

# What's New From IGES

January 2014



## IGES Activities at COP19

From 11 to 22 November 2013, the 19th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP19) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 9th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP9) were held in Warsaw, Poland. At COP19, steady progress was seen on negotiations towards a new climate change framework beyond 2020, to replace the Kyoto Protocol. IGES was active in holding a series of side events on major themes with related organisations.

### Eleven Side Events on Climate Policy

On 18 November IGES co-hosted an official side event with the Joint Implementation Network (JIN). Taking up the issue of the knowledge gaps in climate policy, discussions were held from the respective points of view of developed countries, developing countries, NGOs and businesses regarding how decision-making will proceed in line with policy needs when constructing the climate change framework beyond 2020. Dr. Kentaro Tamura, Leader for the Climate and Energy Area at IGES, reported on research regarding knowledge gaps in the development process for pledges on emissions reduction targets and actions.

A series of side events was also held focusing on various efforts and measures in Asia towards achieving a low-carbon society including the Environmentally Sustainable Cities (ESC) model cities programme being implemented in 14 cities across 8 countries in the ASEAN region, and support for low-

carbon city planning in Surabaya, Indonesia. As well as exchanging the results of IGES research and activities, detailed discussions took place with policymakers and experts from across the region on future issues and the potential for further development and cooperation within Asia.



Official side event with JIN



Side event on low-carbon city planning in Surabaya

### CDM Executive Board Adopts IGES Proposal for a Standardised Baseline

In the run-up to COP19, the seventy-sixth meeting of the Executive Board of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) adopted the standardised baseline "Technology switch in the rice mill sector of Cambodia" which was established based on a joint proposal from IGES and the Ministry of the Environment of Cambodia. Baseline emissions (the business as usual amount of greenhouse gas emissions) are required to be calculated for the development of CDM projects. Standardisation for these baselines in a specific area and sector is expected to reduce transaction costs, and promote the use and scaling up of CDM projects.



Field survey in Cambodia

### Timely Delivery of Preliminary Results from COP19

On 4 December, immediately after the end of COP19, the open seminar "Post-COP19 Debriefing and Prospects" was held in Tokyo. IGES researchers gave detailed reports on the contents of discussions and the main points of negotiation at COP19. In addition to this, Dr. Thomas Stocker, the Co-chair of Working Group I of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), gave a lecture on IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report (Working Group I) "Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis" which was published in September 2013.



Reporting by IGES researchers

## Declaration on Sustainable Forestry and Trade in Papua New Guinea

IGES is participating in the Responsible Asia Forestry and Trade (RAFT) programme, which brings together a coalition of established organisations active in promoting responsible forestry and trade in the Asia Pacific region.

Through RAFT, IGES has just completed a comprehensive review of timber legality

issues in Papua New Guinea, covering legality risks, mitigation measures, and drivers for third party legality and sustainability certification. The results of this research have been published in the report "Managing Forests as a Renewable Asset for Present and Future Generations: Verifying Legal Compliance in Forestry in Papua New Guinea".



## Proposal at the World Resources Forum for "Absolute Reductions"

IGES recently led a workshop on achieving "Absolute Reductions" at the latest World Resources Forum (WRF), convened in Davos, Switzerland from 6-9 October 2013. WRF is a science-based platform to discuss the economic, political, social and environmental implications of global resources use.

IGES has been conducting international collaborative research on achieving absolute REDUCTIONS ("Reducing Environmental Degradation & Unsustainable Consumption Trends & Impacts On Nature & Society")

together with the Global Research Forum for Sustainable Production and Consumption and other research institutes such as the Wuppertal Institute (Germany), the Tellus Institute (USA) and the Sustainable Europe Research Institute (SERI). The WRF workshop brought up discussions on research and policy, as well as opportunities for achieving absolute reductions. Sample approaches were presented based on case studies and previous research on reducing consumption of resources and bringing energy use down

to one-planet levels.

IGES is continuing the project with a global consortium of esteemed institutes, collaborating on research and collecting case studies – examples of where absolute reduction have been observed or seem to be likely. A call for papers is now out, inviting submissions for a special volume of the *Journal of Cleaner Production* with a focus on achieving absolute reductions.

