



OUIK Newsletter

Greetings from the Director

Tsunao Watanabe

Director

United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability
Operating Unit Ishikawa/Kanazawa (UNU-IAS OUIK)

I was appointed as Director of the Operating Unit Ishikawa/Kanazawa (OUIK) in January 2014 and would like to express my sincere gratefulness to all the people who have provided their support to OUIK in a variety of different ways.

Until the summer of 2012, I was involved for 34 years at the Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MOEJ) with the conservation and management of the National Parks of Japan and its wildlife, including the Japanese crested ibis and wild cat. I also have worked on the ground on issues in cooperation with local people. In 2010, as Director of the Japan Secretariat, I contributed to the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/COP10).

Hakusan National Park, which is a symbol of Ishikawa Prefecture, just celebrated its 50th anniversary, and the collaborative efforts by local communities surrounding Mt. Hakusan have attracted international attention. In addition, the Noto region of Ishikawa Prefecture and Sado Island in Niigata Prefecture were designated as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) sites in 2011. Records exist of the Japanese crested ibis living in both Noto and Sado after the Second World War, and one of the objectives of the Noto GIAHS site is to revitalize the *satoyama* and *satoumi* areas, which provide a habitat for the Japanese crested ibis. Community-based practices in Noto can provide a leading example to the whole country of Japan.

The global Aichi Biodiversity Targets were adopted in 2010 under the Convention on Biological Diversity's 2011-2020 Strategic Plan with a vision of "living in harmony with nature." At that time, the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI), which was jointly initiated by the United Nations University (UNU) and MOEJ, was established with the aim of realizing a nature-harmonious society. I believe that pioneering efforts in Ishikawa/Kanazawa have contributed to achieving such international outcomes. Participants of the Closing Event for the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 and the Global Launching of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity in 2011 may agree with me.

I believe that OUIK can play an important role in linking local efforts in Ishikawa/Kanazawa with the rest of the world for a sustainable society that utilizes the diversity of nature, life, and culture at the local level.

OUIK has focused on *Satoyama* and *Satoumi* (SAS), Sustainable Primary Industries (SPI), and Cities and Biodiversity (CAB) as its focal research themes during the last two years. I would like to continue enhancing these research activities in collaboration with local stakeholders to create new international trends from Ishikawa/Kanazawa.



Mr. Tsunao Watanabe was appointed as Senior Programme Coordinator of the United Nations University Institute for Sustainability and Peace (UNU-ISP) in November 2012. Prior to this appointment, he served as Director-General of the Nature Conservation Bureau from January 2011, Councillor for Nature Conservation, Director for Biodiversity Policy Division, Ministry of the Environment of Japan.

He also played a pivotal role in the success of the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/COP10) in 2010. He graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Tokyo with a major in landscape architecture.

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.

