Introduction

The Internet Revolution is a global event that has reached Germany and Japan to similar extents. Many experts agree that this revolution may bring about new patterns of social and economic interactions with potentially far-reaching implications. Although these patterns will develop in virtual space, material input and therewith ecological impacts may also be heavily affected.

Researchers within the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) as well as the Wuppertal Institute felt that these potentially negative ecological impacts could provide a fruitful subject for the second phase of the "policy dialogue between Japan and Germany to facilitate co-ordinated action to combat climate change". First preparatory studies at the onset of the second phase indicated that there might be significant implications stemming from increased Internet usage as far as emissions of greenhouse gases are concerned. Therefore, the two institutes decided to focus exclusively on policies and measures in the Information Technology (IT) Sector suitable to combating climate change. The guiding question was: How can the ecological soundness of the infrastructure sustaining the Internet Revolution be ensured?

To tackle this question, always with a view to potential demand for policy co-ordination, the chosen approach was as follows. In collaboration, the two Institutes specified three environmental fields of action related to the Internet. Then experts in these fields working with IGES, the Wuppertal Institute as well as with external institutes were approached and asked to write discussion papers. As a basis, the experts received terms of reference, which outlined the general structure and content of the discussion papers. Providing such terms ensured that Japanese experts and their German counterparts described and evaluated the policy mix intended to tackle identical environmental problems in their respective countries.

Upon finalisation all discussion papers were assembled and complemented by a first attempt by the Wuppertal Institute to quantify the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that can reasonably be attributed to the Internet. The resulting material provided the basis for a very fruitful workshop held in Wuppertal shortly before the opening of the Sixth Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP6). Representatives of major IT-companies, German and Japanese officials as well as delegations from the Institute

for Global Environment Strategies and the Wuppertal Institute attended the workshop. The results of the workshop were presented at a side event, during the Sixth Conference of the Parties of the Framework Convention on Climate Change in The Hague.

The following report contains the material that was produced during the second phase of the policy dialogue. The first pages intend, as a primary goal, to let the reader somewhat participate in the discussion that took place at the workshop. The second goal pursued with the record is to report on the interpretations and at times divergent views of workshop participants.