

Outline of Discussions

Japan-East Asia Dialogue “Cooperation in Environment and Energy”

The Global Forum of Japan (GFJ) and the East Asian Institute (EAI) of National University of Singapore co-sponsored “the Japan-East Asia Dialogue” on June 10, 2008 in Tokyo. In the “Dialogue,” which had 126 participants in total, lively discussion was carried out among experts, including 17 participants from ASEAN, China and Korea, on the theme of “Cooperation in Environment and Energy.”

Pursuing Sustainable Development

In the Session I on the theme of “The Current Situation and Challenge of East Asian Environmental and Energy Problems”, two key note speakers presented their views. Prof. HIRONO Ryokichi stated, “Environmental issues such as water pollution and water shortage are emerging threats to the sustainability of economic development along with the increasing price of crude oil and the failure of Doha Round. A new Fukuda vision including the introduction of carbon tax should be highly evaluated as it is a key for each country’s efforts to incorporate environmental issues to its development strategy,” while Prof. Simon TAY said, “The stable supply of energy cannot be guaranteed. Economic development has significant effects on environment and climate change as well as water and air pollutions. Energy, environment and economy are three corners of an interlocking triangle. We need to make efforts to solve these three issues at each of the national, regional, and international levels.”

In the following free discussions voices such as “Both commercial-based and knowledge-based approaches are needed for environmental issues” (Chinese participant) and “Voluntary model and mandatory model should be combined when we tackle with environmental issues” (Bruneian Participants) were expressed.

Measures for Climate Change and Regional Cooperation

In the Session II on the theme of “Future prospects for East Asian Environmental and Energy cooperation”, two key note speakers presented their reports. Dr. Shaharuddin MOHAMAD ISMAIL said, “East Asia is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to its size of population which concentrates in coastal and low lying areas. The only practical approach to protect communities, ecosystems and economies of the region is adaptation to climate change if it is impossible to avoid climate change over the next few decades. It is therefore crucial to reinforce regional cooperation,” while Prof. ASUKA Jusen stated, “Technology transfer from developed countries to developing countries should be considered as an obligation of developed countries from the viewpoint of equity. The protection of intellectual property rights is a barrier for effective transfer of technology. Domestic and international policies, such as various preferential treatments for technology transfer, are needed.”

In the following free discussions views such as “What is needed now is historical reconciliation between rich and poor countries” (Vietnamese Participant), “Developing countries should accept the targets for reducing the emission of greenhouse gas” (Japanese Participant) and “We need to set up a new target as Kyoto Protocol has not been functioning well” (Participant from ASEAN Secretariat) were raised.