

# A Study of the Roles of the European Spatial Development Perspective(ESDP) and Its Application Potential in East Asia

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## ABSTRACT

In recent years, the relationships and inter-dependencies between the countries in East Asia have deepened, and the vision for regional cohesion such as the East Asian Community have been gradually elaborated. A Grand Design for Northeast Asia is one of these comprehensive visions that aim to improve and develop international infrastructure through cooperation in the field of transportation, energy, environment, and information technology. This study paid attention to the possibility for a system for regional cohesion and cooperation in spatial development in East Asia, and analyzed the roles of the ESDP according to the requirements of the East Asian situation. As a result, it was understood that while the development of infrastructure is a main stream in the case of the regional cohesion in East Asia, the cooperative visions for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, which are being positioned as an important policy in the EU, have not been seen. It is a very important subject to promote the policy cohesion/cooperation on the conservation and management of natural/cultural heritage and the development of tourism infrastructure for the sustainable development of East Asia, considering the trends in the growth of the interchange population and tourism market in East Asia. It was discussed that the role of research networks like the International Landscape Architectural Symposium of Korea, China and Japan is becoming important in supporting this policy cohesion and in grasping the present conditions and trends of the spatial development of these counties.

*Key Words: ESDP, European Union(EU), East Asia, Spatial Development, Spatial Policy*

## I. Introduction

The European Commission established the European Spatial Development Perspective(ESDP) in 1999, and the Ministers of the competent authorities in each member states approved it. The ESDP proposed guidelines for spatial development policies at the levels of the EU and the member states for sustainable development in the territory of the EU. On the other hand, East Asia is in a different context to the EU, but thinking of the trends of mutual dependence and influences between the countries in this region, we recognize that a comprehensive spatial development perspective like the

ESDP is also needed for the balanced and sustainable development of this region. In East Asia, including Japan, the contents of the ESDP have been hardly introduced until now. Okabe(2003) arranged the summary of this document, but did not mention the application potential for East Asia. Above all, this study was conducted for the purpose of analyzing the background and objectives of the ESDP in the EU and to discuss the application potential for a similar idea and plan in East Asia.

## II. Idea of the ESDP and its Policy Aims in the EU

Table 1 shows the structure of the cooperation on spatial development in the EU and East Asia. Now there are very big differences in the economic and social situations of these two regions. Europe achieved its union under the political, economical and social consciousness of the EU community, but now East Asia is only in the phase of discussing the possibility for economic cooperation. Here, considering these differences, we will review and understand the present conditions of the two regions and will remark upon similarities and differences between the two regions.

## 1. Background and Objectives of the ESDP

The main purpose of the European Union is to achieve a balanced and sustainable economic/social development, common security, defense, etc. After the unionization, the EU newly established unified organizations such as the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the Commission of the European Communities, and the European Parliament, etc., and they implemented various policies to achieve the aims of the union. To implement EU policies, the fundamental goals of European policies are as shown in Table 1, 1) economic and social cohesion 2) conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage, and 3) more balanced competitiveness of the European territory. The central aim is to reinforce economic and social cohesion, and this is based on the way of thinking that, if the economical and social needs in the region were achieved, the natural, ecological and cultural functions would be strengthened and the region's competitiveness would be improved. These are basic goals not only for the spatial policies, but also for all EU policies.

However the cohesion of the spatial development policies within the EU territory had not been prepared in the early stage. With growing economic and social integration, internal borders have disappeared and more intensive relationships and inter-dependencies are emerging between cities and regions of the member states. As a result, the effects of regional, national and EU-level projects in one country can have considerable impact on the spatial structure of other member states. Furthermore, at the same time, the effects of the sectoral EU policies(such as transportation, agriculture and environment, as mentioned in the next paragraph) had begun to appear, and the direction of spatial development in the EU was gradually influenced by these policies. However if the member states and each region had have continued to im-

plement the sectoral EU policies individually, the possibility of development disparities would have arisen in the territory of the EU. Because of the existing disparities between the regions, the effect of the EU policies did not spread evenly over the territory. To improve this situation it is important to give different means and opportunities to each region in different development stages. Based on such understanding, the ESDP was prepared to propose policy guidelines balancing individual policies with spatial impact. For this purpose, spatial development guidelines were set out as follows: 1) development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban-rural relationship, 2) securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge and 3) sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage. In ESDP, sixty policy options are presented, and they function as the guidelines for the member states' individual policies and spatial plans.

