

United Nations University Institute of Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)  
Global Environmental Outreach Centre (GEOC)

UNU-IAS/GEOC Joint Symposium Report



# Achieving the SDGs 2017 Event Report

- World Food Day Movie Screening *Wastecooking* (SDG12)
- International Symposium “Climate Change & the Republic of Kiribati” (SDG13)



Photo: Honorary Consul of the Republic of Kiribati in Sendai \*closed as of February 2018

## Foreword

The Global Environmental Outreach Centre was launched in 1996 as a joint initiative of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan and United Nations University to support the establishment and maintenance of partnerships among the different sectors to achieve a sustainable society. Since then, GEOC has played a central role as an intermediary organization to support the establishment and maintenance of environmental partnerships including NGOs, national governments, local authorities and companies.

GEOC's efforts over the last two decades have contributed to the advancement of multi-stakeholder partnership initiatives locally and globally. However, continued and accelerated efforts will be required as we face more complex, interlinked and multifaceted challenges as represented in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Taking this into account, GEOC set a policy direction for the next ten years to further advance the multi-stakeholder partnerships.

This ten-year vision was formulated under the theme of “*Global to Local, Local to Global-Supporting the implementation of the SDGs through partnerships-*.” Under this theme, GEOC aims to accelerate its activities for achievement of a sustainable society by connecting local initiatives and efforts on a global scale with wider and multi-level partnerships.

In particular, GEOC will proactively transmit information both inside and outside of Japan by hosting various events under internationally relevant themes in collaboration with other partners including international organizations and youth, sectors that have not previously collaborated closely. GEOC also supports accelerating local and civil sectors' initiatives through linking partners and international themes.

With this objective, GEOC hosted two important events in 2017. This report aims to explore opportunities for the advancement of partnership policies by providing event summaries and introducing GEOC's activities.

March 2018

United Nations University Institute of Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)  
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## World Food Day Movie Screening *Wastecooking*



Goal 12 of the SDGs aims to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, which include issues of food waste/loss and supply chains. Goal 13 is interconnected with other SDGs such as Goal 1: No Poverty, Goal 2: Zero Hunger, Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, and Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities.

An event was held to celebrate World Food Day with a screening of the movie *Wastecooking*, a 2015 Austrian documentary by David Gross who traveled through five European countries to find a solution to the problem of food loss and waste. The event participants exchanged ideas and viewpoints about the present and future state of food security and consumption patterns.

### **Event Summary**

Date: Thursday, 5 October 2017, 18:00-21:00

Venue: United Nations University, Annex Hall 1F

MC: Tsunao Watanabe, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNU-IAS

### **Programme**

- Presentation: Mbuli Charles Boliko, Director of the FAO Liaison Office in Japan
- Presentation: Akiko Umehara, Director of the Japanese NPO Morinooto
- Movie Screening *Wastecooking*
- Floor Discussion

\**Wastecooking*

David Gross/Georg Misch/2015 Austria/81 min.

<http://unitedpeople.jp/wastecooking/>

## REPORT

In opening remarks, Mr. Tsunao Watanabe, UNU-IAS Senior Programme Coordinator, highlighted the significant role that GEOC has played over the past 20 years and stressed its continued commitment to expand collaborative partnerships through its outreach activities such as organization of public events and poster exhibitions themed on internationally significant issues. He explained in doing so, GEOC assists in connecting the global with the local to achieve the SDGs. He expressed his gratitude to the two invited speakers, Dr. Mbuli Charles Boliko, Director of FAO Liaison Office in Japan, and Ms. Akiko Umehara, Director of the Japanese NPO Morinooto.

Following his remarks, Dr. Boliko delivered a presentation on FAO activities and the world food situation.

***“We produce enough food, nevertheless, 815 million people suffer from chronic hunger; one third of all food we produce is wasted.”***

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. World Food Day is celebrated every year on October 16<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the founding of the FAO and to call for the global actions on Zero Hunger. FAO headquarters is located in Rome, Italy, and currently 3,400 staff are working at the FAO.

Dr. Boliko highlighted collaborative efforts to provide food assistance to people affected by conflicts and natural disasters with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), an international financial institution dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries, and



Dr. Mbuli Charles Boliko

the World Food Programme (WFP), the leading humanitarian organization fighting major challenges including delivery, production and capacity building. He highlighted FAO projects to provide education to acquire necessary skills and knowledge to enhance self-reliance.