## Open Seminar on REDD+ Safeguards

To prevent negative impacts due to the implementation of REDD+\* and enhance social and environmental co-benefits, seven REDD+ safeguards were set up at the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Parties also agreed to develop a system for providing information on these safeguards. REDD+ safeguards stipulated under UNFCCC agreements cover a broad range of fundamental principles. However they are necessarily general and require further elaboration to promote a common understanding and guidance on

how the safeguards are being addressed and respected.

IGES held an open seminar "REDD+ Safeguards: Fundamental, Not an Add-on" from 4 to 5 December 2013 in Tokyo with representatives from government agencies, NGOs and experts. The seminar provided a detailed analysis of REDD+ safeguards with updates on the national experiences and plans from Indonesia, Viet Nam and Lao PDR, as well as a range of

approaches and tools from the viewpoints of governance, participation, rights, and biodiversity and ecosystems services.



\* REDD+: a mechanism to provide financial incentives to protect and/or increase forest carbon stocks in developing countries, which might otherwise be lost through conversion to other land uses or degraded through unsustainable forest management.

## Comparative Report on Climate Finance to Developing Countries

IGES has published a report entitled "Mobilising International Climate Finance: Lessons from the Fast-Start Finance Period" together with World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The report analyses developed country support given to developing countries for climate change.

The target goal set for Fast-Start Finance (FSF) was that developed countries would donate USD30 billion to developing countries

over the three years from 2010-2012. This report reviews the FSF contributions that 37 countries have reported to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It provides a detailed case analysis of the five largest Fast-Start Finance contributors: Germany, Japan, Norway, the US and the UK. It also suggests important lessons for countries seeking to scale up and effectively target climate finance over the medium and long term.





## IPCC Open Symposium in Hokkaido

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Open Symposium “New Scientific Findings on Climate Change and the Importance of GHG Inventory to Assess Mitigation Progress” was held on 10 December 2013 in Sapporo, Hokkaido with IGES as one of the collaborators.

Since the IPCC approved and accepted the WG1 contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report and two Methodology Reports on

estimation of greenhouse gas emissions and removals in autumn 2013, this symposium aimed to provide the information on the work of IPCC and new scientific findings on climate change. It also considered climate change from the point of view of Hokkaido, the location for the event, and featured international efforts to control climate change and IPCC’s activities.



IPCC Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI) Technical Support Unit (TSU) is located in IGES. TSU supports the activities of IPCC TFI. TFI develops and promotes the IPCC guidelines and relevant tools for the estimation and reporting of national greenhouse gas emissions and removals.

### Researchers' Viewpoint

## Can Myanmar Hold on to Being Green?

**Kenta Usui**

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When I recently went to the Myanmar Embassy to apply for a visa, it was so crowded that the lobby was full. I counted about forty people waiting. So it seems that there is still a healthy number of Japanese people wanting to visit Myanmar.

The first time I visited Myanmar was in November 2012 when I participated in the second Myanmar Green Economy Green Growth (GEGG) Forum. The third of these forums took place on 20-22 November 2013. Over the three days of the Forum, there were twelve five-hour parallel sessions, a move of location from Nay Pyi Taw to Yangon between days one and two, and to cap it all, it was extremely difficult to grasp the agenda. Because of this situation, it is almost impossible to follow the details discussed at the Forum.

However, the great feature of the GEGG conference is participation by the top echelons of power in Myanmar, with the attendance of Myanmar’s President and Cabinet ministers. In fact the conference started with an inaugural address from President U Thein Sein, which was attended by fourteen ministers. The strong military presence within Myanmar’s government means that the decisions made at the top levels of government have a profound influence. The most important purpose of this Forum was not to draw any particular conclusions from the discussions but to drive home the idea of being “green” to Myanmar’s leadership.

The theme for the third GEGG forum was the “water-food-energy nexus”. For example, energy is needed to produce food, water is needed to maintain energy, energy is needed to maintain water and so on and so forth. These three resources, water, food and energy, form

an inseparable tripartite. We could say that using the globally recognised word “Nexus” is like sounding a warning bell against thinking about these concepts as separate entities.