## 2. Supporting System for the ESDP

The ESDP is approved by the Ministers of the competent authorities of each member state, the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions, etc., but it is a legally non-binding document and is only a framework for strengthening cohesion between the sectoral policies of the EU, the member states, and regions. However the EU policies with spatial impact are the Community Competition Policy, the Trans-European Networks(TEN), the Structural Funds, the Common Agricultural Policy(CAP), the Environment Policy, the Research, Technology and Development(RTD) and the Loan Activities of the European Investment Bank, etc., in which the Structural Funds, the TEN and the Environment Policy are giving direct influence to development activities in the territory of the EU. Therefore the member states are not able to ignore the ESDP as the guideline that is balancing these EU policies. In other words, it is expected that the ESDP bridges the gap between the EU policies and each member state's development plan and promotes cohesion among the regions.

Another role of the ESDP is to grasp present conditions and trends in the spatial development of Europe, and from those extract problems and reflect their solutions to EU policies. The ESDP is the first challenge to analyze the trends and problems in the spatial development at the EU level. It was made clear that the long-term trend of the spatial

Table 1. Structure of cooperation on spatial development in EU and East Asia

	Europe	East Asia
Regional Co-operation	<p><b>European Union's Mission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Peace and Stability</li> <li>· Promote balanced economic and social development</li> <li>· Common European security and defense</li> <li>· Identity and diversity in a globalized world</li> </ul> <p><b>Fundamental goals of European policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Economic and social cohesion</li> <li>· Conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage</li> <li>· More balanced competitiveness of the European territory</li> </ul>	<p><b>East Asia Union/Co-operation/Integration?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Conditions : Common menace, Common profit, Mutual Understanding</li> <li>· Frame: Japan, China and Korea 3, Asean+3, Northeast 6 countries etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Possible Co-operation Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Economic development</li> <li>· Security and Defense</li> <li>· Stable supply of Food and Energy resource</li> <li>· Human right and Environmental problem</li> <li>· International infrastructure Development</li> <li>· Natural hazard management</li> <li>· Tourism Policy etc.</li> </ul>
Spatial development policy	<p><b>Policy guidelines for the spatial development of the EU</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban-rural relationship</li> <li>· Securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge</li> <li>· Sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage</li> </ul> <p><b>EU policies with spatial impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Competition Policy</li> <li>- Trans-European Networks(TEN)</li> <li>- Structural Funds</li> <li>- Common Agricultural Policy(CAP)</li> <li>- Environment Policy</li> <li>- Research, Technology and Development(RTD)</li> <li>- Loan Activities of the European Investment Bank</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Possibility of Vision for Integrated East Asia Spatial Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A Grand Design for the Northeast Asia: Integrated strategic infrastructure development planning</li> <li>- Transportation network and infrastructure</li> <li>- Technology remove for energy save and use</li> <li>- Environmental cooperation</li> <li>- Cooperation and development of information technology</li> </ul> <p><b>Long term development concept of the East Asia region</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Asian Highway Network(AH)</li> <li>· Trans-Asian Railway(TAR)</li> <li>· Asia Gateway Provision</li> <li>· Seamless Asia Provision</li> <li>· Natural Gas Pipeline</li> <li>· International Tourism policy</li> </ul>
Supporting System	<p><b>European Spatial Planning Observatory Network(ESPON)</b></p> <p>Development of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Common definitions of spatial terms</li> <li>- Consistent spatial indicators</li> <li>- Methodologies for typologies of areas</li> <li>- Alternative long term scenarios</li> </ul> <p>Assessment of the use of quantitative targets for European spatial development policy</p>	<p><b>Collaborative research with the ISPRES(China), KRIHS(Korea) and NIRA(Japan)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A Grand Design for the Northeast Asia: Integrated strategic infrastructure development planning</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaborative research with the CHSLA(China), KILA(Korea) and JILA(Japan)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conservation of Natural landscape and Cultural Heritage</li> <li>- Infrastructure Development for Tourism etc.</li> </ul>

development in the territory of the EU had to be carefully analyzed based on the statistical data. Then the member states enabled information exchange and collaborative research through networking the research institutes(Ex. University, research institute, etc.) of each member state, and came to establish the organizations in each member state to lead political cooperation between the competent authorities of the member states and the EU. This idea had been completed in 1997 as the research network called the European Spatial Planning Observation Network(ESPON) which was established as one of the measures to implement the ESPDP. The ESPON is an organization that performs policy proposal through assessment of EU spatial policy impact and mapping out spatial information with the purpose of clarifying the concept of territorial unification and to offer a database

supporting harmonized development in the EU.

