

Discussion Paper II

The Initiative Vision and How “Initiative” will Progress

Satoyama landscapes are complex landscapes composed of *Satoyama* at the center, around which are located cultivated land, rural settlements, irrigation ponds and ditches and other features that result from veritable mosaics of different types of land usage that are functionally linked to one another. These *Satoyama* were once used as forests for agricultural purposes, firewood/charcoal biofuels, coppice woodlands for thatch, among other rural production-based resource use activities. *Satoyama* landscapes have historically provided a wide range of ecosystem services to humans, that include non-material benefits such as traditional community identity and cultural heritage in addition to an awareness of the importance of sustainable use/management of natural resources. Nevertheless, since the fuel and fertilizer revolutions of the 1960s, the very survival of these landscapes has come under threat as the functional relationships between *Satoyama* and other types of land usage have weakened. Two visible patterns of *Satoyama* degradation have emerged in recent decades. *Satoyama* landscapes have become the target of large-scale urban, agricultural and recreational development projects. Another pattern of *Satoyama* degradation observed has been the under-use of agro-forestry lands, abandonment of cultivated lands, coupled with community degradation driven by depopulation and aging demographic trends. Through the revitalization of Japanese *Satoyama* landscapes faced by threats of degradation and decline of ecosystem services, Japan aims to rebuild these socio-ecological production landscapes that are in keeping with sustainable land-use models of the 21st Century. Revitalization of such *Satoyama* landscapes in Japan is recognized as a challenge common to traditional agricultural and forestry land-use systems in Asia as well as other parts of the world.

The Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (hereinafter: “the Convention”) (2000) adopted the "Ecosystem Approach" as a strategy for the integrated management of water resources, biological resources and land. This was followed by the adoption of the "Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity” by the Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (2004). In view of the already well-established benefits that have arisen from these schemes, the Government of Japan (Ministry of the Environment) and the United Nations University are currently preparing to propose under the banner of the International *Satoyama* Initiative at the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, where they will advocate the forging of common global strategies and cooperative frameworks for the purpose of revitalizing *Satoyama*-like landscapes as part of the Post-2010 Strategy, while maintaining ethno-historical, cultural and ecological sensitivity to potential partners outside of Japan where such landscapes are located.

The Initiative Vision

The Initiative Vision components described below were formulated as a result of discussions (please refer to the reference materials) at the "SATOYAMA Initiative International Workshop" convened in March 2009 by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan. Through the framework of international partnerships, the International *Satoyama* Initiative aims for maintenance and revitalization of *Satoyama*-like landscapes where human-nature relationships are potentially more sustainable land and natural resources use/management systems than conventional methods. In order to achieve this objective, the Initiative will conduct activities such as development of strategies and collecting/disseminating case studies (discussed in the section of "How 'Initiative' will Progress"). Based on the information that has been gathered to date, the following Threefold Vision has been designed. It consists of 3 points which together, are considered to be absolutely critical for the sustainable development of *Satoyama*-like landscapes in the future.

<The Initiative's Threefold Vision>

1. Amalgamation of wisdom related to sustainable use, re-use and recycling inclusive, of natural resources as the foundation for harmonious co-existence between nature and human society.
2. Integrating traditional ecological knowledge with modern science
3. Creating a "new commons"

Based on the above Threefold Vision, the following five perspectives will form the underlying premises, values and approaches for the maintenance and revitalization of *Satoyama*-like landscapes, contributing to developing new paradigms for sustainable use/management of land and natural resources in each regional area. The bracketed numbers after each paragraph title indicate the Threefold Vision components that are linked to the subject matter of that paragraph.

<The Five Perspectives>

1. Understanding the features of the landscape and assessing the carrying capacity and resilience of the natural environment (1,2)

It is important that the inherent features of biodiversity and ecosystems in each regional area are well understood. Simultaneously with grasping various natural settings such as topography, soil and climate, the structure and processes of the landscape must be scientifically comprehended from the perspective of such things as spatiotemporal mosaic-like features (complex ecosystems), functional relationships between different types of land usage and the circulation of natural resources. It is vital that the relationships between such natural landscape features and the provisioning and regulating services obtained from local biodiversity and ecosystems are understood. Thus, attention to the carrying capacity and resilience of the natural environment is critical so as to ensure that such knowledge might lead to sustainable use and management of natural resources.

2. Integration of local traditional ecological knowledge and modern science (1,2)

It is important that we respect the unique history, cultures and traditional ecological knowledge that produced these landscapes and the efforts of the local communities who nurtured such customs and ways of life. It is anticipated that the rationale behind systems of traditional land-use, resource utilization and management will be demonstrated and, simultaneously, that local history and culture will be preserved. Such practices can be integrated with modern science to increase the aggregate benefits from both knowledge systems. Dually, integration of local knowledge and modern science will ensure that any partnerships between communities and modern practitioners will be fair and equitable. By combining traditional ecological knowledge with modern scientific techniques, it is also hoped that mechanisms that may be adapted to modern-day socioeconomic conditions will be developed.