About the world food situation, he explained the dual problems. He said even though we produce enough food to feed everyone adequately; nevertheless, 815 million people (or one in nine) still suffer from chronic hunger. Among those, two-thirds of them are in Asia. In East Africa, one in three people faces malnutrition. On the other hand, BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) face growing rates of obesity, and he stressed the importance of addressing both issues.

He also addressed the issue of food shortages caused by climate change, natural disasters and conflicts, as well as the rise of food price due to a growing demand on bio energy.

He then introduced the status of food waste. He explained about one third of the food we produced is lost or wasted annually, and if food waste were a country, it would be the third largest greenhouse gas emitting country in the world. He added the problem is not just about *mottainai* or its amount, but it is about wasting all resources required to produce, such as energy, land, labor, and knowledge. Therefore, he said that if food is wasted, it damages our planet; and we need to take actions to reduce food waste.

In conclusion, Dr. Boliko introduced his actions to reduce food waste at home and shared an idea for reducing food waste by drawing an example of cutting spinach. He then warned how we easily waste food and advocated reducing waste by not buying, producing, and taking excess food, and sharing stories at home, the office, and school.

***“Local media can be a platform to circulate resources in the community”***

The next presentation was made by Ms. Akiko Umehara, Director of Morinooto. Morinooto is a nonprofit organization based in Aoba-ku, Yokohama. The organization runs a community website and offers various information to make the community more attractive by following the concept of harmonious co-existence between nature and mankind so that the community can be extended to future generations. Morinooto was established in 2009 when the founder, Ms. Madoka Kitahara, was looking to do something for the local community after giving birth to her first child. Ms. Umehara has been working as the Director since 2015 and currently Morinooto has six staff members. The community was developed as a commuter town and it is a popular area for child rearing families as the area encompasses both *satoyama* landscape and has good accessibility to central Tokyo.

Ms. Umehara has written on the website on



Ms. Akiko Umehara

guidance to reduce food waste. Her article offered ideas on ways to organize items in a fridge and a new dining style called Salvage Party, which is a party with leftover food brought from the homes of party participants.

She also introduced an initiative by a local company, COMA-DELI, which sells cooked meals by using locally produced foods and helps to implement the local production-local consumption model.

She highlighted another initiative conducted jointly with the local authority. In the initiative, a map of restaurants and markets contributing to local production for local consumption is created and distributed at public facilities. She commented that the initiative facilitated the engagement of local people who were usually not engaged. She also commented that local media can be a platform to circulate resources by linking different stakeholders.

Also, she shared her activity to reduce food waste from the Japanese Traditional New Year's cuisine, *osechi ryori*. She introduced potluck-style *osechi ryori* as an alternate to the traditional one where food waste is produced from preparing several small dishes in a single house hold. She also introduced a cooking class by local farmers who know how to cook in the best ways.

Lastly, she expressed her commitment in designing simple and interesting activities to teach complex issues. She drew an example from a compost bin used in a cooking class which can easily demonstrate recycling.

## **OPINIONS**

After the screening of the documentary *Wastecooking*, Ms. Tomoko Hoshino, Vice Representative of Environmental Partnership Council, briefly shared comments by highlighting positive solutions offered in the film, and then opened the floor

for discussion.

### *Comments from the floor*

- Engagement of the people who are not interested in food waste problems is the key.
- It is important to not waste food. If we start considering insects as an alternative food source, we also need to consider the emergence of food allergies due to the introduction of new foods into our diet.
- I have a concern that food is not delivered to the people who are in need. Also, I have a concern about Japan's low food sufficiency rate. It is necessary to enhance food production while lowering the dependency on food imports.
- I agree with the importance of engaging people who are not interested in the issue and would like to ask ideas from participants. Also, I agree with the issue of the food sufficiency rate. In Africa, it is necessary to enhance production, but in Japan, the food sufficiency rate is low, and it is important to think of locally grown and consumed food while lowering the dependency on food import.
- Planning some fun activities and activities related to hobbies can be considered as ways to engage people who are not interested in the issues. I believe the issue is many people do not know where our meals come from. I think food loss can be reduced if more people understand the production of meats, vegetables, and others.



- I think commercially induced consumption is one of the reasons why we produce more than we need. What we value is not eating itself but eating together with people. When the distance between the producer and consumer is close, people will consume locally grown food.
- I wonder what will happen if we do the same thing as in the movie in Japan. In my opinion, European countries are more flexible on such initiatives. I think doing the same thing in Japan may not be as easy, but if we could do it, it would be very interesting.
- As shown in the movie, demonstrations to reduce food loss in public facilities were impressive. It is also interesting to see people's negative impressions towards livestock industries. Activities demonstrated in the movie are special cases, but having a meal is part of our daily activities. I think the reality is everyone is busy and has no room to think about the issues.
- The biggest challenge on doing the same thing in Japan is the issue of hygiene management. In case of reusable plates, there's always a problem of responsibility

when there is the potential for food poisoning.

