



Title of ISAP 2020:

Just Transitions Toward Sustainable Societies in Asia and the Pacific: Building Forward Better for Our Future Beyond COVID-19

Background

Transformative change to a sustainable society has been the subject of endless international debate, but until recently, any action has made very slow progress. Then the world was struck by the COVID-19 pandemic and this was our wake-up call to make actual changes in our socio-economic structure, lifestyle and values. A swift response and recovery from COVID-19 is certainly necessary, and this is also a chance for us to think about how we can re-design our societies and transform them to be more sustainable.

At the same time, this pandemic reminds us that it is not only transformative change that is needed, but also a just and inclusive transition to a sustainable and resilient society. COVID-19 has shown that people in vulnerable environments, those with disabilities, and marginalised groups are the most affected during crises. With this in mind, IGES needs to reframe the scope and approach of its strategic research. More attention should be paid to the socio-economic dimensions of the SDGs, such as jobs, gender, health, empowerment, and lifestyles.

ISAP2020 will showcase IGES' position on the risks we face now and in the future, focusing on global sustainability. At the same time, we would like to make a call for stronger partnerships with relevant stakeholders, so that the world can recover from this global crisis. We must make every effort to re-design a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive society while ensuring that we fully consider international processes, such as the 'Online platform on Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from COVID19' advocated by the Government of Japan, UNFCCC-COP26, CBD-COP15, UNEA-5, APFSD, and HLPPF.

IGES is now in the final year of its 7th Phase Integrative Strategic Research Programme (ISRP7). Going forward, the Institute needs to develop a plan for our next four-year programme which will start in July 2021. ISAP, therefore, will be a great opportunity for us to seek inputs for the ISRP8 and we look forward to gaining insights and ideas from all participants.

Objectives

ISAP2020 has following two-fold objectives:

- 1) To discuss required actions for transformative change for a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive society, considering initial response, recovery, and re-design processes for COVID-19.
- 2) To facilitate discussions among various stakeholders by welcoming much broader participation than previous years and taking an innovative approach through the use of online tools.