3. Formulating plans for the purpose of optimizing ecosystem services (1,2)

Land usage that is able to apply the structural and process features of *Satoyama*-like landscapes to wise use practices based on land and resource use must be investigated. Further, topography, soil and climate must also be considered. To achieve this, a comprehensive cross-sectional approach spanning a range of sectors is required to ensure that the relationships between different types of land usage, including natural resource circulation practices, are comprehensively integrated and function effectively. In order to enhance community-based activity feasibility, it is important to encourage multiple stakeholder participation in all levels of planning. Moreover, in view of the fact that ecosystems are in a continual state of flux (a situation that involves a high degree of uncertainty), which may increase under global climate change, it is important that adaptive approaches are adopted in order to facilitate the utilization of ecosystem services under optimal conditions within the scope of the carrying capacity and resilience of the natural environment.

4. Wide range of stakeholder participation in land and natural resources use/management (2,3)

The fact that there are insufficient funds and systems in place for managing forests, grasslands and water reservoirs is problematic across the globe. In order to resolve this issue, perspectives that view commons as joint assets which should be maintained by the collective community are once again coming to the fore. In the past, commons carried with them the associated problem of resource overexploitation, owing to joint usage; however, it is conceivable that this problem may be avoided in the future by establishing sustainable management regulations and rules. Natural resources may even potentially be managed from a more broad-based perspective through the construction of mechanisms for sharing the associated benefits and burdens more broadly, not only the landowners themselves, but the collective community of those participating in land use and management activities, including various stakeholders in areas that benefit from ecosystem services provide by the socio-ecological production landscapes.

5. Contributions to local communities' livelihood (1,2,3)

A balance between regional development and land usage/natural resource utilization is essential to ensure sustainable use/management of land and natural resources. In order to achieve this critical balance, new values must be created for resources through such things as ecotourism development, the environmentally-conscious

utilization of biomass resources, certification schemes for environmentally-sound agricultural methods and crop production, and farm-fresh schemes that directly link consumers with producers. The creation of new values for resources may facilitate assessment and valuation of the contributions made by *Satoyama*-like landscapes to human well-being such as food and resource security, and poverty alleviation. It is also important to identify and promote the potential contributions to environmental education and community development through cooperative use/management of *Satoyama*-like landscapes.

I. How the “Initiative” will Progress

<Progress of the Initiative Projects>

To develop the initiative through consultative discussions and collaborative action among partners, the following steps require consideration. Firstly, potential partners will develop global common strategies and the concept of the framework/partnerships. The core of the global common strategy would be the threefold vision and the perspectives as mentioned above. The strategy would describe main activities, targets of these activities and the role of partners. Throughout the development of the strategies, close cooperation with like-minded initiatives/partnerships, including but not limited to “Ecoagriculture Partners¹”, “Equator Initiative²” and “Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS)³”, is necessary to avoid duplication of works and achieve maximum outputs and impacts.

The main activities will potentially include the following:

- (1) To gather and analyze case studies from around the globe which illustrate the sustainable use/management of natural resources in *Satoyama*-like landscapes and their benefits to human well-being.
- (2) Through (1) the above, case studies will be sorted and analyzed on the following criteria:
 - i. lessons learnt
 - ii. practical measures for systems and technology supporting the sustainable use/management of natural resources for human well-being,
 - iii. challenges relevant to maintenance and revitalization of *Satoyama*-like landscape
- (3) To assist in the enhancement of information dissemination and capacity building based on the (2) i. and ii. above

Through (2) i. above, case studies gathered will be integrated into a searchable database where information may be found using keywords such as the region or environmental state. This will enable people who require specific information to refer to lessons that were derived from individual case studies. In regard to the practical measures for systems and technology supporting sustainable use/management of natural resources for human well-being, they will be organized so as to facilitate application in the field and studies for the development of new practices and methods.

¹ <http://www.ecoagriculture.org>

² <http://www.equatorinitiative.org>

³ <http://www.fao.org/nr/giahs/en/>

An online portal site will be set up in order to provide information about the vision, perspectives and activities of the International *Satoyama* Initiative. Educational materials such as videos that convey information about the Initiative, lessons learnt and the measures derived from case studies will be posted on the portal site. Also, the organized measures as well as the database that is to be created (mentioned in 2 above) will be posted on the site. This should prove useful for enhancing information dissemination and capacity building. Alliances will also be forged with donor agencies in order to promote the formulation of the type of projects that might become model case studies.

(4) Development of an action plan for the Initiative

Based on (1) iii, the challenges relevant to maintenance and revitalization of *Satoyama*-like landscapes will be organized for discussion on global challenges and response measures. Based on this discussion, an action plan will be developed aimed at the revitalization of *Satoyama*-like landscapes.

<Framework for Advancing the International *Satoyama* Initiative>

This will be a partnership comprised of participating international agencies, national governments, local governments, civil societies, private companies, NPOs/NGOs, universities and other organizations that will work together for the purpose of maintenance and revitalization of *Satoyama*-like landscapes where human-nature relationships are more sustainable in the aspect of land and natural resources use/management. Those who participate in the Initiative will be encouraged to provide information about case studies of actual activities, to store information in the database and disseminate lessons derived from case studies, practical systems and technology to the database. Furthermore, regular meetings will be convened and the portal site that is to be established (mentioned in (3) above) will be utilized for promoting cooperation and information sharing between all partners.