

Afterword

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH COOPERATION IN FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

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The First IGES International Workshop on Forest Conservation Strategies in the Asia and the Pacific Region was held at the Shonan International Village Center from 21 to 23 July 1998 gathering 65 participants from over 10 countries. Among the participants were representatives of representing IGES Forest Conservation Project, relevant research institutes, government officials, international and national NGOs, academic societies and other entities. In the Workshop, two main subjects were considered and discussed. One subject was the underlying causes of forest degradation and deforestation, which has been one of the central subjects in the IFF process. Ardent and prudent presentation and discussion was conducted based on fact findings in various areas of the region. The other subject was participatory forest management which has also been a key concept for sustainable forest management around the world. Actual cases and recent experiences, as well as failures were explained honestly and necessary future actions were pointed out.

Through active discussion in the course of two full days, we learned many of local perspectives on forest issues in the region. We also learned that further and thorough studies should be carried out because only a little part of the complicated social and physical aspects of forest issues have been introduced and understood. The IGES Forest Project has just been started. The Project members are going to carry out on-site research activities in various areas of the region putting a special emphasis on local participation in forest management in order to ensure sustainable utilization of forest products. The successful results of the First Workshop will no doubt help our research activities and we would like to ask all participants to cooperate actively with IGES.

We are going to hold the Second Workshop in Singapore in late November 1998 to review and discuss more about sustainable forest management and necessary legal and administrative measures to promote and support wider participation of local people. The result of the First Workshop will be published and sent to you all and will be distributed at relevant international forum such as the ECOASIA Meeting in September 1998 and IFF meetings.