

New Publication

2009 Top News on the Environment in Asia

“Top News on the Environment in Asia” has been released through the IGES research network at the end of each year since the organisation’s establishment in 1998. Focusing on three areas of particular environmental significance in Asia - global warming, biodiversity, and

sustainable consumption and production - this 2009 edition includes reportage from three international organisations (IGES, UNEP/ROAP, and the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia) and 23 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.



To download, please visit IGES website at <http://www.iges.or.jp/en>

Shonan Village Academia “Satoyama and Our Lives”



IGES is part of a network of research institutes in Shonan Village, Hayama, where its headquarters are located. Each year, a seminar “Shonan Village Academia” is jointly organised with the Kanagawa International Foundation, aimed at the general public.

This year, IGES invited Dr. Kazuhiko Takeuchi, Vice Rector of the United Nations University, to speak at its headquarters on 23 January 2010, on the topic of “Satoyama and Our Lives: From Past to Future”.

Ahead of COP10 to be held in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010, there is a growing awareness of biodiversity conservation and this event looked at satoyama, the border of mountains and arable lands in rural Japan, as models for a society in harmony with nature. The discussion with 100 participants in the audience considered how to realise a sustainable society using the wisdom from satoyama.



IGES Endorsed as the Secretariat for AECEN

IGES has furthered its cooperation with the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN), a regional network which promotes environmental compliance and enforcement in Asia, and in

October 2009, IGES was endorsed as the secretariat for AECEN by the Executive Committee, and will conduct secretariat work from its Bangkok Office.

IGES Affiliate Membership

IGES welcomes affiliate members from corporations, NGOs, the public and students. The purpose of the IGES affiliate membership is to publicise IGES strategic research activities and ask the members to support IGES activities.

Registered affiliate members receive priority announcements and registrations for symposiums and seminars hosted by IGES, as well as IGES publications including the Newsletter, Annual Report, White Paper, Policy Briefs and other activity reports. IGES puts up the logo marks of membership foundations, corporations and NGOs on the IGES website to show their support.

IGES welcomes all new members and hopes they will take an active role in IGES research activities.

For details, please visit: <http://www.iges.or.jp/en/outline/member.html>

Categories and Membership Fees

	Registration Charge	Yearly Fee (1 unit)
Foundations/Corporations	50,000 yen	100,000 yen
NGOs	15,000 yen	30,000 yen
Private Members	5,000 yen	10,000 yen
Student Members	5,000 yen	3,000 yen

Mail News: E-alert

Our mail news service, E-alert, is sent out to subscribers, reporting the activities of IGES projects and environmental news.

For subscription: <http://www.iges.or.jp/en/news/mail/>

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e-mail : iges@iges.or.jp

IGES Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

2108-11 Kamiyamaguchi, Hayama, Kanagawa
240-0115 Japan
TEL : +81-46-855-3700 FAX : +81-46-855-3709
URL : <http://www.iges.or.jp> e-mail : iges@iges.or.jp

【Tokyo Office】
Nippon Press Center Bldg, 6th Floor 2-2-1 Uchisaiwai-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0011 Japan
TEL : +81-3-3595-1081 FAX : +81-3-3595-1084

【Kansai Research Centre】
East Building 4th Floor, Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution, 1-5-2, Kaigan-dori, Waki-no-hama, Chuo-ku, Kobe, Hyogo, 651-0073 Japan
TEL : +81-78-262-6634 FAX : +81-78-262-6635

【Kitakyushu Office】
Kitakyushu International Conference Center 6th Floor 3-9-30 Asano, Kokurakita-ku, Kitakyushu, Fukuoka 802-0001 Japan
TEL : +81-93-513-3711 FAX : +81-93-513-3712

【Beijing Office】 (Sino-Japan Cooperation Project Office)
Sino-Japan Friendship Center for Environmental Protection 5F, Room No. 508, No. 1 Yuhui Nanlu, Chaoyang District, Beijing, People's Republic of China
TEL : +86-10-8463-6314 FAX : +86-10-8463-6314

【Bangkok Office】
c/o UNEP RRC-AP, Outreach Bldg, 3F, AIT
P.O. Box 4, Klongluang, Pathumthani 12120, Thailand
TEL : +66-2-524-6441 FAX : +66-2-524-6233

IGES What's New From IGES

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies February 2010

The United Nations Climate Change Conference

Asian Viewpoint on Key Issues for Future Regime

– IGES Presentation at COP15

COP 15 was held in Copenhagen, Denmark from 7 to 18 December 2009. With the main focus of COP15 being the formation of a future climate regime, IGES held various side events and meetings during the conference and presented its policy proposals and exchanged ideas based on its research results on critical issues such as development of a low-carbon economy, adaptation, and REDD¹, in order to formulate the future global climate regime which will include Asian developing countries.