However it is not clear what this nexus means in the context of Myanmar. There are four large rivers that flow through the country, and it also has more abundant water resources than its neighbours. There are also rich gas fields which provide a lot of foreign income. Although one cannot go so far as to say that food is plentiful, rice production is thriving and the land is fertile. In other words, Myanmar does not have any problems in terms of resources. This is very different from the situation in China and India where they have insufficient energy and water resources for their huge populations.

So why exactly was nexus chosen as the theme of the conference? I think the intention here was to give a warning to the vertically structured administration in Myanmar. For example, the country does not have centralised management of energy, but rather it is fragmented across several ministries such as the “Ministry of Energy”, “Ministry of Power”, “Ministry of Industry” and the “Ministry of Science and Technology”. There is the National Water Resources Committee to deal with water, however its influence in decision making is weak. The concept of a nexus includes the message that in order for there to be a green economy, the government really needs to break down the barriers

between ministries.

Even in the face of challenges like these, Myanmar has shown that it can make progress in terms of the environment-related systems. We can see prime examples of this in the establishment of the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, the enactment of the Environmental Conservation Law and the creation of Environmental Impact Assessment rules (work in progress). On the other hand, there is an overwhelming lack of financial and human resources as well as insufficient technical capabilities for the departments that deal with the environment so this is an area which needs to be strengthened. And of course, there also needs to be reforms to the tax and education systems which support such resources.

In 2014 Myanmar will take up the chair of ASEAN, and will hold general elections in 2015. The outcomes of any reforms will certainly be tested over the next couple of years.



The third Myanmar Green Economy Green Growth Forum

## Improving the Skills of Environmental Education Leaders

On 12 December 2013, a course was held in Hiratsuka by Kanagawa Environmental Research Center with the aim of improving the skills of environmental education leaders in Kanagawa Prefecture. Dr. Chisa Umemiya, a researcher in the Climate and Energy Area at IGES, gave a lecture on the theme of the decline in tropical forests

that are located in developing countries, and international efforts to curb this decline using some examples from Thailand. Participants showed great interest in the theme of the event and after the lecture, they asked many questions, which resulted in a lively questions and answer session.



## Lecture on "The Degrowth Way of Life" at Shonan Village Academia

On 19 October, the Shonan Village Academia "Café Integral" lecture was held on the theme of "Degrowth". (Organisers: Kanagawa International Foundation, Kanagawa Prefecture / Cooperation from: IGES and others)

The lecture was given by Dr. Satoshi

Kojima, Principal Policy Researcher at IGES, who spoke on "Why Degrowth? Overcoming the dilemma of growth, aiming for well-being in society". He presented various materials and data to give an easy-to-understand explanation of degrowth as a new value.



## Junior High School Students Come to IGES to Do Work Experience

In November 2013, four second-year junior high school students, two students from Ogusu Junior High School and two students from Hayama Junior High School, came to IGES to do work experience. After learning business etiquette, such as how to exchange business cards, they gave a self-introduction in English to all the research groups. The students had a variety of experiences at IGES, including the chance to listen to a lecture given by a researcher from Sri Lanka using the TV conference

system to connect to the Kitakyushu Urban Centre. Researchers from various countries gave presentations about their field of expertise, and the students could gain a wide range of information on each country and why the researchers chose their careers. They then worked to create actual documents. The junior high school students received warm words of encouragement from a number of researchers, and were able to feel at home at IGES as they carried out their work experience.



### IGES Chair Receives JICA Recognition Award

In October 2013, Prof. Hironori Hamanaka, Chair of IGES Board of Directors, received the JICA Recognition Award for his cooperation and long-standing contribution to the activities of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). At the same time, the Indonesia Climate Change Programme Loan (ICCP) which IGES has been cooperating on for the past 5 years, received the JICA President Award

### 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. IGES puts up the logo marks of membership foundations, corporations and NGOs on the IGES website to show their support. In addition, members

receive preferential tax treatment.

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>

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	Registration Charge	Yearly Fee (1unit)
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