

Achievements of the Science and Technology Basic Plans in Japan: Impressions of a Sympathetic Foreigner¹

Dr. William A. Blanpied

Former Director, Tokyo Regional Office, NSF, US

(International Affiliated Fellow, NISTEP)

The First and Second Science and Technology (S&T) Basic Plans (1996-2001 and 2001-2006), developed in response to the 1995 Science and Technology Basic Law, have significantly altered the science and technology enterprise in Japan, not only substantively but also in the ways that Japanese (and foreign) scientists think about the enterprise. Although there are some continuities between the two plans, they also differ in their objectives. Whereas the First Plan sought to expand the enterprise, the Second Plan also aimed at its reorientation. The Second Plan has also served as a partial agenda for the Council for Science and Technology Policy (CSTP), created at the time of the reorganization of the Government of Japan in January 2001. Additional, complementary measures have also contributed to changes in the science and technology enterprise. Quantitative assessments of the impacts of the two plans and related measures by NISTEP and its contractors should provide essential inputs into formulation of the Third Basic Plan.

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