

Editorial

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EDITORIAL

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Preface

Issues related to Sustainable Management in Satoyama-Satoumi and other Social Ecological Production Landscapes (SEPLs) require a complex understanding of ecosystem processes in both agriculture and forests, as well as social and economic systems. SEPLs encompass two main types of ecosystems: agricultural agro-forest and forests, and in some cases with relevance to aquaculture or coastal systems. The aim here is to integrate the findings and insights from both agricultures and forests as well as from various disciplines, including the use and understanding of diverse knowledge systems such as local and traditional knowledge. The interaction of landscapes and human activities has produced goods and services for the local populations for long periods of time, which has resulted in an accumulation of local and traditional knowledge/traditional ecological knowledge.

In order to bring together an understanding of the topic, an international symposium was organized jointly by the Kanazawa University, School of Rural Development (coordinator Dr. Ryo Kohsaka) and Natural Resource Canada (coordinator Dr. Ian Thompson) and held on April 30– May 3, 2014 at Komatsu, Japan. The symposium was sponsored by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Co-operative Research Programme (CRP) on Biological Resource Management for Sustainable Agricultural Systems, whose financial support made it possible for invited speakers to participate in the symposium, with other additional other sources as noted in the acknowledgements. The title of the workshop was “Sustainable Management including the use of Traditional Knowledge in Satoyama and other SEPLS.” The symposium was supported by the MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries), the MOE (Ministry of the Environment), Ishikawa Prefecture, Komatsu City, University of Tsukuba Graduate School of Life and Environmental Sciences International Bioindustrial Sciences Course, UNU-IAS (United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability), UNU-IAS OUIK (UNU-IAS Operating Unit Ishikawa/Kanazawa), Kyoto University Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies. During a three day seminar, 22 speakers including scientists,

policy makers and UN staff presented their views or scientific findings. From among these presentations, five papers are presented in this current feature, covering various agricultural or forest areas and social processes globally. Presented studies bring forward a variety of study approaches when addressing a broad range of topics related to natural ecosystem process and human introduced process.

Thompson (this issue) set the scene by providing the overview the science policy interface of the contemporary environmental processes at the global level. The importance of multi-sectoral approach, an understanding of local ecological knowledge and scientific information in forming the policies are identified as key issues to maintain SELPs.

Cordonier-Segger and Freedom-Kai (this issue) examine the inclusion traditional knowledge (TK) held by the indigenous and local communities in the context of the Convention of Biological Diversity and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA). Their reviews suggest that the inclusion of such knowledge provides a channel for sustainable development under those international processes.

The following two papers discuss European cases of cultural landscapes, including Social Ecological Production Landscapes. These are followed by a case study with a focus on knowledge systems, including traditional knowledge for mushroom production in Japan.

Agnoletti and Santoro (this issue) highlight the role of cultural values and taking a landscape approach for forest management. The cultural value is largely overlooked in the scientific exploration and policies in the European contexts, including EU policies. They warn that an idea of 'naturalness' favouring processes of abandonment and re-naturalization, to places that are not natural can be counter-productive for the community and society. Given the lack of strategies for cultural values, the paper advocates the practical implementation of existing tools, including those at regional and international levels.

Parviainen (this issue) analyzes the cultural aspects of northern European forests from a historical perspective. A historical analysis suggested overuse in the past, which eventually led to the establishment of sustainable forestry regulations, beginning in

the 19th century. Amongst others, he highlights the transformation of the tradition of “Everyman’s right”, which has been undergoing changes such as the commercial use of ecosystem services on related private lands.

Kohsaka et al. (this issue) highlight the transformation and interactions of knowledge systems in producing mushrooms in the rural areas in Japan. In a rapidly depopulating society, new actors or agents are frequently needed to maintain the SEPLs or to address the underlying causes of change, such as the underuse of forest resources, including non-timber forest products. The paper highlights the dynamic exchanges of information among the new and older farmers of mushroom production, indicating that the productivity might not depend on whether the person is the holder of “traditional knowledge”.

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