

Eisenhower Fellowships – Northeast Asia Region Program 2006

Mr. Masahito Hiratake

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**(Until September, 2006: Senior Operations Officer, Carbon Finance Business,
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Masahito Hiratake currently serves as a Senior Operations Officer in the Carbon Finance Business of the World Bank's Environment Bureau. In this role, he manages several Asian projects that focus on sustainable development and generation of tradable emission reduction certificates initiated under the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism. As a long term employee of Mitsubishi Corporation, he has worked in both Japan and China. While in Shanghai, Mr. Hiratake launched China's first LPG vehicle project, converting all 40,000 taxis in Shanghai to LPG. In recognition of this accomplishment, he was awarded the Mitsubishi Corporation Group CEO Prize. He used his fellowship to gain a deeper understanding of American energy policy and its intersection with environmental, security, and economic issues.

Mr. Hiratake met with state and federal government officials, as well as with academics, non-profit experts, and industry representatives to get a better understanding of American environmental, energy, and national security policy issues. Through these meetings, he reached several conclusions that he hopes to apply to a broad set of societal problems. First, he found that the private sector should be the key driver for societal problem solving. Second, he learned that the American tax deduction given for charitable contributions allows individuals and corporations to play a significant role in solving such problems. Third, all regulation should be analyzed for the effect and impact it will have on incentives to encourage the private sector to solve problems efficiently. Fourth, careful analysis must be used in choosing the stakeholders and a business model to be used to solve a specific problem. Fifth, leadership is crucial, and public private partnerships are a good mechanism for coordinating stakeholders from different sectors. Seventh, using a business model to solve societal problems, stakeholders will have equal relationships between one another.

Some of the highlights of Mr. Hiratake's fellowship were the opportunities he had to visit U.S. Department of Energy laboratories; Art Rosenfeld, Commissioner of the California Energy Commission; and a farm in Michigan. He very much enjoyed his visits to Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. In Sacramento, during several hours speaking with Commissioner Rosenfeld, he was impressed and inspired by the Commissioner's career. His wonderful weekend in Michigan was spent learning about American farm practices and spending time with an American family. Mr. Hiratake looks forward to using his Eisenhower Fellowships experience to convince the Japanese to lead in taking novel approaches to improving the global environment and ensuring a more secure world.