International Conference on
Science and Technology
for Sustainability 2026

Enhancing Trust in Science:

The Role of Science as a Public Good in Policymaking

Conference Report

13 July Mon, 2026

【Organizer】Science Council of Japan

Report of

International Conference on

Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026

Enhancing Trust in Science:

The Role of Science as a Public Good in Policymaking

Contents

1. Message

MITSUISHI MAMORU **President, Science Council of Japan**

Distinguished guests, esteemed speakers, and participants,
It is my great honour to welcome you to the International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026.On behalf of the Science Council of Japan, may I extend my sincere greetings to all participants joining us onsite and online.

The Science Council of Japan is the representative organization of the Japanese scientific community, covering the humanities, social sciences, life sciences, the natural sciences, and engineering. The Science Council of Japan deliberates on important scientific matters and coordinates scientific studies.

Since 2003, the Science Council of Japan has convened the International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability to examine specific sustainability-related issues from multiple perspectives. This year's conference focuses on collaboration among stakeholders so that science can earn the public trust and contribute to policymaking that truly serves the public good.

Today, we face complex global issues such as climate change, pandemics, and the rapid advancement of generative AI. These challenges make society increasingly dependent upon scientific knowledge. At the same time, the spread of misinformation and growing social divisions have weakened public trust in science. For science to effectively serve as a public good in policymaking, public trust in science must be strengthened.

The Science Council of Japan has highlighted the importance of fostering public trust in science. For example, in February 2025, the Science Council of Japan published a proposal titled "Towards a Society that Embraces and Utilizes Generative AI." This proposal calls for a balance between active use of generative AI and measures to address risks, including transparent development, agile multi-stakeholder governance, and education and literacy for a society living with AI.

Today, we will focus on three key areas: first, participatory science communication; second, transparent and accountable science and technology, and third, effective collaboration between science and policy with a focus on AI. All of these are central to enhancing trust in science.

I sincerely hope that today's discussions will reexamine the foundations of trust among science, policy, and society, and inspire concrete actions toward a more sustainable future.

Finally, the Science Council of Japan will transition to a new corporate status on October the first this year. Under this new framework, we will continue our efforts to strengthen trust between science and society.

2. About the Conference

International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026

Enhancing Trust in Science: The Role of Science as a Public Good in Policymaking

- Time & Date: 9:30-16:50 (JST) 13 July, 2026
- Venue: Hybrid (Auditorium of Science Council of Japan and ZOOM Webinar)
- Organizer: Science Council of Japan
  (International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026 Sub-Committee)
- Supported: Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan
  Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology – Japan
  International Science Council
- Languages: English (simultaneous interpretation into Japanese available)

3. Concept Paper

International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026

Concept Paper

Theme: *Enhancing Trust in Science: The Role of Science as a Public Good in Policymaking*

Background

Two fundamental attributes of science underpin its core value as a public good: firstly, knowledge claims and the evidence upon which they rest are openly available for scrutiny and validation; and secondly, the results of scientific research are communicated promptly to the public sphere and properly circulated in order to maximize their availability and access to all. These attributes enable science to function as an accessible *global public good*, usable by anyone in the world, without hindrance to others. As a public good, science provides the foundation for policymaking, for addressing societal challenges, and for the legitimacy of democratic decision-making. Securing and strengthening trust in science has thus become a central issue in enabling science to fulfil its role as a public good in contemporary policymaking.

In recent years, concerns about trust in science have intensified. As a result, science has sometimes struggled to make contributions to policymaking that are inherently expected of *science for policy*. For example, scientific knowledge is indispensable to policymaking on issues such as climate change, infectious diseases, and artificial intelligence (AI). Yet, populism and the spread of mis- and disinformation have sporadically undermined public trust in science, forcing it to link scientific evidence to policymaking.

For science to function as a public good in society and to contribute effectively to policymaking, it is essential, therefore, to establish social trust in science and sustain it through appropriate governance and dialogue with civil society.