IGES held a side event attended by more than 200 people, entitled “Low-Carbon Asia: Visions and Actions” organised jointly with the National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) and the Japan Center for Climate Change Actions (JCCCA). Based on analysis of the IGES CDM database, a report was given on the current status of CDM in Asia, which accounts for over 85% of the UN registered projects, and forecasts of credit supplies. Key messages from stakeholder consultations held by IGES in 2009 in China and India were presented, stating the needs to create urban level low-carbon models and to support

capacity development in realising MRV².

At the High-level Roundtable Meeting attended by ministerial level participants of COP15 to discuss “Meeting the Needs for Information and Knowledge for Climate Change Adaptation”, IGES declared that it would actively provide its results of adaptation policy research to institutes and governments in the region, through the Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Network which was launched in October 2009 in collaboration with AIT/UNEP Regional Resource Center for Asia and the Pacific.

A side event on REDD was held jointly with organisations including the Asia-Europe



IGES declared its active involvement in adaptation issues

Environment Forum (ENVforum), in which IGES is a member, to address issues relating to promoting the involvement of the private sector in a future REDD scheme as well as measures for effective implementation of REDD-plus-plus³ mechanisms.



Discussion on REDD at co-organised side event

IGES also gave its support as the secretariat for a LCS-RNet (International Research Network for Low Carbon Societies) side event organised by the G8 host, the Italian government.

COP15 concluded by approving a motion to “take note of the Copenhagen Accord” for a future climate regime. However, the Accord does not refer to concrete mid-term or long-term GHG reduction targets. These and other controversial issues were deferred to future negotiations. With an Asian viewpoint, IGES will continue to strengthen research networks linking related institutes and to provide more pro-active policies for institutional design of the future regime.

- 1 reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries
- 2 measurement, reporting and verification
- 3 carbon management not just in forestry, but also in other non-forest ecosystems



Side event on low-carbon Asia with over 200 participants

International Collaborative Research on the 3Rs in Asia

With increasing attention on waste management as a major environmental issue in Asia, the Regional 3R* Forum in Asia was established in November 2009 as a new facility of international collaboration for low-carbon and sound material cycle society. Fifteen Asian countries and 16 institutes including IGES participated in the forum and recognised the need for further progress on the

implementation of the 3Rs in Asia, by such moves as facilitating high-level policy dialogues and disseminating national strategies. IGES submitted to the forum reports relevant to developing Asia on “Extended Producer Responsibility Policy”, “National 3R Strategy Development”, and “Co-benefits of Climate Change and the 3Rs”

With the strengthening of collaboration in the

region with regard to the 3Rs, there was also the launch of an international collaborative research project coordinated by IGES, “Asia Resource Circulation Policy Research Project”, which has the participation of researchers from China, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Taiwan. At the Inaugural Workshop held in Tokyo, Japan on 9 and 10 November 2009, participants confirmed to conduct research to evaluate the economic, social and environmental benefits of implementing the 3Rs in Asia, and submit policy recommendations on sustainable resource circulation to the Regional 3R Forum in Asia.

The international collaborative research project will be carried out over the next three years, and aims to offer proposals for the effective implementation of 3R policies in Asia. The second workshop is due to be held in Bangkok, Thailand in March 2010.

* 3R: Towards the efficient use of resources, reduce, reuse and recycle waste products



Inaugural workshop in Tokyo, Japan

Efforts towards a Low-Carbon Adaptive Society –Disaster Risk Assessment in Asia

It is now 15 years since the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake hit Kobe and IGES Kansai Research Centre held a symposium in the city on 15 January 2010 entitled “Climate Change/Global Environment and Natural Disasters”.

At the symposium, reports were presented on the risks of natural disasters related to climate change including major typhoons and flooding, giving examples from Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Japan and the Pacific Island Nations. Countermeasures

that are being carried out in each area were introduced.

Looking at the worsening risk of natural disaster and growing urban population in the Asia-Pacific region, it was also pointed out that there is a need for integration of climate policies and development planning, as well as long-term disaster prevention strategies. Recommendations were proposed for promoting low-carbon development along with creating an adaptive society flexible enough to cope with climate change.



Discussion on disaster risk assessment

IGES Holds Global Environment Seminars –Bridging the Gaps of Information inside Japan

IGES holds Global Environment Seminars for affiliate members and the general public to introduce global environmental issues with the latest topics in Japan and overseas in an easy-to-understand way.

