

## Editor's Note

The Kyoto Protocol was signed at the third Convention of the Parties (COP 3) in 1997, and its participating nations are now formulating national and international guidelines to achieve the protocol's goals as they wait for it to come into force. At the same time, nations not participating in the protocol are taking measures to achieve parallel goals. Collectively, such efforts have the potential to contribute not only to the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, but also to changes in energy demand and supply conditions, and shifts in the attitudes of people as they go about their daily lives. In Japan, the country's policy measures and guidelines to implement the Kyoto Protocol were formulated in 2002 and reviewed in 2004. In 2005, further steps to strengthening the measures to address climate change will start. At the international level, research is under way on policy regimes that are needed "beyond Kyoto," as international approaches to address climate change after 2012 are to be discussed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change starting in 2007.

Now almost seven years since the Kyoto meeting, this special issue of the *International Review for Environmental Strategies (IRES)* surveys the various effects of the Kyoto Protocol at the national, regional, and global levels. The aims of this issue are to ascertain the effectiveness of the Kyoto Protocol, as well as its major issues and barriers, and to offer clues for future frameworks, based on the findings and perspectives presented here.

For this issue of *IRES*, we were fortunate to receive articles from many outstanding experts, who provided us with information on current trends as well as their insightful views on issues surrounding the Kyoto Protocol. We hope our readers will find it to be a useful resource on this important topic. Though solutions to the challenges we face may not be easily found, the international community must continue to work on climate issues as well as many other environmental concerns. We at the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) will continue to do our part to tackle these challenges, by finding and presenting sound and sustainable solutions.

While making this issue of *IRES*, we learned that the Russian Federation is now going through the process of ratifying the Kyoto Protocol. We hope this fact makes our publication timely and more meaningful to the global community. We look forward to your comments on this issue of *IRES*, as well as contributions from you, the readers, in order to keep future issues informative and useful.



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