



# OUIK Newsletter

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## Partnership between OUIK and Ishikawa/Kanazawa

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I am pleased to report that OUIK contributed to the GIAHS International Forum, which was successfully held last May in Ishikawa Prefecture's Noto Peninsula, by organizing a GIAHS International Workshop as a pre-event to this forum. Our research group on Sustainable Primary Industries (SPI) played an important role in planning this workshop and developing discussions among the participating experts from three countries, China, the Republic of Korea and Japan. I am sure that the outcome of this workshop was fully reflected in the discussions during the GIAHS Forum, which concluded with the adoption of the Noto Communiqué. We are very happy that our SPI team will be able to further develop its research program based on these outcomes, together with research members of United Nations University Institute for Sustainability and Peace (UNU-ISP).

Our research group on Satoyama and Satoumi (SAS) has developed its research agenda by collecting knowledge and data for an assessment of satoyama and satoumi under the leadership of Prof. Koji Nakamura (Kanazawa University), who also holds the position of visiting professor with UNU-IAS. Last July, the SAS research group organized an expert meeting to discuss a report to assess the values of satoyama and satoumi, with the view of possibly contributing to the IPBES conceptual paper. Another research group on Cities and Biodiversity (CAB) organized expert meetings in June and August to discuss the linkage between urban planning and landscapes as well as sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity. The CAB research group would like to convene intensive multi-stakeholder discussions in September to further develop this research agenda. Based on the expertise and experience generated through these research activities, OUIK will support the Fourth IPSI Global Conference (IPSI-4), which is scheduled for mid-September in Fukui Prefecture, as a part of its Secretariat.

One and a half years have passed since I took over the Director of this unit. I have found that all the research groups have started developing their own research agendas in a substantial manner and feel confident that they are all making very good progress. I am sure that OUIK activities will not be meaningful unless their outcomes contribute to the local community and policy development at the local level. In this spirit, I am committed to continue to serve OUIK.

I am pleased that, under the strong leadership of Dr. David Malone, who was appointed as the UNU Rector last March, UNU has re-affirmed its commitment to the international community in its capacity as the UN think tank. OUIK is a unique office within the UNU system, since it has strong support from local governments such as Ishikawa Prefecture and Kanazawa City, and field sites for pursuing research activities on biodiversity and agriculture. I would like to continue enhancing our activities in close collaboration with the local community and citizens.

### OUIK's Objectives:

1. To contribute to international research activities, in collaboration with local partners, towards a sustainable society, and
2. To develop communication and networks with local stakeholders through public outreach and capacity building, while sharing information on international trends.

## International GIAHS Workshop “Experiences and Lessons of Dynamic Conservation and Sustainable Development from Asian GIAHS Pilot Sites” Workshop Report

UNU-IAS OUIK organized the International GIAHS Workshop on “Experiences and Lessons of Dynamic Conservation and Sustainable Development from Asian GIAHS Pilot Sites” in Kanazawa, Japan on 28 May 2013.

### Part I. Development of GIAHS in Asia

Prof. Kazuhiko Takeuchi, Senior Vice-Rector of UNU, first gave an overview of traditional agriculture in Asia, pointing out that many Asian traditional agricultural practices are still utilized today, and they are extremely resilient and rooted deeply in the daily lives of the people. He illustrated the point with the examples of an irrigation system in Sri Lanka and crop rotation system in Indonesia. Prof. Takeuchi explained that such traditional agricultural systems in harmony with biodiversity are extremely resilient, but are rapidly disappearing in the face of social, political and economic changes, as well as the pressures of rural depopulation and an aging society. UNU has played an active role in providing technical support and scientific advice to GIAHS applicants and also in promoting cooperation and exchange among GIAHS countries, especially in Asia. At UNU, there is also ongoing active research related to GIAHS and the Satoyama Initiative, which aims to build resilient and sustainable ecological environments for rural communities in consideration of three aspects, namely “enhancing resiliency”, “establishing new commons” and “creating new business models”.

Prof. Qingwen Min, Chinese Academy of Sciences (IGSNRR), gave an update on the developments of GIAHS in China. He stressed that GIAHS is an active, living system and that the goal of the GIAHS initiative is “to protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements”. Prof. Min introduced China’s Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (NIAHS), which were established in 2012 and led to the designation of 19 NIAHS sites. He mentioned efforts by governments to designate and conserve important agricultural heritage systems, particularly through raising public awareness, including through media publicity. Prof. Min also emphasized the importance of scientific research, which can help to rediscover traditional values and techniques to improve modern agriculture, conserve biodiversity, withstand climate change pressures and maintain ecological functions.

Dr. Sang-Bum Kim, Researcher of National Academy of Agricultural Science of the Republic of Korea, shared the definition of heritage in the Republic of Korea and informed that the country was conducting research on agricultural and rural heritage resources. He informed that the Republic of Korea launched “Nationally Important Agriculture and Fisheries Heritage” in 2012 to raise awareness and interest in tangible and intangible agricultural heritage, value of biodiversity conservation, and the maintaining of ecosystem functions.