### III. Visions of the Cohesion of the Spatial Policies in East Asia

The present conditions of East Asia are very different from those of Europe. It is said that regional integration will be possible when a common menace, common profit and mutual understanding are concluded, but East Asia is in the phase of beginning to recognize supplementary relationships and the importance of regional cooperation and to seek the possibility of cohesion and union between the regions(Table 1). The National Institute for Research Advancement(NIRA) in Japan has been conducting research on the ideal method for coopera-

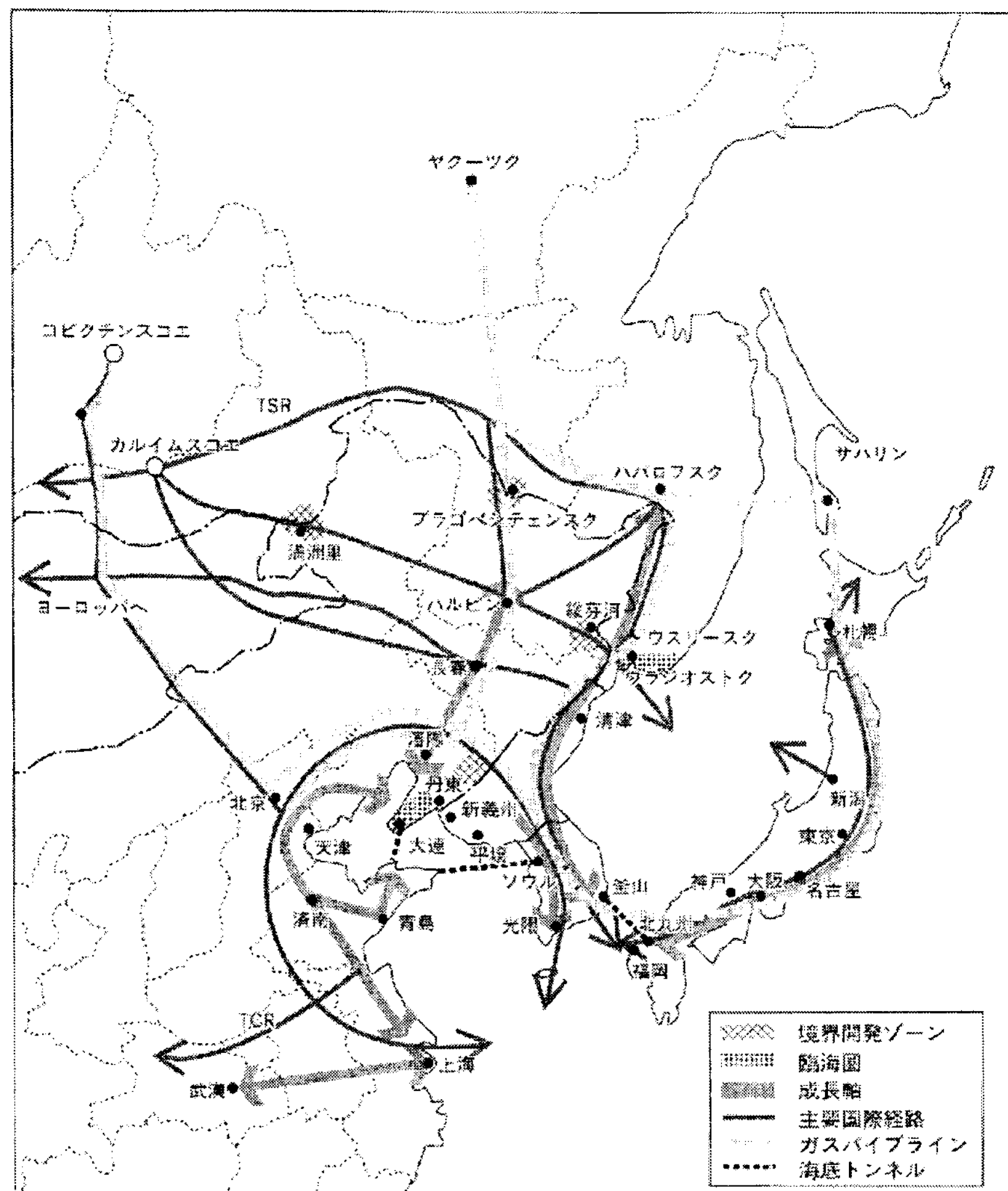


Figure 1. Long term development vision for Northeast Asia

tion among six countries in northeast Asia, in which a study called "A Grand Design for Northeast Asia" proposed the necessity of a plan for comprehensive and efficient development of strategic infrastructure across national borders. The main contents are: 1) transportation network and infrastructure, 2) the technology transference for energy efficiency, energy saving and environment cooperation and 3) the cooperation, development and innovation of information technology. Then the NIRA started the collaborative research with the Institute of Spatial Planning & Regional Economy (ISPRES) in China and the Korea Research Institute for Human Settlement(KRIHS) in South Korea, to set out the middle- and long-term visions for the purpose of comprehensive improvement and development of infrastructure. For example, figure is one of the proposals presented by Korean researchers(Figure 1).

While socio-economic problems are spreading over national borders, it is difficult to establish a planning concept for spatial development over those borders. However in Japan, land policies for strengthening relations with East Asia and a certain system for cohesion among neighboring countries(e.g. the Asian Gateway Provision, the development of land infrastructure for 'Seamless Asia', etc.) are being elaborated. Also China and Korea are elaborating plans such as those for the Trans-Asian railway, the Asian highway and a natural gas pipeline, etc.

Above all, the principal objective of the visions for spatial development in East Asia is the development of infrastructure at this stage. The development of infrastructure in this region lacks a sense of cohesion and cooperation among the countries and each country is attempting to maximize its national interest. Thus the phenomena of competition such as for hub



Table 2. Policy Aims and Options

1. Polycentric Spatial Development and a New Urban-Rural Relationship
1.1 Polycentric and Balanced Spatial Development in the EU
1.2 Dynamic, Attractive and Competitive Cities and Urbanized Regions
1.3 Indigenous Development, Diverse and Productive Rural Areas
1.4 Urban-Rural Partnership
2. Parity of Access to Infrastructure and Knowledge (An Integrated Approach for Improved Transport Links and Access to Knowledge)
2.1 Polycentric Development Model: A Basis for Better Accessibility
2.2 Efficient and Sustainable Use of the Infrastructure