Overview of the Conference

The International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026 will examine—from the perspective of strengthening and sustaining trust in science for policy—the following three issues in a transversal manner. The conference will discuss the appropriate structuring of collaboration between science, policy, and society:

1. Promoting participatory science communication to build societal trust in science
2. Establishing transparent and responsible science and technology governance, with a focus on AI
3. Ensuring the robust linkage between science and policy

Issue 1: Promoting Participatory Science Communication to Build Societal Trust in Science

Trust in science for policy is closely linked to trust in democratic institutions. Building citizens' trust in specific policies and in democratic systems requires the co-creation and sharing of scientific knowledge with diverse stakeholders and publics. In addition, it must ensure transparency throughout these processes. In Japan, challenges have been identified such as insufficient dialogue between citizens and government in the policymaking process. In response, efforts have been undertaken to promote science communication, including the creation and promotion of spaces for dialogue and collaboration involving diverse stakeholders from the early stages of policymaking. Dissemination efforts have emerged also to provide experiential learning opportunities for children and students.

Recognizing that the promotion of science communication is a global trend, this conference will explore appropriate approaches while at the same time sharing discussion and insight from forums such as the International Science Council (ISC).

Keywords: Countering mis- and disinformation / Strengthening science education and scientific literacy / Building multi-layered, participatory science communication systems / Responsible use of AI tools to support public understanding

Issue 2: Establishing Transparent and Responsible Science and Technology, with a focus on AI

Enhancing trust in science requires clear governance frameworks for scientific activity. Amid ongoing openness and internationalisation in research, the Science Council of Japan (SCJ) has emphasised that research integrity must be ensured autonomously by the scientific community itself. Moreover, the Science Council has also stressed the importance of proactive governance from the perspective of safeguarding academic freedom and research autonomy. With the rapid advancement of emerging technologies, AI in particular, these governance challenges now extend beyond the scientific community. They have become increasingly salient for domestic and international institutional frameworks and for international coordination. The SCJ has issued recommendations noting that conventional regulatory models are insufficient to address the risks posed by rapidly evolving emerging technologies - notably generative AI - and that agile and multi-stakeholder governance should therefore be pursued.

From these perspectives, the conference will examine appropriate governance models for science and emerging technologies, including AI, with a focus on balancing academic freedom and social responsibility.

Keywords: Research integrity / Openness / Responsible science governance / Responsible AI development / International cooperation in governance

Issue 3: Ensuring Sound Linkage between Science and Policy

To enhance the effectiveness and societal relevance of science in policymaking, it is essential to appropriately connect scientific practices that are transparent, accountable, and inclusive with the process of policymaking and policy implementation. Specifically, clarifying how scientific evidence is collected and evaluated, and through what value judgments and societal considerations it is reflected in policy decisions, forms the basis for the legitimacy and social acceptance of policies. In this regard, the Science Council of Japan has repeatedly emphasised the importance of a “sound linkage between science and policy.” It has noted that, for scientific advice to be effectively utilised in policy, a constructive relationship with government must be maintained while ensuring the independence and autonomy of academia. The ISC has similarly pointed out that “science can only inform policy if it is accessible, usable, and trusted.” It emphasises that strengthening science–policy–society interfaces through the establishment and operation of institutionalized dialogue and advisory mechanisms with policymakers and civil society—while safeguarding the independence, transparency, and accountability of scientific advice—is indispensable for building trust.

From these diverse perspectives, the conference will address the conditions for healthy science–policy linkages, including transparency in the use of scientific evidence, forms of dialogue among science, policy, and civil society, and international best practice.

Keywords: Collaboration between science and policy / Institutional design for evidence-based policymaking (EBPM) / AI-supported policymaking / Cross-border policy coordination

This conference aims to serve as a forum for dialogue, bringing together diverse perspectives on themes such as trust in science, engagement in policymaking, and the public good. Building on these issues and with the various recommendations issued by the SCJ and the ISC, participants are encouraged to deepen their discussions from their respective viewpoints. At the same time, the conference seeks to move beyond the confines of existing frameworks presented in these recommendations. It seeks to incorporate on-the-ground insights and international perspectives to foster more creative and forward-looking discussion.

