

International Symposium on Voluntary Approaches

Evaluating Industry-led Voluntary Approach and Discussing the Future of Climate Change Policy: Achievements and Future Roles of Japan's Voluntary Action Plan on the Environment

(Japanese-English simultaneous interpretation available)

Objectives:

Launched in 1997, the Voluntary Action Plan on the Environment (“the Plan”) concluded its target period in fiscal year 2012. The Plan was referred to in the Kyoto Protocol Target Achievement Plan, revised in 2008, as having “thus far produced results”. Despite addressing the climate change issue over a long term, such industrial community’s efforts under the Plan have not had a sufficient academic studies and discussion done on it both domestically and overseas. It was because that the Plan took a gradual development, including its follow-up process, and it also had limited access to information.

Given the conclusion of the Plan in fiscal year 2012, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry launched the Committee for the Comprehensive Review of the Voluntary Action Plan on the Environment (“the Committee”). The Committee performed a comprehensive evaluation of the achievements of the Plan, which had mainly focused on reducing emissions in corporate production activities. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the renewed voluntary approach, the Committee also compiled a proposal for the formulation and assessment/evaluation of action plans carried out by the industrial community.

“International Symposium on Voluntary Approaches” aims at communicating a comprehensive evaluation of voluntary approaches and proposals for future programs to domestic and overseas audiences, discussing the future roles of voluntary approaches as well as facilitating understanding of Japan’s climate change measures. Through this symposium, we expect to share the achievements and challenges of voluntary approaches among the parties concerned, and to promote the further development of the voluntary action. Also, we hope such kinds of knowledge and experiences contribute to improve the effectiveness of the Japanese climate change policy.