

Preface

This book, published in the *IDE Spot Survey series*, is a collection of research papers written by members of a tri-national study team who participated in the joint project “Crafting Japan-U.S. Water Partnerships: Promoting Sustainable River Basin Governance in China” initiated by the China Environment Forum, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (CEF-WWC, Washington, DC, US) and the Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETRO, Chiba, Japan). This project was generously funded by the Center for Global Partnership of the Japan Foundation.

One goal of this project was to identify possible opportunities for U.S.-Japan assistance to promote successful river basin governance in China. CEF-WWC and IDE-JETRO therefore organized a tri-national working group—comprised of water experts from Japan, the United States, and China. Through working group study tours and research in China, Japan, and the United States, we have emphasized three key aspects of river basin governance: (1) the structure and function of river basin commissions; (2) the creation and operation of innovative finance mechanisms; and (3) the enhancement of public participation in river basin decision-making processes. Over the course of the study tours in the three countries, the working group has met with government representatives, environmental financing experts, NGO activists, and scholars to discuss river basin governance issues along these three key themes. On October 7, 2004, IDE-JETRO and CEF-WWC held an international workshop in the Japan Foundation’s office in Tokyo to present and discuss draft versions of the papers presented in this book with over 50 participants from the academic, government, NGO, and foundation communities. We hope the discussions and insights in these research papers will help to promote international assistance to sustainable river basin governance in China.

In addition to this book, CEF-WWC and IDE-JETRO will publish a trilingual policy brief featuring research and discussions from each of the tours that highlight water basin governance initiatives in the United States and Japan applicable to China. This policy brief will be published by May 2005, after a final Wilson Center meeting in April.

We would like not only to thank our enthusiastic study tour members and the supportive staff at the Center for Global Partnership, but also Tim Hildebrandt and Wilson Lee for their assistance in the logistics and note taking for the study tours. We also are grateful for the generosity we received from the numerous people who met with our group in all three countries and others who helped in setting up the international workshop in Tokyo and in editing this book.

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