4. Programme

Time	Title	Overview	
9:30-12:05	**Opening Ceremony / Keynote Speech**		
9:30-9:35	**Opening Remarks**	**MITSUISHI Mamoru**	President, Science Council of Japan
9:35-9:40	**Guest Speech**	**ONODA Kimi**	Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, Cabinet Office
9:40-9:50	**Introduction**	**ODANAKA Naoki**	Chair of the Sub-Committee for the International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026, Science Council of Japan Vice President for Education Reform, Tohoku University
9:50-10:35	**Keynote Speech 1**	**Sir Peter GLUCKMAN**	President, International Science Council
10:35-11:20	**Keynote Speech 2**	**KASUYA Yuko**	President, International Political Science Association Professor, Faculty of Political Science and Economics, Waseda University
11:20-12:05	**Keynote Speech 3**	**Lise KORSTEN**	President, African Academy of Sciences Professor, University of Pretoria
12:05-13:15	**Lunch Break**		
13:15-16:30	**Panel Discussion**		
13:15-13:25	**Introduction**	**TAKATA Yasuyuki**	Distinguished Research Professor, International Institute for Carbon-Neutral Energy Research, Kyushu University
13:25-13:50	**Presentation 1**	**Poonam KHETRAPAL SINGH**	Former WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia (Online)
13:50-14:15	**Presentation 2**	**YAMAMOTO Tatsuhiko**	Professor of Keio University Law School Co-Director of X Dignity Center
14:15-14:40	**Presentation 3**	**MUTO Kaori**	Professor, Department of Public Policy, Human Genome Center, The Institute of Medical Science, The University of Tokyo Team Director, Riken Center for Integrative Medical Sciences Laboratory for Biomedical Ethics and Co-design
14:40-15:00	**Coffee Break**		
15:00-16:30	**Panel Discussion**	**TAKATA Yasuyuki**	Distinguished Research Professor, International Institute for Carbon-Neutral Energy Research, Kyushu University
		KASUYA Yuko	President, International Political Science Association Professor, Faculty of Political Science and Economics, Waseda University
		Lise KORSTEN	President, African Academy of Sciences Professor, University of Pretoria
		YAMAMOTO Tatsuhiko	Professor of Keio University Law School Co-Director of X Dignity Center
		MUTO Kaori	Professor, Department of Public Policy, Human Genome Center, The Institute of Medical Science, The University of Tokyo Team Director, Riken Center for Integrative Medical Sciences Laboratory for Biomedical Ethics and Co-design
		KAMIHIGASHI Takashi	Professor, RIEB, Kobe University Director, Center for Computational Social Science, Kobe University
		SAKAMOTO Haruka	Associate Professor, St.Luke's International Hospital Senior Manager, Health and Global Policy Institute
16:35-16:50	**Closing Session**		
16:35-16:45	**Summary**	**ODANAKA Naoki**	Chair of the Sub-Committee for the International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026, Science Council of Japan Vice President for Education Reform, Tohoku University
16:45-16:50	**Closing Remarks**	**HIBIYA Junko**	Vice President, Science Council of Japan

5. Conference Report

International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainable Society 2026

Enhancing Trust in Science: The Role of Science as a Public Good in Policymaking

The conference was organized by the Science Council of Japan (SCJ), with support from the Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and the International Science Council (ISC). It aimed to discuss how to enhance society's trust in science so that science can fulfil its role as a public good, and what role science should play in policymaking. Specifically, it examined ways to promote science communication between society and the scientific community, strengthen governance, and integrate scientific practices into policy.

1. Opening Ceremony

1) Opening Remarks — MITSUISHI Mamoru: President, Science Council of Japan

The conference focuses on how trust in science can be strengthened and how scientific knowledge can be better utilized in policymaking for the public good. As society faces complex global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and the rapid advancement of generative AI, increasing reliance on scientific knowledge has become a defining feature of the modern world. At the same time, the spread of misinformation and growing social divisions have contributed to a decline in public trust in science. In response to these challenges, the conference centers its discussions on three key themes: participatory science communication, transparent and accountable science and technology, and stronger collaboration between science and policy, particularly in the field of AI. Through these discussions, the conference aims to rebuild trust among science, policy, and society, and to encourage concrete actions toward a more sustainable future.

2) Guest Speech — ONODA Kimi: Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, Cabinet Office

The conference focuses on the theme **"***Enhancing Trust in Science: The Role of Science as a Public Good in Policymaking.***"** As societal challenges become increasingly complex, reliable scientific knowledge plays an ever more important role in effective policymaking. Trust in science depends on strong engagement between the scientific community and society. Reflecting this view, the 7th Science, Technology and Innovation Basic Plan emphasizes the importance of strengthening public understanding of and confidence in science. Transparency and accountability in the use of scientific evidence are essential for Evidence-Based Policy Making (EBPM). In rapidly evolving fields such as generative AI, collaboration among academia, industry, government, and civil society is vital to promoting innovation while ensuring safety and ethical responsibility. It is hoped that the discussions at this conference will help strengthen trust among science, policy, and society, and contribute to more effective policymaking.

