
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Daisuke Kanama is an Associate Professor of Hokkaido Information University. His research focuses on the role of technology foresight for science, technology and innovation policy. He is interested in the role of universities and public research organisations and the importance of public sector in national innovation system. He also carries out research on how to motivate R&D workers in firms and universities.

Yuko Ito is a Research Unit Chief of Science of Science Innovation Policy of NISTEP. Her main research interests cover application of technology foresight into policy-making, social effects for shared research facilities in universities or government research institutes, and influences on society and national innovation system caused by introduction of new policy.

By the first half of the 1990s, national foresight exercises were launched in most of the OECD members which are classified industrial countries. They might have varied in economic and social condition and technological progress, leading to their requirements regarding various foresight exercises. Some developing countries in Asia and South America also conducted national foresight in the 1990s. Through these activities, countries in the world have considered development of new foresight covering their various needs. The foresight methods could be differed depending on survey scope – nationwide or regional, on time span and on target discipline.

This special issue focuses on the application of foresight process on innovation strategy planning. Researchers and business managers have discussed how to develop foresight methodology or the framework, but not have discussed enough how to apply foresight to the innovation strategy planning and to integrate the foresight process with innovation strategy.

Recently, the meaning of foresight rapidly change as the world experienced fast globalisation and intensifying international competition. As uncertainties about the social realisation of science and technology increased in line with intensifying industrial and economic competition, foresight should cover establishment of different visions of the

ideal future for communities, economic organisations or governments in addition to the selection and prioritisation of technologies and future predictions/estimates for strategic policy-planning. Under a growing recognition that future economic and social benefits would stem from fusion or cooperation of different disciplines and development of innovative technologies covering more social needs, foresight has also begun to play a role as a learning tool linking a variety of disciplines.

This special issue focused on case studies and methodological studies of foresight applications on national and regional level, aiming to accumulate and enhance knowledge and skills of foresight applications to be able to implement more effective foresight projects.

The collection of four papers in this special issue provides important insights into design of new technology foresight at not only national level but also any level. As an important conclusion, these papers in this special issue definitely contribute to a better understanding of the positively effectiveness of technology foresight into policy-making. Simultaneously, there are many challenges left for development of new methodology, establishment of new model and participating of company, in technology foresight.