

On publication of the Delphi analysis

The design of this Delphi analysis differs significantly from that used in the past. The newly-introduced structure of "field, area, and topic," presents a comprehensive view of the development of science and technology.

The 130 areas and the 858 topics that represent them were selected through repeated discussions among more than 170 experts in the subcommittees on the 13 fields. Furthermore, a questionnaire with the participation of 2,300 Japanese researchers, engineers, and other experts surveyed scientific and technological, economic, and social impacts in each area, as well as the level of research and development in Japan. Regarding topics, we surveyed in detail the forecast times of technological realization and social application, as well as the necessity of government support and effective policies for each stage of development.

In this sense, this analysis is unprecedented anywhere in the world in the way it collects the opinion distribution of a diverse and large-scale group of experts regarding the future of science and technology.

The Science and Technology Foresight Survey that includes this analysis is intended to contribute the development of science and technology policy, especially the next Science and Technology Basic Plan. However, as stated above, this analysis is predicated on collecting the opinion distribution of science and technology experts. When utilizing the results in the policy making process, the following should be taken into consideration.

- (1) The areas and topics designated in this analysis look ahead 30 years into the future and are extracted based on recognition of their great potential and high expectations. The analysis is not necessarily intended to examine technologies at various stages of development in each field in a systematic or comprehensive manner.
- (2) The results obtained through the large-scale questionnaire represent the distribution of opinion among frontline Japanese researchers and engineers, and, of course, these results do not necessarily represent "the truth."

We hope that departments and agencies related to science and technology policy will utilize the results of this analysis with the above point in view, while adding to it their own policy and specialist perspectives.

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IKOMA Toshiaki
Committee Chair
On behalf of the Steering Committee