

ISAP 2011 Chair's Summary

Chair: Prof. Hironori Hamanaka, Chair of the Board of Directors, IGES

Day 1 26 July

Morning Session on the Hayama Proposal and Implications of Japan's disasters

People recognized the importance of thinking about the future energy mix of Japan with new and flexible perspectives after the Fukushima triple disaster. Energy policy and climate policy are different sides of the same coin and we should seek low carbon, high safety, and high energy security – keeping in mind there may be costs to bear for these positive goals. Research institutes such as IGES should play an important role to provide qualitative and quantitative analysis and concrete proposals to contribute to the ongoing discussion on Japan's future courses of action. In this regard, it was urgently called for continued dialogue among stakeholders such as the ones we had at ISAP 2011, learning from the German experience. The future direction of the international regime for climate change mitigation is very unclear. Parties including Japan should make compromises to make the discussion move ahead for our common future. The Hayama Proposal as proposed by the IGES climate change group may stir further discussion inside and outside of Japan.

Afternoon Session on Resilient Societies

A decentralized system for risk reduction, relief, and recovery with differentiated roles under a comprehensive plan was proposed and discussed during this session in which:

- National governments have a facilitating and enabling role
- Local government has the responsibility for decision making and implementation, and for promoting horizontal cooperation and participation of different stakeholders.

It is essential to revitalize decentralized, localized, and self-reliant socio-economic systems which value and support inclusive and meaningful participatory processes as a way to facilitate effective risk

reduction, relief work, and reconstruction on the pathway to a transition towards a resilient and sustainable society. In this regard, the importance of community-based approach was emphasized.

Day 2 27 July

Morning Session on Governance for Sustainable Development

Despite the many challenges we need transformational change in addressing the weaknesses in current governance arrangements.

- Greater attention must be paid to horizontal and vertical integration – genuine and informed multi-stakeholder participation and multi-level integration: the involvement of women and civil society groups, business and local governments at all levels need to influence the outcome of Rio+20.
- Access to information and *meaningful* public participation in policy decision making process to enhance accountability and implementation, possibly through a global or regional convention.
- International and regional organizations need to play a proactive role in engaging with national and sub-national stakeholders, while sub-national stakeholders can take a more proactive role to engage with the national government to promote change.

If we agree that the status quo is not sufficient to address current and future sustainable development problems, then we cannot fear the challenges and consequences of making fundamental changes in the UN charter.

Afternoon Session on Green Economy

The East Japan disasters, including the Fukushima nuclear accident, reveal that the existing social and economic system does not fully account for environmental and social costs. The concept of green economy is important in this context. The session discussed how the implication and definition of a green economy may vary depending on the developmental stage, but sharing the common goal of sustainable development. One of the key discussion points was how green economy can improve the

daily lives of poor people, not only in developing countries but also in developed countries. The importance of technology transfer and application, particularly exploring opportunities between south-south was emphasized, indicating a need for improving education to develop the capabilities necessary for technology transfer and to provide the skills that will sustain green job growth.

Conclusion

In closing Prof. Hamanaka and Mr. Rae Kwon Chung, Director, Environment and Sustainable Development Division of UNESCAP shared their final thoughts for ISAP2011. Prof. Hamanaka recapped the main messages from each plenary session, which he said he hoped would be used towards developing a sustainable and resilient society and promoting green economy in the context of achieving sustainable development and alleviating poverty, bearing in mind the diversity of the Asia-Pacific region. Mr. Chung closed ISAP2011 by offering a reminder of two points – the first challenge is to reach out to convince the other two pillars, the other ministries, the other NGOs, as speaking to the converted is no way to achieve cross-cutting goals. The second challenge is to have more clarity within the environmental policy community as internal disagreements weaken the messages and do little to clarify the misperceptions and understanding about sustainable development. IGES and other institutes need to clarify and educate the national delegates going to Seoul and Rio de Janeiro. That is the challenge of our times, to overcome the knowledge gaps by working together and overcoming our collective challenges to human survival on planet Earth.