

This section is aimed at activating the regional economies.

Establish intelligent clusters and industrial clusters in the regions,

- Activate the regional economy by means of the continuous creation of new industries and new businesses.

Various programmes and policies will be reviewed in accordance with evaluation guidelines. In November 2001, CSTP announced the issuance of national guidelines for evaluating R&D.

4. Future S&T Directions in Japan

The 2nd Phase of the S&T Basic Plan targeted these national goals as stated in my2001 S&TC report:

- 1. [To be]...a nation that can contribute to the world through the creation of scientific knowledge and its usage,***
- 2. [To be]...a nation that is internationally competitive and [that can]make sustainable development***
- 3. [To be]...a nation that ensures its people to live in safe and comfortable environments.***

The two major policy pillars; (1) reform of the S&T system, and (2) selection of 4 priority areas, are based on the three national goals. The reform of the S&T system is important for Japan in directing its future S&T, but it appears that this poses a serious challenge for the country since the old system has lasted for decades, and also due to the nature of the country's culture. In this context, the CSTP operates its own budget, called "Special Co-ordination Funds for Promoting S&T", to assist it in realising the goal of reforming the system.

Regarding the forecasting of future directions for S&T, the National Science & Technology Policy (NISTEP) of MEXT conducts a technology forecast survey every 5 years, using the Delphi method, to look as far ahead as 30 years into the future. In July of 2001, NISTEP issued a survey report on the "7th Technology Foresight Survey", subtitled "Future Technology in Japan". The Technology Foresight Committee that NISTEP set up selected 1,065 themes in 16 areas. The English version of the 7th survey was not available as of the end of February 2002, but it is expected to be made available through the NISTEP website (<http://www.nistep.go.jp/>) by the end of March 2002. CSTP will refer to the survey results as a reference whenever required. NISTEP issues a monthly newsletter on the current trends in S&T in Japan and overseas. Finally, we have taken