

## 1. Background and Objectives

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan (hereinafter referred to as “Pakistan”) is now facing a situation of a seriously worsening urban environmental pollution nationwide, including air pollution, water pollution and deteriorating waste management, primarily caused by progressive population concentration in urban areas against the background of a fairly high annual population growth rate of approximately 3%. Meanwhile, the insufficient capacity of the administration to deal with these problems is pointed out as a consequence of sluggish revenues and political confusion in the 1990’s which followed the high growth period of the 1980’s due to industrialisation. In rural areas, wide-ranging problems relating to the natural environment have been emerging. These include soil degradation, destruction of the ecosystem, desertification, forest depletion and a decline of biodiversity. Behind the aggravation of environmental problems in Pakistan, there appears to be special circumstances, such as the formation of slums (katchi abadis) due to the population inflow to urban areas and the emergence of new social and economic problems resulting from the intermittent arrival of refugees from Afghanistan over a quarter of a century.

The environmental administration in Pakistan essentially started with the formulation of the National Conservation Strategy (NCS) in 1992. The 1990’s can be described as a decade dedicated to paperwork of which typical examples are the introduction of the National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) in 1993 and the enactment of the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA) in 1997. This century, however, is seeing efforts to materialise concrete measures to proceed with the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) formulated in 2001.

The Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center (OECC) has been entrusted by Ministry of the Environment (formerly the Environment Agency) in the past to conduct the following studies on environmental issues in Pakistan.

- FY 1995: Study to Promote the Planning of Environmental Conservation in a Developing Countries (March, 1996)
- FY 2000: Study to Assist the Formulation of Environmental Conservation Plan in a Developing Countries (March, 2001)

The FY 1995 study was conducted to gather information on the general situation of environmental problems and environmental policies while the FY 2000 study was mainly conducted to examine the current situation of toxic industrial waste in Karachi which is the largest industrial city in Pakistan. The current institutions concerning environmental administration were also introduced in the study.

The friendly diplomatic relationship has been kept between Japan and Pakistan for more than 50 years. Despite the suspension of Japanese assistance to Pakistan due to the nuclear testing in 1998, the Government of Japan recommenced its ODA for Pakistan in 2001 as part of the assistance for peripheral countries of Afghanistan in order to contribute to the permanent peace and stabilisation of Afghanistan. In FY 2003, the work to prepare a country assistance programme for Pakistan, which is regarded as a leading country in South Asia, commenced.

The objective of the present Study is to build an understanding of the latest important environmental problems and Pakistan's response to these problems with a view to formulating a strategy to assist Pakistan to deal with such problems. The Study is intended to clarify the present situation surrounding environmental problems based on the results of a field survey, discussions with various organizations in Pakistan and a document survey. Moreover, the Study intends the implementation of a basic examination for the formulation of an appropriate assistance strategy to contribute to the development of and environmental conservation in Pakistan, taking Pakistan's needs for external assistance in the field of the environment suggested by the above-mentioned results and Japan's assistance policies for developing countries into consideration.