

## Impact Players

### *Lee Hoesung*

By Si-Ryoung Kim

#### Who is he?

Dr. Lee Hoesung is the new chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, an international body under the UN responsible for the assessment of climate change.

Dr. Lee is a professor in the Graduate School of Energy and Environment at Korea University. He is also concurrently a member of the council for the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), a member of the executive board for the Korean Academy of Environmental Sciences, and a board member for the President's Advisory Board on Climate Change and Sustainable Development for the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Prior to being elected to his new position, Dr. Lee served as the vice-chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).



Dr. Lee started his professional career as an economist at Exxon USA in 1975 and he later worked at the Korea Development Institute as a senior fellow from 1978 to 1981. Beginning in 1986, Dr. Lee became the founding director of the Korea Energy Economics Institute (KEEI), a renowned government-affiliated research institute, and held that position for ten years. His involvement with the IPCC began when he was elected to serve as the co-chair of Working Group III in the Second Assessment. He served in that position from 1992 to 1997 and was also the lead author and review editor for various IPCC assessments in the same working group from 1997 to 2001. The activities of Working Group III laid an important scientific basis for the drafting and adoption of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change. Throughout his career, Dr. Lee has also served in various advisory or board positions including as member of the International Advisory Board for Battelle-Pacific Northwest National Lab (1994-1999), special advisor to the Minister of Environment (1994-1996), the Hyundai Corporation (1996-1999), and Institute for Global Environment Strategies in Japan (1998-2005). Born in 1945, Dr. Lee received a B.A. in economics from Seoul National University and a Ph.D. in economics from Rutgers University.

#### Why has he been in the news?

On March 26, 2015, the Republic of Korea (ROK) nominated Dr. Lee Hoesung, previously one of the three vice chairs for the IPCC, to be the new chair of the intergovernmental body. Shortly thereafter, on October 6, 2015, Dr. Hoesung Lee was elected as the new Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. He replaced Rajendra Pachauri who had resigned amid a scandal in February 2015. Dr. Lee became the first South Korean national to be elected to the position and the fourth Chair in IPCC's 27-year history.

#### What can we expect from him?

During his term, which is set to last six to eight years, Dr. Lee will oversee a new phase in the IPCC's growth. The IPCC's latest development will build on a series of five major climate change reports that were released in November 2014. Dr. Lee said this new phase of growth for the IPCC would see an increase in focus on the regional impacts of climate change, especially for developing countries, as well as more efforts to promote diverse voices such as female experts and experts from developing countries. Dr. Lee intends to pay special attention to climate change issues associated with job creation, health, innovation and development of technology as well as energy access and poverty alleviation. These are issue areas that overlap with Dr. Lee's own expertise in the fields of energy, climate economics, and sustainable development. His previous experience and wealth of knowledge in these areas will make him an ideal candidate to deal with these important tasks.



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