

Visions for a Low-Carbon Society

Findings from the workshop series of the UK-Japan
collaboration Low-Carbon Societies

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Questions addressed by the LCS project

- Why do we need deep cuts in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions ?
- How could reductions of about 50% be achieved by 2050 – country perspectives?
- How can we align sustainable development and climate objectives?
- What are the gaps between current reality and the future vision for a LCS at the country-level?
- What opportunities exist for cooperation and how can we best cooperate in estimating country, regional and global-level LCS scenarios.

1st Workshop: What do we mean by a Low-Carbon Society?

A Low-Carbon Society:

- takes actions that are compatible with the principles of sustainable development, ensuring that the development needs of all groups within society are met;
- makes an equitable contribution towards the global effort to stabilise atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases at a level that will avoid dangerous climate change through deep cuts in global emissions;
- demonstrates high levels of energy efficiency and uses low-carbon energy sources and production technologies, and adopts patterns of consumption and behaviour that are consistent with low levels of GHG emissions.

Findings from the 1st Workshop (2):

- **Why do we need Low-Carbon Societies**
- **How can we achieve Low-Carbon Societies**
- **How to align Low-Carbon Societies with Sustainable Development**
- **International cooperation**

2nd Workshop (1) Rationale

- Urgent action required to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions significantly (by at least 50 per cent by 2050) and adapt to unavoidable impacts of climate change.
- Technically and economically feasibility to achieve deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 – as much as 60-80 per cent in developed countries.
- The costs of transitioning to low-carbon societies are vastly outweighed by the future costs of inaction.
- Scale of the problem is such that a wide range of stakeholders need to be engaged in finding solutions.

2nd Workshop (2) Policies and Measures

International action will require bold and innovative measures.

There is a need to:

- Develop long-term policy signals for business
- Enhance international RD&D in integrative and transformational technologies
- Mobilise investment resources for low-carbon development in developing countries.

Well designed low-carbon strategies are an important aspect of sustainable development that can deliver significant co-benefits.

2nd Workshop (3) Key factors for success

Changes in human behaviour and lifestyle are essential to achieving low-carbon societies.

Existing technologies and those close to commercialisation can make a major contribution to carbon emission reductions.

A significant share of global greenhouse gas emissions is due to cities. Existing initiatives and projects at city-level around the world show that effective action can be and is being undertaken.

Key policy recommendations:

- Develop frameworks that create incentives for deployment of Carbon Capture and Storage.
- Develop a comprehensive programmatic approach to global forestry and soil carbon stocks.
- Establish a fiscal framework that discourages low sustainability developments.
- An approach to transport policies that promote more sustainable mobility.
- Create long-term incentives for the design, construction and use of more energy efficient homes
- Develop schemes that raise people's awareness of the impacts that their consumption choices have on their carbon footprint.

Next steps – WS3 2008

- WS3 will be held 13-15 February 2008 in Tokyo, Japan
- Will demonstrate feasibility of low-carbon societies through establishing methodologies for creating visions and drawing roadmaps, and raising awareness
- Will develop further the policy recommendations and mapping of low-carbon society activities
- Will focus on scientific achievement of the low-carbon society study, explore integration of low-carbon societies and sustainable development, and mobilise wider dialogue among stakeholders.

LCS results will feed into other international processes:

- UNFCCC
- G8
- Gleneagles Dialogue
- Other international processes