

Joint Statement on Collaborative Research Actions based on the International Forum on Sustainable Future in Asia

The world is now gearing toward the realization of sustainable societies. Asian countries are also on the turning point to realize economically and environmentally sustainable region. Asia is not an exception on this regard and is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change and disasters. The flooding often happens after high-intensity precipitation in urban areas. Downstream area of the Mekong river basin is facing to the various challenge of environmental issues, such as the rise of sea levels and the threat of flooding. Industrialization and urbanization, along with economic development, have led to sharp increases in energy consumption and waste production, and environmental changes and exposure to environmental contaminants damage health in various ways. The growing economies of Asia are also certain to be vulnerable to climate risks, and adaptive and mitigative measures to climate change are being considered with increased urgency as solutions that facilitate smarter growth of the economy and public welfare in response to scientific forecasting of global warming impacts.

Research institutes and universities are expected to play a substantial role for sustainable development. However, this is a very challenging task. Sustainability science is newly emerging academic field seeking to understand the linkages among nature, social and human systems, and concomitant risks to human well-being and security, and must be based on interdisciplinary approach and method system of interdisciplinary sciences.

As a step toward acceleration of social transformation and fundamental changes in how we live on Earth through researches in the field of sustainability science in Asia, NIES, AIT RRC.AP, IR3S-UTokyo and VJU have initiated discussions to establish comprehensive research initiatives and networks in order to promote effective action within the Asia-Pacific region at the 4th International Forum on Sustainable Future in Asia on January 23 and 24, 2019 at Hanoi, Vietnam.

Through the forum, we have shared recent research findings regarding the realization of sustainable societies in Asia, and new ways of building sustainable societies in Asia elucidated by stimulating discussions among stakeholders; catalyse policy–research networking to formulate relevant science-based policies; and find feasible paths toward sustainable societies in Asia by converting aspirations into actions at the local, national, and regional levels.

In order to be responsible for sustainable development, prominent missions particularly for growing Asian countries and cities are strategic approaches for integrative targets for the future such as SDGs, policy designs to contemplate climate change mitigation and adaptation, exposure to environmental contaminants, and transition of life styles.

Our network will foster the best talents in science, technology, and policy in addressing some of the pressing concerns related to the environment, and pursuing possible research projects in the wide spectrum of the research fields, such as, to lead science and policy innovation, to synergize climate change mitigation and adaptation, to promote the management of solid wastes, to control environmental changes and exposure to environmental contaminants as well as to transform of social infrastructures and life styles into sustainable way. The forum will serve platform and foundation for a consortium of relevant institutions and governments in the region that, through periodic gatherings of researchers and policy-makers, will facilitate the exchange of knowledge gained through research and catalyse dialogue at the policy-research interface in the spheres of environmental management and sustainable development in Asia.

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