

Contribution to International Activities

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

IPCC has a very important role to bridge between scientific communities and policy-makers in terms of climate change. It was established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to assess scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relevant for the understanding of climate change, and its potential impacts and response strategies and options. IPCC's assessment reports, as well as special reports and technical papers, have been regarded as a basis of authority for policy-makers to implement the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol.

Currently IPCC consists of the three Working Groups with the following target subjects: Physical Science Basis (WG I); Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability (WG II); and Mitigation of Climate Change (WG III). IPCC is now preparing the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) to be published in 2007. We plan to contribute the latest scientific information derived from the Global Warming Research Initiative to the AR4 of IPCC.

Earth Observation Summit and Group on Earth Observations (GEO)

The Earth Observation Summit was initiated to promote the development of a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustained Earth-observation systems among governments and the international community to help understand and address global environmental and economic challenges. The first Summit was held July 31, 2003, in Washington,

DC, to begin a process to develop a conceptual framework and implementation plan for building this Earth-observation systems. As a result of the Earth Observation Summit, an ad hoc Group on Earth Observations (GEO) was established to prepare a 10-year implementation plan for a coordinated, comprehensive, and sustained Earth-observation systems.

Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP)

The global research community has a history of enhancing the scientific understanding of global change and the human society through developing international programmes such as World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), and International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP). Recently, the World Summit of Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in 2002, requested that scientific communities strengthen their activities toward ensuring the full understanding of the nature of global environmental changes and contributing to sustainable development of human society. Based on this

request, they have started a new global collaboration program called the Earth System Science Partnership.

The Earth System Science Partnership is a partnership of four global change research programmes (International Programme of Biodiversity Science (DIVERSITAS), IGBP, IHDP and WCRP) for the integrated study of the Earth System, the changes that are occurring to the System and the implications of these changes for global sustainability. The ESSP undertakes joint projects on issues of global sustainability, such as carbon cycle/energy systems, food systems, water resources and human health, and regional studies.

Regional Collaboration through START and APN

The Asia and Pacific region is a focused region from various aspects of global warming and climate change; it has the world's largest population, highest growth rate, and fastest developing economic activities. It has a variety of natural functions, including tropical forests and the Pacific Ocean as sinks of CO₂, and it has been facing severe damage due to cyclones, floods, storm surges, drought, and desertification. Therefore, building scientific and technological capacity is essential for the sustainable development of each country and the region. As an Asian

and Pacific country, we try to contribute support the region to achieve these goals in close collaboration with START*, APN** and other relevant programs.

* :Global Change: System for Analysis, Research and Training (START) is cosponsored by IGBP, IHDP, and WCRP, and seeks to establish and foster regional networks of collaborating scientists and institutions in developing countries.

** :Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) is an inter-governmental network for the promotion of global change research and links between science and policy making in the Asia-Pacific Region, which Japan is strongly supporting.

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