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LATEST REPORT
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1. Northeast Asian Energy Cooperation

Nautilus Institute Associate, Professor Euikon Kim in association with the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Inha University, Incheon, Korea, (Euikon Kim, "NORTHEAST ASIAN ENERGY COOPERATION: THE IRKUTSK PIPELINE PROJECT," October, 2004) released this paper, suggesting the Irkutsk Pipeline Projects as a "litmus test for the future economic cooperation" in Northeast Asia. The author concludes that regional cooperation for the projects will be possible if economic forces outweigh undermining socio-political forces.

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2. Sakhalin II Project Partnership with Japan

Institute of Energy Economics Japan (Andrew Seck, "THE SAKHALIN-II PROJECT: THE STRATEGIC ENERGY PARTNERSHIP WITH JAPAN FOR THE 21ST CENTURY," December 13, 2004) released this presentation for a seminar in Tokyo. The presentation provides an overview of the Sakhalin II Project and the Sakhalin Organization. The project includes two phases with oil production in both phases and gas production introduced in phase two. The presentation points to Sakhalin as the strategic source of LNG for Japan.

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3. Clean Development Projects in PRC under Kyoto

This working paper released by IGES (Shinji Kaneko, Asaka Yonamine, Tae Yong Jung, "TECHNOLOGY CHOICE AND CDM PROJECTS IN CHINA: CASE STUDY OF A SMALL STEEL COMPANY IN SHANDONG PROVINCE," December 2004) reported that the corporate motives and strategies of both investing and hosting country affect the outcomes of a clean development mechanism (CDM) project-who introduces what technology to whom-and result in large differences in economic viability and the CO2 emission reductions. The objective of this study is to demonstrate some analytical methods that can be used to quantitatively evaluate the impacts of technology selection on the profit performance of CDM projects. Specifically, in this study we analyze a CDM project to introduce energy saving technology from Japan to a small steel manufacturer in China's Shandong Province, and conduct a simulation of the quantitative relationships between various technology options and profitability. Based on these results, we examine the environmental and economic significance of technology selection for CDM projects. To take this further, we then reconsider the profitability of a project as typical FDI activity (i.e., without the CDM), and by comparing this outcome with the CDM case, we clarify the significance and potential of the CDM.

This document is available from ScienceDirect.com. See the abstract here.

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4. Japan's Nuclear Nightmare

Japan Focus (Eric Johnston, "JAPAN'S NUCLEAR NIGHTMARE," January, 2005) released this article by Eric Johnston, Deputy Editor of The Japan Times in Osaka. The article was in response to an October, 2004 meeting sponsored by the Atomic Energy Commission to discuss nuclear power's future in Japan and the November 12 announcement by the commission that Japan should go forward with nuclear fuel-recycling. The article briefly summarizes Japan's nuclear history and points to unanswered questions that threaten the survival of the nuclear power industry. Johnston calls the debate over the "nuclear nightmare" that has evolved in Japan "bitter and entrenched with emotions and grudges...decades old."

View the full article here.

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5. Russian Oil and Gas Company Meeting with DPRK

Rigzone.com ("GAZPROM CEO MET WITH NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS REGARDING OIL, GAS," January 21, 2005) reported that the head of Russia's Gazprom has held discussions with DPRK's prime minister and other oil and gas officials in Pyongyang. The Gazprom statement said that exploration work coordinated by DPRK's oil ministry in 1997 had located seven promising offshore and onshore oil and gas fields. Gazprom had been mulling various routes for pipeline options to supply ROK and Japan with oil and gas, including a route through DPRK. The Korean Corporation for Oil Extraction is the only oil and gas company in DPRK, with exclusive rights to explore and develop reserves.

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6. Russia-Japan Pipeline Decision

Vladivostok News ("WHAT WILL PIPELINE BRING TO PACIFIC?" January, 2005) reported that, following a decision over the new year to approve a Japanese-proposed route over one that would have benefited PRC, the Russian government ordered Transneft, Russia's oil pipeline monopoly until May, to present a feasibility study for an estimated 11.5 billion pipeline, expected to ship 80 million tons of oil per year. "Russia and Japan share a view that the pipeline should go to the Pacific coast," Russian Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko was cited by national media as saying after recent meeting with Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura. "Bringing Russian oil there will enable to find customers not only in Japan but in the entire Pacific region," Khristenko said on January 14.

Read the full article here.

JoonAng Daily ("NO SIBERIAN PIPELINE TO SOUTH KOREA," January 2, 2005) reported that a Siberian pipeline that will transport natural gas from Russia to Northeast Asia will not go into Korea, contrary to years of planning by the Korean government to bring it here. Russia signed a contract on Dec. 31 to route the pipeline to Nakhodka, a port city on Russia's east coast about 20 miles east of Vladivostok. In an intense tug of war between Japan and PRC to bring the final destination closer to its own country, Japan has succeeded. Korea, which had made plans with PRC, will have to make changes as well.

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7. Climate Change: NOAA report for 2004

US Department of Energy, Energy Connections Report ("2004 IS FOURTH WARMEST YEAR ON RECORD," January, 2005) reported that on a global scale, 2004 was the fourth warmest year on record, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In 2004, the

average global temperature was 0.97 degrees Fahrenheit above the long-term average established since record keeping began in 1880. The mean temperature in the Northern Hemisphere was the second warmest on record, while the Southern Hemisphere experienced its sixth warmest mean temperature on record.

Read the full climate change 2004 review here for more information.

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8. Solar Cell Technology

US Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy News ("PAINT ON SOLAR CELL CAPTURES INFRARED RADIATION," January 19, 2005) reported that new research at the University of Toronto (U of T) promises to yield new ways to capture the sun's infrared radiation, a part of the solar spectrum that's not captured by today's low-cost flexible thin-film solar cells. Using particles of semiconductor only 6 nanometers in size, the U of T team created a suspension of the particles in a solvent, much like paint, and then applied it to a surface to dry. According to one reviewer of the work, the finding has the potential of eventually allowing flexible solar devices to boost their efficiency significantly, capturing 30 percent of the sun's energy.

Read the U of T press release here.

Researchers at Georgia Institute of Technology are working to boost the efficiency of a new type of flexible solar cell, the organic solar cell, in which the inexpensive, flexible material that forms the cell is also able to capture the sun's energy and convert it into electricity. In tests, the organic solar cells were able to convert 3.4 percent of the sun's energy into electricity. See the Georgia Tech press release:

Read the Georgia Tech press release here.

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