Mr. Akira Nagata, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNU Institute for Sustainability and Peace (ISP), presented progress on GIAHS in Japan, research related to GIAHS, cooperation among Asian countries, and future directions for GIAHS. He mentioned “Noto’s Satoyama and Satoumi” and “Sado’s satoyama in harmony with Japanese crested ibis”, which were designated as GIAHS in 2011, and stressed that both systems emphasized the importance of human intervention in the maintenance and conservation of the ecological environment and agricultural systems that have flourished as a result of such resilient ecosystems characterized by high productivity and biodiversity. He also spoke about the increasing emphasis of GIAHS in national policies, such as *The Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Plan* and *the National Biodiversity Strategy 2012-2020*, both of which were established in 2012. Mr. Nagata elaborated on UNU’s research to develop comprehensive assessment methods for traditional agricultural systems in Japan. The proposed future directions for GIAHS in Japan could work towards image enhancement, adding value to local agricultural products, and promoting green tourism and international cooperation. UNU would continue to contribute to the development of GIAHS with local communities and governments, while also facilitating GIAHS cooperation among Asian countries.



From left: Mr. Liang, Mr. Nagata, Prof. Nakamura, Prof. Takeuchi, Prof. Min, Dr. Kim, Ms. You, Dr. Chen and Prof. Jiao

### Part II. Challenges of Local Conservation Activities, and Potential when Combined with GIAHS

Prof. Yuanmei Jiao from Yunnan Normal University introduced the Hani rice terraces of China’s Yunnan Province. The terraced paddy fields are a system of sustainable land use that not only protects the paddy fields from soil and water erosion, but also serves multiple functions including biodiversity conservation, ecosystems services, and rich indigenous ecological knowledge. Prof. Jiao also introduced some traditional agricultural practices from Hani terraced paddy fields, such as the rice-fish and rice-duck systems. She explained that challenges facing the Hani terraced paddy fields include poverty, outward migration, droughts and landslides. Prof. Jiao also shared information about the

current conservation policies being practiced by the local government, including the establishment of a system of laws and regulations, perfecting of the conservation and management mechanism, and carrying out of monitoring and management in accordance with the laws.

Ms. Wonhee Kanoelani You, Director of the E Study Abroad Center, Jeju University, introduced Jeju Island of the Republic of Korea. Today, Jeju's agriculture has flourished and the whole nation is very much dependent on Jeju agricultural products, but the soil of the island is mainly made up of volcanic ash and determining how to preserve the soil is an ever-present challenge for Jeju's agriculture, the island has a windy and rainy climate. The local people built long black stone fences, known as "Batdam", around their fields which function as windbreaks and thus prevent soil erosion. The government and researchers wish to develop data on Batdam and share positive aspects with other countries, and contribute actively to the development of GIAHS.

Dr. Bixia Chen, research associate at UNU-IAS OUIK, introduced Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi focusing on conservation of terraced paddy fields. Dr. Chen explained the multiple functions of terraced paddy fields, including crop production, biodiversity conservation, retaining of water, and prevention of soil erosion. She introduced some examples of governmental support such as the "Direct Payment System for Hilly and Mountainous Areas" by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan and local efforts such as the "Owner System" and "branding of rice". She emphasized the significance of the economic, social, and environmental benefits that are brought about by the rice branding scheme as it hopes to reduce chemical inputs into terraced paddy fields. Dr. Chen also pointed out the importance of creating "sixth industry" business models to increase the farmers' income and to diversify their incomes beyond rice farming in the hilly and mountainous areas.

### Part III. Discussion

Prof. Koji Nakamura from Kanazawa University, who is also a visiting professor of UNU-IAS, chaired the discussion, and the panellists shared their expertise.

#### 1. What are the other potential GIAHS sites in Asia?

Mr. Liang Luohui, Academic Programme Officer of UNU-ISP, shared information about some potential systems in Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar.

#### 2. What are the benefits of GIAHS?

Prof. Takeuchi explained that in the case of developing countries, designated GIAHS sites can apply for funding and support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Prof. Min mentioned the international recognition of the system, finding wisdom from traditional practices for sustainable development, and opportunities to create a research platform for scientists. Dr. Kim shared his hope that GIAHS can change consumer perceptions of agriculture away from price consciousness to including value added benefits as well.

#### 3. How could cooperation on GIAHS among China, the Republic of Korea and Japan be fostered?

Mr. Nagata suggested that the countries could first

collaborate on research and the development of assessment methods. Prof. Min pointed out that cooperation among the three countries can be arranged at the international/central government level by organizing a network among the respective sites in these countries. Prof. Takeuchi stressed that the most integral aspect is the scientific assessment of traditional knowledge and systems, and that while comparative studies are important, they should be based on the objective of carrying out a scientific evaluation of the value of the traditional systems. Dr. Kim mentioned an international workshop held in March 2013 in the Republic of Korea as an opportunity for the country to better understand GIAHS.

