

## **A Grand Design for Northeast Asia as a Comprehensive Vision for Trans-border Development**

### **<Research Outline>**

This project represents Phase Three of “Research on a Grand Design for Northeast Asia,” which commenced in fiscal 2001. In Phase One of the project, basic research was conducted; the conceptual outlines of “Northeast Asia” were clarified, the status of various sectors (energy, transportation, etc.) in the region was considered from the macroscopic perspective, and a rough sketch for multilateral infrastructure building within the region was proposed. In Phase Two, specific projects which were viewed as possessing the potential to promote cooperation and harmonious coexistence in the region were selected from among infrastructure development plans in various sectors, including energy and environment, transportation and physical distribution, and their feasibility was examined.

Based on the results of Phases One and Two, in Phase Three Japanese, Chinese and South Korean think tanks and researchers conducted joint research on the future prospects for the comprehensive development of Northeast Asia as a whole, taking the national development plans of each nation as a point of departure. Each think tank involved in the research considered the national development plans of its own nation. Common points were identified, and a grand design for trans-border development was sketched out. In addition, the project considered development plans established with consideration of the region as a whole in the following areas: energy, transportation and physical distribution, telecommunications, strategic development clusters, ecotourism and development finance. Pilot projects with a high level of feasibility were selected from these plans. The project concluded that the nations of the region should establish a shared development vision and formulate development plans coordinated with their respective national development plans, and that it would be necessary to establish a multilateral system of cooperation in order to realize these goals.

## **<Policy Proposals>**

### **I. National development plans that consider the region as a whole must be vigorously promoted**

\* Japan's stability and prosperity is inseparable from the stability and development of nearby Northeast Asian nations.

\* Northeast Asia is a key region in terms of the flow of goods and people to and from Japan. The entire region represents a zone in which same-day business and sightseeing trips can potentially be conducted.

\* National development plans should be formulated with consideration of the development of an East Asian Economic Zone, looking towards the formation of a zone in which same-day round trips can be made to neighboring countries, the enhancement of the functions of international distribution bases, etc.

### **II. Japan must share a common regional development vision with other Northeast Asian nations**

\* Interdependence between Japan and the other nations of Northeast Asia in terms of trade and investment and personal exchanges has been increasing. Given this, it is essential for the nations of the region to share a future-directed regional development vision.

\* With regard to national development plans, and in particular development plans for basic social infrastructure, the Northeast Asian nations must commence formulating ideas for multilateral projects that consider the region as a whole and advance the common interests of all the nations in the region.

\* An institutional foundation must be established to enable multilateral coordination of the basic infrastructure development plans of individual nations.

### **III. It will be necessary to formulate a comprehensive development vision that encompasses functional approaches**

\* Despite the political difficulties that can be pointed to in the Northeast Asian region, there is also considerable mutual complementarity in terms of energy, natural resources, capital, technologies, workforces, etc. It will be essential to exploit this mutual complementarity as much as possible in order to deepen

economic cooperation within the region.

\* To this end, in parallel with the establishment of formal economic cooperation frameworks (FTA, EPA, etc.) that is already proceeding, it will be important to promote functional approaches that will work to maximize shared benefits in different sectors in the region's nations. This will involve facilitating the cross-border movement of people, goods and information, and promoting the development of international infrastructure that will contribute to the economic and social development of each nation.

\* The energy and environment and transport sectors can be indicated as the sectors in which common interests are most concentrated, and in which the feasibility of cooperative projects is highest. In particular, the establishment by Japan, China and South Korea (the largest energy consumers in the region) of a community with Russia for the joint development and utilization of energy resources could generate development and increased prosperity in all the nations of the region. This is also a policy initiative with considerable strategic benefits for the future.

#### **IV. Plans must be established with the realization of the BESETO Corridor (a plan for inter-urban cooperation centering on Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo) considered as a priority**

\* Enhanced cooperation in traffic and transportation systems will be essential to the promotion of regional integration in Northeast Asia.

\* For Japan, which is separated from the continent by a narrow strait, promoting the establishment of multi-level land, sea and air transportation networks that incorporate the benefits of recent advances in information technology is an important issue.