3) Conference Overview — ODANAKA Naoki: Chair of Sub-Committee for the International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026, Science Council of Japan/ Vice President, Tohoku University

The conference focuses its discussions on three key issues aimed at strengthening trust in science. The first is the promotion of science communication through dialogue with diverse stakeholders, recognizing that trust in science is closely linked to trust in democracy. The second is the development of agile, multi-stakeholder governance for rapidly evolving technologies such as AI, while safeguarding academic freedom. The third is the realization of effective collaboration between science and policy through ensuring transparency and accountability in the processes by which scientific evidence is generated, assessed, and utilized. As a starting point for these discussions, the conference will draw upon recommendations issued by the Science Council of Japan and the International Science Council, while providing a forum for creative dialogue aimed at strengthening collaboration among science, policy, and society.

4). Keynote Speech

(1) Sir Peter GLUCKMAN: President, International Science Council

Science is a generally trusted but inherently provisional knowledge system. Public trust in science and the trustworthiness of science itself are distinct concepts: trust reflects public perception, whereas trustworthiness depends on transparency, integrity, critical review, and effective communication. Although public trust in science remains relatively high, maintaining trustworthiness is an ongoing challenge in an increasingly fragmented information environment. Political polarization, misinformation, and the selective use or rejection of scientific evidence by political and commercial actors influence public perceptions of science. Clear communication of scientific uncertainty and the avoidance of overstatement are essential to sustaining trust. The impact of AI on the scientific enterprise is a growing concern. Existing systems of research funding, publication, peer review, and science advice face increasing pressure from AI-generated outputs and rapid technological change. Research integrity, predatory publishing, reproducibility, and the absence of established norms governing AI use remain important challenges. Inequalities between the Global North and South, including issues of data sovereignty and equitable scientific partnerships, also shape the contemporary scientific landscape. Science functions as a universal knowledge system that can support international cooperation while engaging with diverse knowledge traditions and societal values.

Summary of Responses in the Q&A Session

Maintaining trust in science requires strengthening research integrity, transparency, and engagement with society. Efforts are underway to develop journal trust markers based on criteria such as peer review and publication ethics. At the science–policy interface, evidence synthesis, evidence brokerage, and public communication are becoming increasingly important. Effective engagement with policymakers and the public requires communication and knowledge-brokering skills. As AI use in research expands, the development of internationally coordinated frameworks, together with new professional norms and ethical standards, is emerging as a major challenge.

(2) KASUYA Yuko: Professor, Faculty of Political Science and Economics, Waseda University / President, International Political Science Association

Scientific knowledge plays an important role in policymaking and is examined from a political science perspective through the concepts of public good and EBPM. Democratic backsliding and the rise of populist politics place increasing political pressure on social sciences. Examples from the United States illustrate how research funding and knowledge production can be shaped by political priorities, with implications for academic freedom. Public good is not a universally agreed objective but an inherently contested concept that requires continuous democratic deliberation. Within this context, Japan's declining birthrate policies illustrate several limitations of EBPM, including mismatches between evidence and policy choices, difficulties in policy evaluation, the risks of generalizing local success stories, and the political nature of problem definition itself. While evidence provides an important basis for policymaking, it cannot by itself determine social values or priorities. The role of the social sciences extends beyond evidence production to scrutinizing power relations, questioning underlying assumptions, and sustaining open debate over competing visions of the public good. Effective science-policy relations depend on both robust evidence and the protection of academic freedom.

Summary of Responses in the Q&A Session

Within competitive research funding systems, research proposals may be framed to reflect the interests of funding bodies when seeking financial support. At the same time, researchers can continue to pursue questions they consider academically important in their actual research activities. Even under institutional and political constraints, maintaining intellectual autonomy and sustaining independent inquiry remain important responsibilities for researchers.

