

Developments in the Upgrading of the Transportation Corridors Supporting Intraregional Northeast Asian Distribution and Examination concerning the Policy Responses

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Summary

Concerning the Northeast Asian transportation network, in 2002 the “Vision for Northeast Asia Transportation Corridors” was announced. Seven years have passed since the formulation of the vision. In that time a variety of projects have been developed in various regions, and although many results have been achieved, information on these individually has been in circulation. Even though there has been attention paid to component projects, there has not been a panoramic identifying of the raising of the service level as transportation corridors or of the network in its entirety. It is difficult to say that follow-up work on raising the service level and the promotion of use via its publication, planned at the time of formulation, have been fully carried out.

In this paper, in attempting to ascertain the whole picture, I have undertaken the task of bringing together the disparate parts into entire transportation corridors, identifying the situation in recent years, and summarizing the challenges. The subject is the Suifenhe Transportation Corridor and the Tumen River Transportation Corridor of which there are expectations for supporting in the main the distribution to be concluded within the region of Northeast Asia, and the multimodal transportation services that utilize maritime routes to connect them.

The matter of being able to relate the current situation in overview is one of continuing to promote the development of infrastructure as transportation facilities, based on the respective programs of each country. Related to this aspect, while it is not the case that there are no problems at all, it is not a case either of a major change in policy being necessary. On the contrary there are many problems in the sphere of providing transportation services, however effective the utilization of the distribution infrastructure which has been thus developed. In particular, this is conspicuous in multimodal transportation. For individual private-sector firms there are several difficult-to-overcome issues. Consequently, policy responses are necessary which advance the development of an environment where private business operators are able to develop trouble-free business.

As one concrete strategy, it is thought that the moving forward of “pacesetting model transportation corridor” projects via international cooperation is effective. This has as its content that the governments of the nations concerned designate the “Suifenhe Transportation Corridor” and the “Tumen River Transportation Corridor” as “pacesetting model transportation corridors”, develop various experimental measures, intended for these corridors, toward the raising of the service level for distribution and the promotion of utilization, and in addition verify the effects and issues, and continue to link up the environment’s development. Furthermore, it is thought that, by the concerned persons of every country in the public and private sectors continuing to share the challenges and resolve them in collaboration, and share experience and make practical use thereof, the effects will rise another level.

The Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI), among others, is envisioned as a platform for international cooperation. While several “joint projects” connected with transportation have already been promoted in the GTI, to also accelerate these I consider that cooperating internationally and developing “pacesetting model transportation corridor” projects is effective.

Meanwhile, the “Vision for Northeast Asia Transportation Corridors” which was announced in 2002 was put together as the result of over two years’ work by an international collaborative research team. Recalling that, it could be said that the organization of an international team of experts is necessary for its follow-up also.