taking up Asian global warming issues.

I wish that this symposium will be the opportunity to deepen your understanding on global environmental issues. We also wish to have your environment-friendly action and attention to following relay symposiums.

I hope that today's symposium will be fruitful and will be shared to contribute to all of Japan and the rest of the world. With that I would like to conclude the congratulatory remarks for this symposium. Thank you very much.