(3) Lise KORSTEN: President, African Academy of Sciences / Professor in Plant Health and Food Safety, University of Pretoria

Science functions as a public good whose value depends on trust, transparency, and engagement with society. At the same time, the rapid advancement of AI is outpacing existing governance frameworks, creating challenges for scientific credibility, public health, and policymaking. Data concentration, the black box nature of AI systems, and difficulties in ensuring transparency, validation, and accountability remain significant concerns. Addressing these challenges requires anticipatory ethics and proactive governance capable of responding to risks before they emerge. Experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate the importance of trust in science and medicine, with higher levels of trust contributing to better public-health outcomes. A One Health perspective, integrating human, plant, animal, and environmental health, is essential for addressing global challenges such as disease outbreaks and antimicrobial resistance. Inequalities in data access and research capacity, particularly in Africa, together with concerns regarding AI bias and data sovereignty, continue to shape the global scientific landscape. Maintaining trust in an AI-driven world depends on stronger public engagement, ethical responsibility, open science, and international collaboration.

Summary of Responses in the Q&A Session

A substantial gap remains between the scientific and AI communities, creating a need to rethink approaches to research, education, and policymaking. The scientific community is expected to play a key role in validation, ethics, and standards as AI development accelerates. Strategic roadmaps developed by governments, universities, and research institutions are becoming increasingly important for guiding AI adoption. While AI expands access to knowledge and educational opportunities, effective governance and clear rules for its use remain essential. Maintaining trust in science also requires collaboration among scientists, governments, and society.

2. Panel Discussion

1) Moderator Description — TAKATA Yasuyuki: Distinguished Research Professor, International Institute for Carbon-Neutral Energy Research, Kyushu University

This session examines how trust in science can be strengthened to ensure that science continues to serve society as a public good. Evidence alone does not guarantee effective policy or public acceptance; its value depends on trust, transparency, communication, and accountable governance. The discussion focuses on three interconnected themes: public health, where crises reveal challenges in communicating uncertainty; AI, which raises questions of governance and integrity; and public policy, where evidence must be balanced with social values and democratic deliberation.

2) Presentations

(1) Poonam KHETRAPAL SINGH: Former WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia *Presented remotely

Science becomes a public good only when knowledge is translated into policies, institutions, financing mechanisms, and governance systems that protect lives. The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami exposed the deadly consequences of the gap between scientific knowledge and action: while tsunami risks were understood, inadequate warning systems and emergency response mechanisms contributed to massive loss of life. In response, WHO adopted evidence-based measures, including rapid needs assessments, disease surveillance systems, and psychosocial support, ensuring that decisions were guided by data rather than assumptions. These lessons were institutionalized through preparedness frameworks and regional financing mechanisms, creating lasting institutional memory. The reforms later enabled more effective responses to disasters such as the 2015 Nepal earthquake, helping maintain health services and prevent major disease outbreaks. Emergency preparedness also strengthens routine health systems, and trust in science grows when evidence produces visible and equitable public benefits.

(2) YAMAMOTO Tatsuhiko: Professor of Keio University Law School / Co-Director of X Dignity Center

Contemporary science and democratic decision-making are increasingly challenged by the attention economy and generative AI. Social media algorithms are designed to maximize attention by stimulating intuition and emotion rather than critical reflection, creating conditions in which

misinformation spreads rapidly and scientific evidence becomes harder to evaluate. Generative AI further complicates this environment by producing persuasive but potentially unreliable content that is often accepted without verification, encouraging reliance on personal reassurance over evidence-based knowledge. These trends risk fostering a new age of anti-scientific belief in which conspiracy theories and unsupported claims gain the status of unquestionable truths. At the same time, major technology companies exert influence comparable to that of states, raising concerns about the concentration of power over information and public opinion. Addressing these challenges requires greater algorithmic transparency, democratic oversight, AI-content labeling, and institutional safeguards that support informed choice. The concept of “informational health” highlights the importance of balanced information consumption and building societal resilience through strategic literacy and critical engagement rather than censorship.

(3) MUTO Kaori: Professor, Department of Public Policy, Human Genome Center, The Institute of Medical Science, The University of Tokyo / Team Director, Riken Center for Integrative Medical Sciences Laboratory for Biomedical Ethics and Co-design

Japan’s COVID-19 response focused on minimizing severe cases and deaths and achieved one of the lowest reported mortality rates among OECD countries. At the same time, reliance on voluntary compliance rather than legally enforceable restrictions generated strong social pressure, leading to discrimination, privacy violations, and public criticism of infected individuals and healthcare workers. The pandemic also revealed limitations in evidence-based policymaking. Even when evidence is limited or unavailable, experts are often expected to answer highly specific policy questions, blurring the boundary between scientific advice and political responsibility. Meaningful involvement of patients, citizens, and communities throughout the research process is increasingly important, although such approaches were largely absent during the pandemic response. Growing AI-driven misinformation further highlights the need for inclusive dialogue and the co-creation of science and trust, particularly with vulnerable and anti-science audiences, rather than one-way communication from experts to the public.

