The Satoyama Sympoiesis
Fostering community-based learning on biodiversity

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Photo: Noreen Dianne S. Alazada
Satoyama - Satoumi

Where people are part of the Nature they lived in

Nanao City, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan
Satoyama and Satoumi are “living classrooms” of sustainability.
Satoyama type of landscape - Satoumi type of seascape

- SEPLS are “dynamic mosaics of habitats and land and sea uses where the harmonious interaction between people and nature maintains biodiversity while providing humans with the goods and services needed for their livelihoods, survival and well-being in a sustainable manner” (IPSI, 2017)
Biodiversity rich environments maintained by traditional cultures and wisdom of indigenous peoples and local communities
Biodiversity underpins sustainability of the planet!

The SDGs ‘Wedding Cake’
(Stockholm Resilience Center, 2016)

• Forming the basis of the planet are 4 goals related to the **biosphere**:
  • *SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation*
  • *SDG 13: Climate action*
  • *SDG 14: Life under water*
  • *SDG 15: Life on land*

• Economy and Society are embedded parts of Biosphere

• Ecological limits form basis of the SDGs

Biosphere is the foundation of sustainability of our planet and biodiversity is the key connector of the 4 biosphere related SDGs!
However, biodiversity is now in crisis...

and sustainable development of our planet is at critical threat!
The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment on Biodiversity (May 2019)

The Report warns that

around 1 million animal and plant species (out of 8 million)

are now threatened with extinction, many within decades, more than ever before in human history

5 Key Drivers of
Global Biodiversity Loss:

1) Changes in land and sea use
2) Direct exploitation of organisms
3) Climate change
4) Pollution
5) Invasive alien species

(Source: IPBES, 2019)

ALL CAUSED BY HUMAN ACTIVITIES!
Threats and Challenges facing SEPLS

- Land-use change
- Over-exploitation
- Under-use
- Abandonment
- Urbanization

Indirect drivers

- Demographic change
- Economic change
- Cultural change
- Science & technology
- Socio-political change

- Climate change
- Pollution
- Invasive species
The Satoyama Initiative

Proposed by UNU and the Ministry of Environment Japan at the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD COP 10) held in Nagoya City, Aichi Pref., Japan, 2010.

- A global effort to realize “societies in harmony with nature”
- Revitalization and sustainable management of landscapes and seascapes for people and nature

“Useful tool to better understand and support human-influenced natural environments for the benefit of biodiversity and human well-being”

(CBD-COP10 Decision X/32)
International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI)

- Launched at CBD COP 10 in 2010
- IPSI Secretariat at UNU-IAS
- **258 member organizations** as at April 2020
  - (e.g., Governments, NGOs, private sector, IPLCs, academia)

**Vision:**
Societies in harmony with nature

**Three-fold Approach:**
1. Consolidate wisdom on securing diverse ecosystem services and values
2. Integrate traditional ecological knowledge and modern science
3. Explore new forms of co-management systems

**Six Ecological and Socioeconomic Perspectives**
- Resource use within the carrying capacity of the environment
- Cyclic use of natural resources
- Recognition of local traditions and culture
- Multi-stakeholder participation and collaboration
- Contributions to sustainable socio-economies
- Improved community resilience
Sustainable management and restoration of SEPLS through promoting community-based knowledge sharing and social learning

Consolidating **wisdom** on securing diverse ecosystem services and values

Integrating traditional ecological **knowledge** and modern science to promote innovation

Exploring new forms of **co-management** systems or evolving frameworks of “commons”
Five clusters of IPSI Activities

1. Knowledge Facilitation
   - Enhance understanding and raise awareness of the importance of SEPLs

2. Policy Research

3. Indicators Research

4. Capacity Building

5. On-the-ground Activities

Provide research tools and capacity building mechanisms for community-based learning and biodiversity conservation measures
Why Community-based learning?

- Participatory Approach
- Social learning
- Conflict reduction
- Just outcomes
- Motivations
- Life-long learning
- Sustainability
Satoyama Development Mechanism (SDM) Project 15-1: Integrated participation of institutional stakeholder for upliftment of rural livelihood through sustainable harvesting and market linkages of NTFPs and Agri products

- Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh, India
- Livelihood of indigenous tribes depend on forest resource, subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry
- However, intensifying exploitation and market pressure

- Establish sustainable harvest of commercially important nontimber forest products (NTFP), develop market linkages, promote community fodder banks and rotational grazing
- Promote knowledge-sharing through community-based consultations

Source: Takahashi et. al (2019), A self assessment by the SDM Secretariat
Key Achievements

Empowered the elderly and women

Sense of ownership

Value chain analysis

Value-added to marketing of agro-products

Established community enterprises

Established sustainable harvest of native crops

Enhanced livelihoods and business skills

Reinforced valuing of nature and motivation to learn

Source: Takahashi et. al (2019), A self assessment by the SDM Secretariat
Indicators of Resilience in SEPLS

• A self-assessment survey tool of local communities on their understanding and perceptions

