

Foreword

Established in 1998 with the aim of proposing innovative policy measures to policy makers, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) has been conducting policy research in order to realise sustainable development. Based on the research results of the six projects in the First Phase, IGES entered the Second Phase in April 2001 under the Second Phase Strategic Research Programme composed of seven projects, two sub-projects and two programmes. The research in the Second Phase has been successful so far, expanding its capacity with the inauguration of the Kansai Research Centre in June 2001 supported by the Hyogo Prefectural Government. In June 2002, the IGES headquarters building was constructed by the Kanagawa Prefectural Government, which meant the full-fledged start of the Institute.

The First Phase was a funding phase, seeking a common idea of “strategic research”, while the Second Phase Strategic Research Programme was formulated in order to propose practical policy options through inter-projects research, utilising the First Phase achievements. Now, two years from the start of the Second Phase, most of the original objectives of the Second Phase Strategic Research Programme are being achieved.

Specifically, IGES was able to make contributions to policy makers at such important global environmental conferences as “World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)”, “The Third World Water Forum (WWF3)”, “The Seventh Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC/COP7)” and UNFCCC/COP8, under the leadership of the Climate Policy Project and the over-arching Long-term Perspective and Policy Integration Project, utilising domestic and overseas networks built up in the First Phase. This was one of the major achievements in the first half of the Second Phase.

IGES research results are being applied to actual policy process through IGES’ capacity as the Secretariat of the Asia Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED) as well as making policy proposals through the Asia-Pacific Environmental Innovation Strategy Project (APEIS/RISPO) to the Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO ASIA). Through these activities, IGES has been expected to make more extensive contributions to the global environmental community. From its own view point, IGES will compile the Environmental Whitepaper for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region (tentative name)” at the end of the Second Phase.

On top of the achievements mentioned above, the research results in the Second Phase are being disseminated through the eLearning system, an electronic tool for learning via the Internet, which is operated by the Capacity Building Programme, translating the results into an understandable form in accessible way. However, the Freshwater Resources Management Project is only now finalising its project plan, after two years examination, and will start the project in the final year of the Second Phase. As for the Communication Programme, the formulation of integrated information dissemination system is well behind schedule due to the move to the new building.

On the other hand, the situation surrounding the global environmental community and the needs there have changed greatly in the past two years and each entity needs to follow up the Ministerial Declaration adopted at WSSD in Johannesburg and Ministerial Declaration at WWF3, and prepare itself for the enactment of the Kyoto Protocol of UNFCCC. Thus, they are expected to shift their focus from a conventional approach toward the environment to a cross-cutting approach. This approach will integrate the environment with the economy and society to realise sustainable development, covering such themes as poverty alleviation and appropriate management of natural resources.

This report was prepared to review the Second Phase Strategic Research mid- point, examining the achievement in the first half in light of the original objectives and the expected goal of each project, with a view to reorganising the “strategy” in order to reflect the current needs of society and to produce better results at the end of the Second Phase. Based on this review, the project business plan for the fiscal year 2003 will be drafted to conclude the Second Phase successfully. At the same time, based on the Second Phase achievements, preparation has started to formulate the Third Phase Strategic Research Programme starting in April 2004.

In the fiscal year 2003, a detailed interim peer review will be conducted on some of the projects by outside experts on a trial basis, based on which the final review will take place after the conclusion of the Second Phase using the members of the IGES Research Advisory Committee as referees.

In May 2003, an IGES project office will be established in Bangkok, which will be the base of upgraded and expanded research activities in the Asia Pacific region. IGES is determined to make the utmost effort for global environmental conservation in the 21st Century, especially for the realisation of sustainable development in the Asia Pacific region. I would appreciate your further support and assistance to IGES in its endeavours.

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