- I have been working as the Secretariat of Kodomo Shokudō, a cafeteria that offer meals to children for free, and I feel a big gap between what is ideal and real activities on the ground. I strongly feel we can save the children if we don't waste food. I believe legislation not to waste is necessary.

Based on the comments from the floor, Ms. Hoshino commented that the “wastecooking” project is not needed if each of us can take actions to reduce food waste at the office and home. In her concluding remarks, she stressed the importance of thinking and acting together to tackle global issues to achieve the SDGs and GEOC’s continued commitment to facilitating partnerships to solve issues.



## ABOUT GEOC's EXHIBITION

As a part of GEOC's outreach activities, GEOC organizes poster exhibitions at symposiums held at United Nations University. These posters explain the 17 goals of the SDGs and partnerships in detail as well as the background of adoption of the SDGs. The posters use visual data and offer national and international perspectives. By displaying these posters at symposiums, it helps to enhance understanding of the participants on the interlinkage of the global issues as reflected in the SDGs including climate change, loss of biodiversity, poverty, conflict, and human rights issues.



## International Symposium on SDG 13: Climate Change & the Republic of Kiribati



Small Island States are exposed to an increasing threat of coastal erosion due to sea level rise caused by climate change. The Republic of Kiribati, a nation in the central Pacific Ocean comprising 33 atolls and reef islands, is faced with extensive coastal erosion.

This symposium was held a month before the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties (COP23) to the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and explored climate change challenges with invited representatives from the Kiribati government and an NGO. It also included a presentation on the UNU-IAS Low-Carbon Technology Transfer Project and discussed partnerships to accelerate the commitment to SDG 13 and the Paris Agreement.

### **Event Summary**

Date: Friday, 20 October, 2017, 14:00-17:00

Venue: United Nations University, Elizabeth Rose Hall 5F

MC: Tsunao Watanabe, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNU-IAS

### **Programme**

Opening Remarks:

Kazuhiko Takemoto, Director, UNU-IAS

Presentations:

Kentaro Ono Honorary Consul, Republic of Kiribati

Meere Riwata President, Kiribati Climate Action Network (KiriCAN)

Kireua Bureimoa Energy Planner, Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy,  
Republic of Kiribati

Lisanne Groen JSPS-UNU Postdoctoral Fellow, UNU-IAS

Panel Discussions:

Moderator: Tomoko Hoshino, Vice Representative, Environmental Partnership Council (EPC)

Panelists: Kentaro Ono, Meere Riwata, Kireua Bureimoa, Toaki Arinoko, Executive Member, KiriCAN, Lisanne Groen



Kazuhiko Takemoto



Kentaro Ono



Meere Riwata



Kireua Bureimoa



Lisanne Groen



Toaki Arinoko

## **PRESENTATION**

In his opening remarks, Prof. Kazuhiko Takemoto, Director of UNU-IAS, expressed appreciation for the guest speakers. He highlighted the importance of concrete actions at local and global levels as the Paris Agreement and the SDGs call for the commitment of all member states to achieve the targets.

### ***Crisis of the Republic of Kiribati, a low-lying atoll country***

The first presentation was made by Mr. Kentaro Ono, introducing an overview of the Republic of Kiribati. The Republic of Kiribati is located in the Pacific Ocean along the edges of the equator and consists of 33 coral islands with a population of approximately 118,000 people. Kiribati also encompasses the largest exclusive economic zone in the Pacific with over 3.5 million square kilometers of ocean. Fisheries and copra production are the main industries. The nation is one of the world's poorest countries.

Mr. Ono explained Kiribati and Japan have established relationships since the Meiji era through trade. He added now that many Kiribati people work as fishers on the Japanese yellowtail fishing boats. He also explained that the country's main infrastructure was built via the Japanese ODA Grant Aid Project.

He then shared how climate change is threatening Kiribati. The country, with an average width of only 350 meters, is facing unprecedented challenges from climate change such as sea level rise, saltwater intrusion into the groundwater supply, coral bleaching, and more intense and frequent typhoons. He shared his concerns that if we cannot stop what's happening now in Kiribati, then such effects will spread to other island nations including Japan.

The next presentation was made by Ms. Meere Riwata, President, Kiribati Climate Action Network (KiriCAN). She expressed appreciation for UNU-IAS and Japan for hosting the event and introduced adaptation measures taken by KiriCan.

