

## **The Purpose of the Seminar**

### **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Eco-efficiency Seminar “IT and Eco-efficiency”**

Improved convenience of life due to the advancement of Information Technology (IT) has changed the life style of the people. Along with the progress in IT, not only the exchange of information and goods but also the communication among the people has been activated, leading to change in the social structure. The potential of IT for the future has been expanding boundlessly. Particularly for corporations, IT has become an indispensable tool. It is no exaggeration to say that any business strategies pursued by corporations would be impossible to implement without IT. At the same time, the advancement of IT has caught the attention of the public because of its negative impact on the environment, including the increase of energy consumption caused by 24-hour internet connections, increase of material consumption caused by the building of infrastructure for an IT society, global warming, destruction of the ozone layer, and increase in wastes. Therefore, it would become inevitable in the future for the management of companies to evaluate the impact of IT solutions on society and to understand added values and environmental burdens caused by IT solutions. In this regard, the concept of eco-efficiency is gaining attention as a way to make the improvement of value and the reduction of eco-burdens compatible with each other. The purpose of this seminar is to attempt to apply this concept to management. We have sponsored this seminar to encourage the participants to discuss and deepen your understanding of how to apply the concept of eco-efficiency to real situations. Through the discussion we would like to provide you with not only the understanding of technical ways of evaluation of eco-efficiency but also a hint about the future vision of the IT applications. We would be happy if this seminar could be a good opportunity to discuss your views as well as visions about the issues, not only for those who are considering improvement of eco-efficiency but also for those who are actually engaged in the application of IT solutions. ( \* ) on some occasions, instead of the term “IT”, ICT (Information Communication Technology) is used.

The Japan Environmental Management Association for Industry has sponsored discussion meetings many times in the past by inviting participations from both companies and academia, with the assistance of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. In order to facilitate the diffusion of the concept of eco-efficiency among society, and by the recognizing the need to continue our efforts and to put together the results of previous discussions, we established the Japan Forum of Eco-efficiency in October, 2004 with Mr. Ryoichi Yamamoto (Professor of the Graduate School of Engineering, Tokyo University) as chairman, Mr. Takashi Koga (Strategy Expert of the Environment Department, Fujitsu) as vice chairman, and the Japan Environmental Management Association for Industry as the office secretariat. The first seminar was held in commemoration of its establishment with the agenda focusing on various subjects, such as products, services, and companies of multiple industries. In the second seminar about eco-efficiency, which is being held at the same time as the Exhibition of Eco-products 2004, we will offer more narrowly-focused subjects to meet the needs of the participants. This time we will discuss the eco-efficiency of IT solutions.