The participants expect that APEC 2011, hosted by the U.S., will prop up American integration in arranging energy cooperation in the Northeast Asia region.

Well-informed and efficient energy sector is a key to reducing carbon emissions while sustaining Northeast Asia’s fast-growing economy.

Northeast Asia Economic Forum
Expert Working Group on Energy

Expert Working Group on Energy Cooperation in Northeast Asia met in April 2011 to discuss the challenges in achieving energy efficiency in Northeast Asia. The meeting was attended by representatives from South Korea, Japan, China, Mongolia, Russia, and the United States. At the meeting, government policies from different countries were laid out to tackle the problems the region faces and to facilitate active discussions among the countries for future cooperation.

The countries’ plans and policies towards energy efficiency and renewable energy show promising future; although it seems that the United States is lagging behind on institutional cooperation on energy issues.

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20th Northeast Asia Economic Forum Annual Conference

Co-hosted by Northeast Asia Economic Forum and University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa College of Social Sciences, 20th Northeast Asia Economic Forum Annual Conference was held on August 7 – 9, 2011. Representatives from South Korea, Japan, China, Mongolia, Russia, European Union, and the U.S. met in Honolulu to take steps towards the common goal of regional integration through productive discussions.

One of the topics discussed was “Energy Cooperation and Green Growth.” Participants discussed the opportunities and challenges in the Northeast Asia region concerning renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies to achieve a low carbon society and green growth.

Participants agreed that we need to increasingly decouple economic growth and foreseeable fossil energy consumption to achieve sustainable growth. Sustainable growth and technological partnerships are already in the works, for instance the Smart Grid Demonstration Projects in the Hawaii-Okinawa Partnership on Clean and Efficient Energy Development and Deployment.

The discussion also touched upon the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan. The Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant incident led many to seriously reconsider the importance of safety issues of nuclear fuel as it poses challenges of demonstrating the safety of nuclear power plants. Despite the incident, it is almost inevitable that nuclear power will continue to play a role in the region’s overall energy profile.

Outside the generation and consumption of energy, climate change is an additional challenge that we will continue to face in our lifetime.

About Northeast Asia Economic Forum

The Northeast Asia Economic Forum (NEAEF) is a non-governmental organization that sponsors and facilitates research, networking, and dialogue relevant to the economic and social development of Northeast Asia. It is the only regional non-governmental organization in which all of the nations of Northeast Asia and the U.S. have participated. NEAEF secretariat is located in Honolulu, Hawai‘i.

Video Interview Participants

- Lee-Jay Cho, Chairman, NEAEF
- George Ariyoshi, Former Governor of Hawai‘i; Honorary Chairman, NEAEF
- Terry Surles, Executive Vice President for Research and Development, Desert Research Institute, University of Nevada
- Jiyao Bi, Director and Senior Research Fellow, Institute for International Economic Research, State Development and Planning Commission, China
- Yasuo Tanabe, Vice President and Executive Officer, Government and External Relations Division, Hitachi
- Ganbold Baasanjav, Director General, Asia Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mongolia

This article is part of a series featuring APEC experts, available at uhero.hawaii.edu/74

ABOUT NORTHEAST ASIA ECONOMIC FORUM

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Video interview with the meeting participants is available at http://www.uhero.hawaii.edu/74/apec-project

The interview reveals experts’ views on:

- Key energy regional issue for Northeast Asia
- Green growth
- Strategies for promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Challenges and solutions to integrating renewable energy and energy efficiency
- What opportunities APEC brings in the energy industry