• 20 indicators (5 areas) to generate understanding of SEPLS:
  1. Landscape/seascape diversity and Ecosystem protection;
  2. Biodiversity;
  3. Knowledge and innovation;
  4. Governance and social equity;
  5. Livelihoods and well-being

• Adjustable to local context
Using the SEPLS Resilience Indicators for Community-based projects

Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) Programme

- Implemented by UNDP; Contribution from Japan Biodiversity Fund
- Small-grant funding in 20 countries to apply the landscape approach

GEF-Satoyama Project

- Implemented by Conservation International; Funding from the GEF
- US$ 2 mill. in total (2015-2018)

Publications developed

- US $22,260,656 (including co-financing) was funded to 398 projects in 6 years (2012-2018)
- “COMDEKS methodology” including landscape approach now included in all GEF-SGP “Upgraded Country Programmes” in 35 countries

- Knowledge generation and capacity-building in 3 priority ecosystems: Indo-Burma, Tropical Andes, and Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands
- Conservation benefits to over 4 million ha of land and sea
- Improved habitats for 120 globally threatened species of plants and animals
• **Y4IRT** is a **tablet-based capacity-building and exchange program**

• By University of the Philippines and local partners

• Reconnect local Ifugao youths, and connect urban youths, with the IRT

• **Community-based education** on value/importance, challenges and the actions taken to conserve IRT

• Also part of a IPSI SDM project and documented in *Satoyama Initiative Thematic Review Vol.5*

Source: Serrano et. al (2019), Chapter 11, SITR Vol.5
4 Phases

Needs analysis

Tablet-based training modules

Youth and exchange program

Monitoring and improvising of module

Both educators and students work with the local communities to build this learning programme, while documenting local knowledge and exploring sustainable pathways for the communities.

Source: Serrano et. al (2019), Chapter 11, SITR Vol.5
Oral History Handbook “Kikigaki”

• Guidance handbook on TEK documentation for students

• Joint publication with NPO Kyozon-no-mori Network

“Kiki”- Listening

“Kaki/Gaki”- Writing (Documenting)

• Annually, 100 high school students interview elders

• Make a record of the lives of skilled craftspeople and farmers living in rural communities in Japan

12 Principles of Kikigaki – Tips on community-based learning

Observation & Experience

Get to know the neighbourhood where the interviewee lives and observe things first-hand. Do your best to listen to the voice of the interviewee’s experience and memory.

Visit the place where the interviewee works: get a feel for the land and the natural business of the area. Ask the interviewee about the wisdom and social values involved in their work. You will begin to understand his/her life and stories. Your interviews will become more meaningful upon learning that there is someone who sincerely wants to understand and listen about their life story.

Respect & Open-mindness

More important than literary talent in Kikigaki is the open-minded and respectful attitude you show to the interviewee.

“Kikigaki” writing doesn’t require literary talent. It is much better to be curious about your interviewee’s story. It is best to ask questions that show respect and care about the feelings of the interviewee.

Communication & Appreciation

A person’s way of speaking reveals much about the background of their life, values and personality. For better understanding, pay attention to the presentation of oral language, local dialects, generational idiom, and specialized terminology.

Kikigaki is a joint product of the interviewer and the interviewee. Kikigaki requires full cooperation and collaboration of the interviewer and interviewee. It is very important for both person to develop a relationship of mutual trust to exchange ideas by a simple sentence. And in this way, you develop a special bond of mutual respect. If you can exchange heartfelt “Thank you” at the end of the project, you will have realized one of the important goals of Kikigaki.

Listening & Understanding

Note the way the era the person has lived through is reflected in his/her way of speaking.

Listening and understanding is the core of Kikigaki. To understand and listen to the interviewee, pay attention to the way of speaking, the oral language, and the local dialects. It is important to understand the background of the interviewee and respect their way of life.

Community-based research can inculcate values, foster skills and capacities of students

Merits of Community-based learning through *Kikigaki*

I realised that technology is not just the skills that are handed down; it is the accumulation of the devotion and wisdom of our ancestors.

(2nd year high school student, male)

I realised that forests are like the foundations of our lives. They are not separate from us, but naturally tied to our daily lives. I became much more aware of forests.

(2nd year high school student, female)

- Raise awareness of the value and importance of local traditions and culture
- Nurture love for Nature
- Strengthen bonds of urban youths with rural communities
- Educate openminded future leaders

"Transformative change" means a fundamental, system-wide reorganization across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values.

By its very nature, transformative change can expect opposition from those with interests vested in the status quo. But such opposition can be overcome for the broader public good.

—IPBES Global Assessment

A whole-of-society effort to make dynamic changes, breaking away from status-quo and business-as-usual ways
Transformative

• Paradigm shift
• Change of mindset
• Need first to change the way we learn!
• Every individual can be an agent of change!
• 3 levels: Structure, Behavior, and Consciousness
• Satoyama Sympoiesis

– Collective creation of the knowledge about multiple values of nature

• Promoting community-based, life-long learning on biodiversity conservation

• Moving learning spaces out of the classrooms (no textbooks!)

• Life-time challenge:

What are the “sustainable futures” we want?
How we can bring about transformative change to achieve them collectively?
THANK YOU

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