Summary of Responses in the Q&A Session

Government consultation with experts may be limited in areas where policy decisions have already been made. By contrast, scientific expertise is more likely to be used when public justification or explanation of policy measures is required. Some pandemic measures were implemented without being directly based on expert recommendations. While scientific knowledge provides an important basis for policymaking, final decisions ultimately involve political judgment, making it important to distinguish between the roles of science and policy.

3) Panel Discussion — TAKATA Yasuyuki, KASUYA Yuko, Lise KORSTEN, YAMAMOTO Tatsuhiko, MUTO Kaori, KAMIHIGASHI Takashi: Professor, RIEB, Kobe University / Director, Center for Computational Social Science, Kobe University, SAKAMOTO Haruka: Associate Professor, St. Luke's International Hospital / Senior Manager, Health and Global Policy Institute

The panel discussion examined how trust in science can be strengthened in addressing the closely connected challenges of public health, artificial intelligence, and public policymaking. Across all three areas, common questions emerged regarding uncertainty, transparency, governance, public participation, and the relationship between scientific knowledge and democratic decision-making. In the context of public health, trust was presented as a multi-layered concept comprising confidence in scientific evidence, experts, public institutions, and trusted local actors such as physicians and communities. Reflections on the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the challenges of communicating science under conditions of uncertainty, where recommendations evolve as new evidence emerges. Such changes were framed not as weaknesses of science but as a normal feature of the scientific process. The discussion emphasized the importance of clearly distinguishing established findings from uncertainty, communicating transparently, and conveying not only risks but also potential benefits. Lessons from past crises also pointed to the need to break the recurring cycle of panic during emergencies and neglect once the immediate threat has passed.AI was discussed as both a transformative opportunity and a significant source of risk. AI can broaden access to knowledge, support scientific inquiry, and provide citizens with new tools to scrutinize scientific and policy claims. At the same time, concerns were raised about personalization-driven manipulation, the concentration of technological power, the erosion of diversity in information and research, and the increasing influence of algorithms on human decision-making. The rapid development of AI has also intensified geopolitical competition and raised difficult questions about governance, transparency, accountability, and the future of international cooperation. Across these discussions, a shared concern was the need to preserve critical scrutiny, intellectual diversity, and healthy information ecosystems, rather than encouraging unquestioning trust in either technology or expertise. In relation to public policy, scientific evidence was regarded as indispensable but insufficient on its own. Policy decisions inevitably involve trade-offs among competing social values such as fairness, liberty, efficiency, public welfare, and democratic legitimacy. Rather than treating policymaking as a simple application of evidence, the discussion emphasized the importance of first clarifying societal goals and values and then using evidence to inform choices within that framework. Effective governance was seen as requiring continuous interaction among scientists, policymakers, media, and citizens, alongside mechanisms that translate knowledge into actionable and publicly accountable decisions. Across all three themes, transparency, accountability, fairness, intellectual humility, democratic deliberation, and public engagement emerged as essential conditions for ensuring that science continues to function as a public good and contributes to broadly shared societal benefits.

3. Closing Session

1) Overall Summary— ODANAKA Naoki: Chair of Sub-Committee for the International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability 2026, Science Council of Japan/ Vice President, Tohoku University

Discussions throughout the conference focused on how science can continue to serve the public good through trust, transparency, and effective governance. Across the presentations and panel discussions, several common themes emerged: evidence alone is insufficient without social trust; scientific knowledge creates value only when translated into policies, institutions, and public action; and uncertainty should be communicated openly rather than concealed. Public health discussions emphasized preparedness, equitable access, and public engagement, while AI discussions highlighted concerns about misinformation, algorithmic influence, transparency, and governance. Public policy discussions underscored the importance of democratic deliberation and the need to navigate competing social values. Although no single conclusion or consensus was reached, a shared commitment to critical scrutiny, openness, and the continuous questioning of assumptions emerged as a common foundation for strengthening trust in science.