2.3 Diffusion of Innovation and Knowledge
3. Wise Management of the Natural and Cultural Heritage (Natural and Cultural Heritage as a Development Asset)
3.1 Preservation and Development of the Natural Heritage
3.2 Water Resource Management - a Special Challenge for Spatial Development
3.3 Creative Management of Cultural Landscapes
3.4 Creative Management of the Cultural Heritage

harbors and airports have been manifested, so that the competitiveness of the whole region has declined. Therefore it can be said that international cohesion will be a vital factor to lead profit for the long term in the East Asian region. Another point to keep in mind is that there is no policy for conservation of the natural landscape and cultural heritage in the case of East Asia (Table 1, 2). In the EU, the purpose of the union is not only for economical profit, but also for the social cohesion of European citizens through understanding of each culture and history of the member states. The natural landscape and cultural heritage are important factors that breed regional identity and support the regional economy as tourist attractions. Recently the interchange population and tourism market rapidly growing in East Asia, there is a need to develop the tourism infrastructure and to conserve the natural and cultural heritage as tourism attractions through cooperation between many countries following the example of the EU. Furthermore it can be thought that the International Landscape Architectural Symposium of Korea, China and Japan plays a key role in conducting cooperative research similar to ESPON mentioned above.

## IV. Conclusions

While the purpose of the EU policies is to stimulate

comprehensive actions for economic integration, social integration, and environment integration, the visions of the regional cooperation in the East Asia tends to pay attention to the examination of international infrastructure. Nevertheless the East Asian region has not had a comprehensive development plan with a spatial interest. In East Asia, before applying these policies above, the most efficient policy application may be of those leading to social cohesion and improvement of the sense of community, for enhancing regional integration and cohesion. It may be a present issue to push forward policy cohesion and cooperation such as the conservation and management of natural and cultural heritage, corresponding to the tourism demand at the trans-national scale, and development of tourism infrastructure, etc. In conjunction with this theme, the future roles and past activities of the International Landscape Architectural Symposium of Korea, China and Japan may be very important in understanding the present conditions and future problems of spatial development in East Asia. In the future, networking individual researchers and research organizations related to spatial planning and landscape in East Asia may be the most basic condition for preparing the spatial development perspective of this region.

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