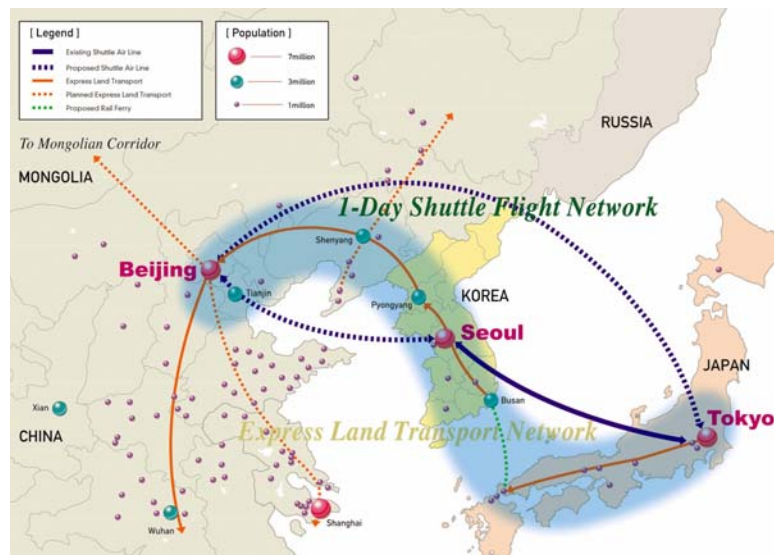
\* Together with the enhancement of systems of high-speed transportation in individual nations, it will be important to promote improvements in strategic focal points, including transport infrastructure that links to areas outside the region (land bridges, the Asian Highway, ports along the coast of the continent, etc.), the enhancement of transport routes that connect the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea (relevant to North Korea), and the development of transport infrastructure related to the Tumen River.

## V. Future Joint Research Agenda

In order to bring the BESETO Corridor closer to realization, it will be necessary to incorporate development plans for individual transportation systems and infrastructure\* into the concept, and to conduct the necessary reviews and feasibility studies. This task should form the agenda of future joint research.

\*Including a daily round-trip air shuttle system linking Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo and related major cities, Route A-1 of the Asian Highway, in which Japan officially participated in 2005, and the bullet train and high-speed rail network that has already been proposed (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: BESETO Corridor Concept and High-speed Transport System



### <Research System>

#### Joint Research

National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA) (Japan)

Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements (KRIHS) (South Korea)

Institute of Spatial Planning & Regional Economy (ISPRES) (China)

#### Domestic Study Group

Chairperson: Toshio Watanabe                      President, Takushoku University

Deputy Chairperson: Yoseki Nagase              Chairman, KRI International Corp.

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Kazuaki Hiraishi      Secretary General, Asian Pipeline Research Society of  
Japan  
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Gas & Pipeline Forum

Yasutaka Nakai      Deputy Manager, Global Environmental Policy Group,  
Environment Department, Tokyo Electric Power Company

(2) Transportation & Physical Distribution

Yuzo Akatsuka      Professor Emeritus, Toyo University

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(3) Information & Telecommunications

Izumi Aizu      Deputy Director, Institute for Hypernetwork Society

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(4) Ecotourism

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(5) Industrial Clusters

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(6) Development Finance

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Tamotsu Shinozuka      Director, International Cooperation Department

Gang-Zhe Li      Senior Researcher, International Cooperation Department

Takeshi Suzuki      Senior Researcher, International Cooperation Department

Naoko Mori      Researcher, International Cooperation Department

Hiroyuki Yasuda      Former Researcher, Policy Research Department

<<Research Reports>>

**- A Grand Design for Northeast Asia: 2005 -- National Land Planning and Sectoral Development Strategies —**

- National Institute for Research Advancement (ed. & pub.)

- Issued: July 18, 2006

**- A Grand Design for Northeast Asia – A Functional Approach for Collaborative Development —**

- National Institute for Research Advancement (ed. & pub.)

- Issued: November 2005

**- A Grand Design for Northeast Asia - Scenario for Development and Coexistence**

- Northeast Asia Grand Design Study Group (auth. & ed.), Nihon Keizai Hyoronsha (pub.)

- Issued: January 2003

<<About NIRA>>

The National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA) is an independent policy research body established on the initiative of leading figures from Japan's industrial, labor and academic communities. The Institute was founded in 1974 under the National Institute for Research Advancement Act and is funded through an endowment of capital contributions and donations from both the public and private sectors.

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