

Japan's STI Minister and Vice Ministers hold once-a-week meetings with the Council for the Science, Technology and Innovation (CSTI) members on STI issues. This is a summary translation of the meeting held on October 5, 2017.

Comprehensive Database to Promote Evidence-based STI Policies

To promote evidence-based STI policies, relevant information is required, including (1) budgets and human resources (INPUT), (2) universities and research institutions that are the primary R&D promoters (ACTIVITY), (3) results of the R&D activities (OUTPUT), and (4) economic effects (OUTCOME).

1. STI Budget

- **Current status and issues:** To ensure the definition and transparency of the STI budgets and programs, new budget calculation method is now being worked to analyze STI budgets.
- **Future:** The above new calculation method will be completed by March 2018, based on which the STI budgets will be analyzed. The analyses results will be reported in due course.

2. Public Statistics

- **Current status and issues:** Public statistics play an important role in promoting evidence-based policy making. However, the data are not always prepared in a machine-decipherable way, and accompany an issue of how to deal with the confidentiality of the information.
- **Future:** It is critical to prepare machine-decipherable data and establish a "comprehensive database (to be mentioned below)" with consideration on confidentiality and security.

3. Data from Government Organizations

- **Current status and issues:** Each STI ministry maintains its STI data in its own fashion without coordination with others. This causes difficulty in establishing the Government policies and also analyzing the data across the ministries.
- **Future:** The solution would be for the Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (CSTI) to collect the data maintained separately by the ministries and establish a comprehensive database which can in return be used by the STI ministries.

4. Data from National University Corporations and National R&D Institutions

- **Current status and issues:** Each of them has its own data available only internally without any information exchange with others. In addition, each has its own system and formats.

- **Future:** The solution would be for each to share its data, including finance, human resources, and research results, with the CSTI, leaving the CSTI play as the government clearing house of STI information. This would require an explanation to the universities and research institutions as to the merits of doing so.

5. Globally and Timely

- **Current status and issues:** It is important for all the STI ministries, universities and research institutions to grasp information globally and timely in order to survive the current competitive world. To help them obtain such information, establishment of a comprehensive database on the above-mentioned INPUT, ACTIVITY, OUTPUT, and OUTCOME is critical.
- **Future:** It would be recommended that the CSTI expedite the process for establishing a comprehensive database, including the data from industries and overseas. This will enable the CSTI to understand where Japan is in the world map and identify the priority areas. The CSTI should in return share the information with those that provide the data to CSTI.

6. Establishment of a System

- **Current status and issues:** The data kept by the relevant STI organizations are not yet open, and the information needed to establish a comprehensive database is not sufficiently collected.
- **Future:** To solve the above, it is important to establish a system through which the relevant information is collected and the budget is secured.

(Source: CSTI Homepage in Japanese: <http://www8.cao.go.jp/cstp/gaiyo/yusikisha/20171005.html>)