

Sustainable development in Asia: The need for a Pan Asian S&T Policy

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Sustainable yet innovative and responsible yet futuristic use of Science & Technology continues to promise new opportunity areas to scientific societies to usher in technological solutions for economic prosperity and societal welfare. None of the present Governments or any of the future can wish away the urgent demands of this century; Energy security, Climate change, Water, Health, Sanitation – which demand urgent attention of not only of asian countries but of a majority in other continents as well. An issue germane to these demands is, whether these country specific demands overarch the national boundaries? Yes, they do.

Science and Technology endeavours have always been international ones, but increasing global challenges, reinforce the case for a new approach to international co-operation in Science & Technology from the Asian perspective. There is a need to create a critical mass of researchers and technologists and a build large scale infrastructure for furthering research in areas of immediate consequence and future relevance for Asian countries. This, therefore, requires Science & Technology policy of individual countries to be in harmony with each other.

This study undertaken on the individual policy issues addressed by many Asian countries does bring out a lack of uniformity on many S & T policies issues across Asia. This, therefore, precludes a sustainable S&T development lacking a thread of commonality running across. The

requirement of the present times is to create a Pan Asian Science & Technology Policy Network to identify and address those issues which afflict the majority of the population. This may require a paradigm shift in the way most of these countries plan and execute their R&D initiatives. There is a need for an overarching think - tank mechanism and a common funding corpus. A case is therefore presented for an all encompassing Asian S & T policy framework by evaluating the S & T Policy of a few Asian countries including India.

Globalization requires us to work on a new strategy that is to find global solutions to local problems