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Capacity Building and Community Empowerment: Connecting Noto and Ifugao

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Efficient mechanism for human capacity building is the key to promoting sustainable development, however, more attention is to be drawn on how to go about it. This article deals with Kanazawa University's activities, first, for revitalizing "satoyama and satoumi" in Noto Peninsula, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan and, second, for recently started collaboration with Ifugao Rice Terraces (IRT) in northern Luzon Island, Philippines.

1. "Satoyama" and "Satoumi" in Japan and its global significance

Satoyama is traditional rural landscape in Japan. It occupies about 50% of Japan's national land, ranging from lowland up to 500-800 m elevation. It is a mosaic of woodlands, plantations, grasslands, farmlands, irrigated ponds, canals, etc. In Japan, much attention has been drawn to Satoyama because of its destruction and deterioration due to societal changes since the end of World War II. In response to these trends, the "Satoyama and Satoumi (coastal areas used for fishery, aquaculture and so on) Assessment" (JSSA) was carried out as an international project from 2007 to 2010, led by United Nations University and the Japanese Ministry of the Environment (Duraippah et al. 2012). It is an assessment by summarizing the current state of knowledge of Satoyama and Satoumi. As an international context, JSSA defines Satoyama landscapes and Satoumi seascapes as "dynamic mosaics of managed socio-ecological systems" producing a bundle of ecosystem services for human well-being, i.e. "socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes" (SEPLS). By using SEPLS as a key concept, the "Satoyama Initiative" (SI) started at CBE-COP 10 in 2010. It aims to promote (1) sustainable use of forest, agricultural land, pastoral land and other types of SEPLS, (2) Enhancing the resilience of SEPLS, (3) Valuing cultural and historical SEPLS and (4) strengthening multi-stakeholder partnership. A global initiative relevant to the SI is "Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems" (GIAHS), which was launched by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in 2002. The overall goal of the initiative is to identify and safeguard GIAHS and their associated landscapes, agricultural biodiversity, and knowledge systems through catalyzing and establishing a long-term support program and enhance global,

national, and local benefit derived through sustainable management and enhanced viability.

Through JSSA, IPSI and GIAHS, it has become clear that the sustainable practices and traditional knowledge and culture in SEPLS have been increasingly threatened in many parts of the world. Commonly recognized causes include urbanization, industrialization, and rapidly shrinking rural populations. These global initiatives have taken global perspectives and sought to consolidate expertise from around the world regarding the sustainable use of resources in SEPLS.

2. Capacity building of young people in Noto Peninsula, Japan

Noto Peninsula, jutting out into the Japan Sea in the central part of Honshu Island. Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi have been nurtured by human livelihoods and agriculture, forestry and fishery industries in harmony with nature. Its traditional primary industries, land use, diverse biological resources, beautiful landscapes, culture and festivals are highly appreciated, consequently "Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi" was designated in June 2011 as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS). However, today Noto is under severe threats from various environmental and social problems, resulting from a shrinking and aging rural population. This area lacks young people due to out-migration to urban areas because there is no jobs and universities here. In result, abandoned farmlands and forests have been increasing, causing the deterioration of ecosystem services and biodiversity, as discussed in Japan Satoyama and Satoumi Assessment (JSSA, 2010).

To reduce this difficulty and revitalize the communities in Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi, Kanazawa University implemented "Noto Satoyama Meister Training Program" (2007-2011), using the fund from Ministry of Education, in conjunction with local government and communities (MOU was concluded between the university and 4 municipalities and prefectural government). Target is young generation under the age of 45. This program is characterized with (1) establishment of base facility (Noto school building) at the amid of Noto 150 km away from Kanazawa University, (2) 5 young post-doc teaching staffs were stationed there, (3) to accept a wide variety of young people, who are both local residents and immigrants from urban areas, with a strong motivation of self-learning, unique ideas for making living and becoming the leaders, (4) intensive face to face mentorship between the staffs and trainees, (5) compulsory graduate tasks including "graduate thesis" and oral presentation. Fortunately, the 5-year Meister program was completed successfully with 62 graduates and construction of extensive networks, and then its subsequent program "Noto Satoyama Satoumi Meister Training Program" was already launched in 2012. At the start of this program, we advocated 3 items: (1) self-funding,

(2) establishment of 3 satellite sites and (3) human capacity building for global perspective.

3. Launching of "Ifugao Satoyama Meister Training Program"

The Noto Communique, delivered at the end of the International Forum on GIAHS, held at Nanao city, in Noto Peninsula in May 2013, recommended "Twinning of GIAHS sites" between developed and developing countries. Ifugao Rice Terraces (IRT), which is designated as both UNESCO World Cultural Heritage and GIAHS site, in the Philippines has also been threatened by lack of young farmers and predominance of unregulated tourism activities. Consequently, it was regrettably nominated as World Endangered Heritage in 2001 (fortunately, resolved in 2012). Therefore, it is an urgent need to develop local human resources for the sustainable development of IRT. We have just started the "Ifugao Satoyama Meister Training Program", which aims to replicate the Satoyama Meister model in GIAHS IRT, in collaboration with Kanazawa University, University of the Philippines Open University (UP-OU) and Ifugao State University (IFSU) with the support of the local government under the framework of JICA's Technical Cooperation for Grassroots Projects. There are many challenges in this collaboration, e.g. (1) how to mutually understand the traditional culture and challenges, (2) how to utilize international frame work such as JSSA, GIAHS and IPSI in the collaboration, (3) bilateral relationships and equal partnership are important, so that self-sustainability of Ifugao Satoyama Meister Training Program is to be established in the near future by IFSU, UP-OU, local governments and other stakeholders in IRT, (4) for Noto GIAHS, this collaboration is a good but not easy opportunity for its own capacity building and sustainable development.