2) Closing Remarks — HIBIYA Junko: Vice President for International Affairs, Science Council of Japan

Growing geopolitical tensions, widening digital and economic divides, and increasing social polarization constitute important challenges affecting public trust in science. At the same time, trust in science and scientists remains relatively strong despite concerns about declining confidence. The symposium provides an opportunity to bring together perspectives from multiple disciplines to examine the relationship between science, society, and policymaking. Integrating diverse forms of knowledge while remaining attentive to the disproportionate influence of a small number of amplified voices in public discourse is increasingly important. Continued interdisciplinary dialogue and engagement serve as important means of strengthening the role of science as a public good in an increasingly complex social environment.

6. Photos

Opening Remarks

Prof. Dr. MITSUISHI Mamoru
President, Science Council of Japan

Guest Speech

H.E. ONODA Kimi
Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

Introduction

Prof. ODANAKA Naoki

Keynote Speech 1

Sir Peter GLUCKMAN

Keynote Speech 2

Prof. KASUYA Yuko

Keynote Speech 3

Prof. Lise KORSTEN

Moderator Description

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Speech 1

Dr. Poonam KHETRAPAL SINGH

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Prof. YAMAMOTO Tatsuhiko

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Prof. MUTO Kaori

Panel Discussion

Summary

Prof. ODANAKA Naoki

Closing Remarks

Prof. HIBIYA Junko

Vice President, Science Council of Japan

Group Photos

Venue

Auditorium

Kids space

Science Council of Japan

7. Record

Date	Theme	Place
Tuesday, 16 December – Friday, 19 December 2003	Energy and Sustainability Science	Tokyo
Wednesday, 10 November – Friday, 12 November 2004	Asian Megacities and Global Sustainability	Tokyo
Friday, 9 September – Saturday, 10 September 2005	Dynamism and Uncertainty in Asia	Kyoto
Friday, 8 September – Saturday, 9 September 2006	Global Innovation Ecosystem	Kyoto
Friday, 7 September – Saturday, 8 September 2007	International Cooperation for Development	Tokyo
Friday, 12 September – Saturday, 13 September 2008	In Search of Sustainable Well-Being	Tokyo
Thursday, 17 September – Friday, 18 September 2009	Global Food Security and Sustainability	Tokyo
Thursday, 16 December – Friday, 17 December 2010	Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity	Ishikawa
Wednesday, 14 September – Friday, 16 September 2011	Building up Regional to Global Sustainability: Asia Vision	Kyoto
Thursday, 17 January – Friday, 18 January 2013	Wisdom for Recovery from Disasters and Risk Control	Tokyo
Wednesday, 9 October – Thursday, 10 October 2013	Colossal Multiple Disaster (Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Plant Accident) - Repercussions, Countermeasures, and Future Policy Choices -	Tokyo
Friday, 18 July 2014	Transdisciplinarity for Global Sustainability: Strategies for Research and Capacity Building	Tokyo
Sunday, 15 November 2015	Future Earth	Tokyo
Friday, 27 January 2017	Promoting Transdisciplinary Research and Multi-stakeholder Collaboration for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals	Tokyo
Wednesday, 1 March – Friday, 3 March 2017	AASSA Regional Workshop -Role of Science for Inclusive Society-	Tokyo
Thursday, 23 November – Saturday, 25 November 2017	Global Forum on Science and Technology for Disaster Resilience 2017	Tokyo
Wednesday, 6 March 2019	Threats to Coastal and Marine Ecosystems, and Conservation of the Ocean Environment with Special Attention to Climate Change and Marine Plastic Waste	Tokyo
Thursday, 3 September – Friday, 4 September 2020	Social Inclusion in the Global Era - Sustainable post-COVID-19 Society-	Online
Monday, 31 January – Tuesday, 1 February 2022	Achieving Net Zero Emissions: The Roles of Academia	Online
Wednesday, 25 January – Thursday, 26 January 2023	Disaster and Health	Online
Thursday, 7 September – Friday, 8 September 2023	Transforming Society to Become Resilient and Sustainable beyond Catastrophic Disasters	Tokyo,Online
Monday, 3 February 2025	Ecosystem for Sustainable Innovation -Toward Sustainable Science and Society in 2040	Tokyo,Online
Wednesday, 11 February – Thursday, 12 February 2026	Strengthening research capability and promoting international talent mobility and circulation: a focus on early career researchers who will lead the academia of the future	Tokyo,Online
Monday, 13 July 2026	Enhancing Trust in Science: The Role of Science as a Public Good in Policymaking	Tokyo,Online

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