She explained the country has become increasingly vulnerable due to climate change and facing various problems including high waves, groundwater contamination, flooding, etc. As representative of KiriCAN, a worldwide network of over 1,300 NGOs in more than 120 countries, she highlighted its adaptation measures including mangrove planting, breakwater constructions, securing food and water supplies, waste management, health management and marine protection activities.

Besides such measures, KiriCAN also conducts activities to secure waters and food by installing storage tanks, growing vegetables and planting coconut trees. KiriCAN also provides training and educational programs for citizens on water conservation, waste management and climate change.

In her closing remarks, she called for measures to protect the environment and to prevent further climate change impacts. She stressed human rights include the rights to the environment, life, food, water, health, indigenous people and security.

### ***National measures must be taken as a member of the international community***

The next speaker, Mr. Kireu Bureimoa, highlighted national mitigation measures and the energy plan of Kiribati. He explained Kiribati is facing issues due to a high dependency on petroleum imports for electricity generation as well as issues of disease among women due to the gas emissions from the use of inefficient fuel sources for cooking.

To tackle these issues, Kiribati established the National Energy Policy in 2009. The country also has been actively taking measures to install renewable energy since 2013. Mr. Bureimoa stressed that, even though Kiribati's emissions represent approximately only 0.0002% of global emissions, the country commits at the maximum extent to uphold the Paris Agreement as a member of the international community.

For future tasks, he identified finding development partners to formulate and implement a comprehensive national energy plan and secure funds for various energy projects.

### ***Multinational partnerships for Low Carbon Technology Transfer***

The next speaker, Dr. Lisanne Groen, introduced a UNU-IAS research project on Low Carbon Technology Transfer (LCT) and highlighted trends in LCT.

She explained strengthening partnerships is addressed as a key element to advance international efforts for climate change at the 23rd session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COP23) to be held in November in Bonn, Germany. She also explained LCT initiatives which help to reduce GHG emissions on a large scale are led mainly by non-state actors compared to cities, civil sectors, local governments and investors. Also, she highlighted that ministerial-level discussions to strengthen public-private partnerships are actively taking place in international meetings to meet the objectives to double public clean energy investment over five years.

To contribute to such discussions, she introduced that UNU-IAS conducts an LCT project which aims to identify the effective strategies to disseminate LCT by comparing LCT strategies of Germany, the UK,

France and Japan to the developing countries in Asia.

## **Discussion**

The panel discussion was moderated by Ms. Tomoko Hoshino, Vice Representative of EPC, and Mr. Toaki Arinoko, Executive Member, KiriCAN, also joined the discussion together with other speakers. The panelist discussed ways to achieve the targets of the SDG 13 through multinational partnerships.

At the beginning of the session, Ms. Hoshino stated that the symposium was realized by close collaboration with the Environmental Partnership Office (EPO) Tohoku.



Tomoko Hoshino

The panelists shared their views on SDG 13.

- The support from NGOs on KiriCAN activities helped to transform how people in Kiribati think and act on Climate Change issues (Mr. Arinoko).
- It is important to raise awareness of climate change issues among women. If women take actions on climate change, that will lead to their participation in political discussions and that will help to promote women's participation in society and politics (Ms. Riwata).
- For the successful implementation of the LCT project, it is important to consider technologies that match the conditions of the transferred country and capacity building of the technical experts. For LCT

between cities, it is important to coordinate national and municipal policies (Dr. Groen).

- The opportunity to learn about the situation of Kiribati is rare, and I was encouraged to see the participants at today's symposium who are interested in hearing about Kiribati. According to World Bank research, 80% of Kiribati's islands will disappear by 2050, and we do not have much time left. I wish more people would become interested in learning about the challenging situation of Kiribati. Please don't think the issues of Kiribati are someone else's problems. We do not want to talk about the future of Kiribati without land (Mr. Ono).
- Installment of renewable energy including solar power to provide stable electricity is our priority. Kiribati faces many problems with water and since this issue is closely related to energy issues, it is



important to consider both at the same time (Mr. Bureimoa).

- Climate change and the value of water resources are taught and discussed in elementary schools, but awareness raising is not sufficient, and we need more promotion to the people in Kiribati (Ms. Riwata).

At the end of the panel session, the panelists and the participants discussed expectations for global partnerships. They shared their views that, by advancing partnerships, smooth financing for climate change measures and advancement of various initiatives on knowledge and information sharing can be enabled. The participants highlighted the importance of collective actions through equitable partnerships.



Floor Discussion





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