

Recent issues on mitigating global warming

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Recent Issues on Mitigating Global Warming

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1. Recent Issues on Global Warming

- Impacts of Global Warming have emerged in snow/ice and ecosystems in many regions.
e.g. Sea ices, Glaciers, Ice shelf and Ice Sheets, Shifts of plants and animal habitats, extinction of certain plants, etc.
- Recent extreme weather/climate events are possible links to current ongoing Global Warming.
e.g. Heat wave in Europe (2003), Huge hurricanes in US (2005), Heavy rains and drought, Wild fires in Europe and US.

2. Mitigation Policy based on Kyoto Protocol

- Kyoto Protocol was finally enacted on 16th February 2005.
- The Japanese Government adopted a new plan to attain the Kyoto Protocol GHG reduction target, i.e. 6% reduction during the first commitment period(2008~12) compared to 1990.
- However, the total GHG emission in 2003 was about 8 % higher than 1990's, so that more effective mitigation policy options should be incorporated in future, such as economic incentives like carbon tax.

3. Toward Low-Carbon Society

- In parallel, so called "Beyond Kyoto" issues has emerged in the context of international climate change negotiation. The key issues are the level of safe and stabilization of atmospheric GHG concentration for ecosystems and human society and how to stabilize the GHG. The European Union indicated 2 °C temperature increase due to global warming should be a long-term target for climate change mitigation.
- In Japan, long term target issue has come to a political issue and has been discussed in the subcommittee of the Central Environmental Council, Ministry of Environment.
- Research on Low Carbon Society was initiated last April, and currently future scenario development for realizing such Low Carbon Society is going on. From its analysis, total GHG emission will be reduced to almost a half of the current emission in the world, and in Japan, a 60-80% GHG reduction should be attained using various countermeasures.