#### 4. What are the challenges facing the development of GIAHS in each country?

Mr. Nagata pointed out that GIAHS is about small-scale traditional farming, while agricultural policies in Japan focus on large-scale high productivity agriculture. He said that the diversification of agriculture is an important task for Japan's future agricultural development. Dr. Kim explained that some people are wary of outsiders coming in to take advantage of GIAHS designation to exploit rural resources. He also stressed that traditional agricultural systems should be protected and that locals should be able to be self-sustaining after the GIAHS designation. Prof. Min accepted the importance of moderate urbanization of rural areas for young people. He stressed that national policies to harmonize traditional agricultural policies could also be considered.

#### 5. How to nurture human resources for agriculture for the future?

Prof. Takeuchi gave an example of big corporations expanding their business involvement in agriculture, where young professionals were actively participating. He also emphasized that it is critical for producers to have good knowledge of the market, and IT can be helpful. He raised the importance of understanding consumer behavior, diversification of products, integrated regional business networks and also community efforts as a whole towards the maintenance of the commons.

Prof. Nakamura closed the workshop by encouraging closer research cooperation amongst China, the Republic of Korea and Japan on GIAHS in the future.



From left: Prof. Nakamura, Prof. Takeuchi, Prof. Min, Dr. Kim and Mr. Nagata



## Event Report

### The International Forum on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) was held in Noto

The International Forum on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) was held in Noto (Nanao City) of Ishikawa Prefecture from 29-31 May 2013. The three-day forum was attended by over 600 participants, including government representatives from participating countries (Mr. Kajiya, Senior Vice-Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, graced the occasion), the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), members of international organizations, as well as many local stakeholders.

In the morning of the first day, the new candidate GIAHS sites presented their proposals and efforts undertaken towards GIAHS, which were provided for consideration and evaluation by members of both the Steering and Scientific Committee. Three candidate sites from Japan were presented by their respective governors, and were all successfully designated, namely, "Traditional tea-grass integrated system in Shizuoka" (Shizuoka Prefecture), "Managing Aso Grasslands for Sustainable Agriculture" (Kumamoto Prefecture), and "Kunisaki Peninsula Usa Integrated Forestry, Agriculture and Fisheries System" (Oita Prefecture). In addition, two sites from China and one site from India were also newly recognized as GIAHS. In the same afternoon, three separate parallel sessions were held where Mr. Liang, Academic Programme Officer of UNU-ISP, represented UNU and gave a presentation on "Embracing Diversity for Sustainability: Learning from Traditional Agriculture", and Prof. Nakamura, Visiting Professor of UNU-IAS, also presented on capacity building.



Governor of Ishikawa Prefecture (left) and representatives from newly designated GIAHS sites

On the second day, a High Level Session of senior representatives and officials was held during which Prof. Takeuchi, Senior Vice-Rector of UNU, moderated the Panel Discussion with representatives from countries with recognized GIAHS sites of Japan, China, Chile, Peru and five international organizations including FAO discussed the theme of "Contributions of GIAHS for a sustainable world." In the afternoon, the Ishikawa Public Forum was also held.

On the last day, the closing ceremony was held in the morning, during which the outcomes of the forum were announced and the participants adopted the Noto Communiqué, which notably highlighted the need for: 1. regular monitoring for active conservation, 2. proactive recognition of GIAHS, and 3. promoting exchange and networks among GIAHS sites. After the closing ceremony, international participants enjoyed their travel to the rural landscapes of Noto and Sado on the excursion field trip.

Akira Nagata, Senior Programme Coordinator  
United Nations University Institute for Sustainability and Peace

## Event Announcement

### Fourth Global Conference of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI-4) to be Held in Fukui, Japan

IPSI-4, entitled "The Way Forward: Implementing the IPSI Strategy for the Benefit of Biodiversity and Human Well-being", will be held at Fukui International Activities Plaza on 12-14 September 2013. The Conference is composed of the IPSI Assembly (IPSI members only), Public Forum open to all interested participants, and a Public Symposium that Fukui Prefectural Government is organizing to facilitate the full engagement of local citizens and stakeholders. To learn more about the Satoyama Initiative and to get the latest information about IPSI-4, please refer to the Satoyama Initiative website (<http://satoyama-initiative.org/en/>).

12 Sept. (Thu)	Excursion (IPSI members only)	
13 Sept. AM (Fri)	IPSI Assembly (IPSI members only)	
13 Sept. PM (Fri)	Public Forum	Poster Session
14 Sept. AM (Sat)		
14 Sept. PM (Sat)	Public Symposium	

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