The seminar held in Tokyo, Japan on 2 December 2009 was based on the report published as a

compilation of IGES research outputs (edition of Chuohoki) and deepened the debate on financial mechanisms for global warming policies.

At a seminar held in Yokohama, Japan on 25 December, straight after COP15, IGES researchers who had participated in COP15 presented immediate reports on the debate and negotiations

carried out in Copenhagen. The researchers also reported on IGES independent observations on measures to tackle global warming.

Furthermore, seminars on such topics as sustainable waste management and low-carbon society are scheduled to be held in March 2010.



Seminar on financial mechanisms introducing IGES outputs



COP15 seminar with 250 participants

Policy Brief Recommends Composting for Asian Cities

IGES recently published a policy brief entitled “Reducing Waste through the Promotion of Composting and Active Involvement of Various Stakeholders: Replicating Surabaya’s Solid Waste Management Model” (Author: Toshizo Maeda) based on its research at Kitakyushu Initiative*.

Solid waste management is a common, as well as a primary, environmental concern for many cities in developing countries. With this in mind, Surabaya City, the second largest city in Indonesia with a population of three million, has successfully

reduced its waste generation by more than 20% over a short period of time.

This policy brief exemplifies how Surabaya’s success in reducing waste through composting and involvement of various stakeholders was achieved by highlighting the economic feasibility and significant environmental benefits of composting practices and thereby recommends local governments in Asia to adopt similar strategies.

IGES will publish a series of recommendations from Kitakyushu Initiative from April 2010 onwards.



Composting activity in Surabaya (Photo courtesy of PKK Surabaya)

* A programme of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) carried out jointly with IGES and Kitakyushu City. Launched in 2000, the network of 62 cities in 18 Asian countries promotes improvements in the urban environment by sharing information and experiences.

Researchers' Viewpoint

Strategic Significance of “Environmental Consciousness” in the Climate Change Issues

Yusuke Matsuo
Researcher, Business and the Environment Project

Through engaging in the “Home Eco Diagnosis Project” which aims to reduce emissions of CO₂ from households for the past two years, I was given an opportunity to think about the significance of people’s minds and environmental consciousness.

In general, to reduce CO₂ emissions in the household sector, one measure that is often taken is to “urge people to change their lifestyle or living environment by raising their awareness on the environment”. Changes of lifestyles or living environment often do not have direct benefits to those who carry out the changes but instead they face additional costs and less convenience. It can be said that such acts count on people’s “goodwill” and “altruism”.

Is this measure to rely on people’s goodwill and altruism effective? As far as I know, many of the policy-makers who are addressing climate issues in the household sector seem to realise the unfortunate limitation of the measures based on raising people’s awareness. In fact, in many countries including Japan, CO₂ emissions from the household sector are increasing despite the fact that environmental consciousness is on the rise.

The situation can also be explained from the findings of evolutionary psychology which attempts to explain humans’ altruistic behaviour, that addressing climate change by efforts founded on people’s altruistic behaviour is not easy. Most of the altruistic behaviour of human beings consists of “altruistic acts among close relatives”, “reciprocal altruism” which involves continuous a relationship with other actors, and “altruistic behaviour for mating” which aims to win good esteem from those of the opposite sex. All of these somehow result in benefits for the individual.

However, with measures for climate change, beneficiaries of the current efforts are not the ones who actually carry out the measures but the unspecified general public of future generations. In other words, the above-mentioned nature of altruism does not apply to any of the efforts to address climate change. Introducing policies (e.g. carbon tax) that do not rely on altruistic behaviour thus becomes very important.

Is it then entirely nonsensical to raise environmental consciousness or turn to altruism? I would not think so. The existing study results show that people with higher environmental consciousness feel more positive towards the introduction of policies with added cost such as carbon tax. It might be difficult for environmental consciousness and altruism to induce voluntary actions, but it could be used to make people accept the mechanisms for solutions (even if it involves cost)¹. If so, we can create a strategy to use people’s environmental consciousness and altruism as leverage to introduce robust policies.

Make good use of environmental consciousness to introduce robust policies that are not dependant on environmental consciousness and altruism.

I find this of strategic significance in raising environmental consciousness on climate change issues.

¹ A programme which has organically combined visualisation of CO₂, suggestion for personalised measures, and environmental education. It started as a spinoff project of an IGES research project. Since it has proven potential to promote actions to reduce CO₂ in the household sector, implementation of the project at the national and municipality level is now under consideration.

² Actions to accept mechanisms for solutions can be explained as ‘altruistic behaviour for mating’ to win good esteem from others from the evolutionary psychology perspective.