

Discussion Paper II Reference

**【Perspectives on Land Usage & the Management & Utilization of Natural Resources】 \***

\*A summary of the issues that were discussed at the SATOYAMA Initiative International Workshop (convened in Tokyo on March 6, 2009)

**(1) Complex ecosystem-focused land usage**

- In view of the fact that the *satoyama*- like landscapes constitute veritable mosaics of different types of land use, the utilization of the land must be discussed from a broad-based perspective.
- When land is utilized, it is important that such usage is suited to the natural characteristics of that land, such as its topographical features and soil.
- It is also essential that the synergistic effects of productive activities (such as agriculture and forestry) are exploited to their maximum potential and that any conflict with these activities is kept to a minimum. For this reason, an integrated cross-sectional approach that covers the many diverse policies and sectors related to the various types of land usage is required. A perspective on the management of catchment area ecosystems, which are centered on water systems, is also essential.
- It is also imperative that the relationship between the land and nearby wilderness areas is paid due attention.

**(2) Sustainable utilization of resources in view of the carrying capacity of the environment and the resilience of nature**

- In order to ensure that natural resources such as water, soil, flora and fauna may continue to be utilized in future years, it is important that usage falls within the scope of the recuperative capacity of nature and the carrying capacity of the environment.
- For example, in accordance with the resilience of nature, dividing land into appropriately-sized usage segments and shifting between segments with suitable frequency.
- It is important to note that the recuperative capacity of nature and the carrying capacity of the environment will differ depending on the land in question and will also be impacted by past methods of land usage, management and occasional climate phenomena.
- Effective, easy-to-understand sustainability assessment indexes must be established and employed to monitor and assess land usage. Also essential is an accommodating management perspective that allows resource utilization methods to be flexibly revised based on the results of such assessments.
- We must work hard to develop policies and systems that link such notions of the resilience and dynamism of nature with each type of land usage and industry.

**(3) Usage, management and consensus-building by diverse stakeholders (“new commons”)**

- In the past, more often than not, the forests, grasslands and irrigation ponds in agricultural areas were utilized and managed on a shared basis by local communities. In recent years, the polarization of land ownership into public and private holdings has resulted in the emergence of an ever-increasing number of areas where such shared use and management of land is no longer practiced. However, in order to promote the sustainable use of resources, preserve biological diversity and conserve the ecosystem services provided by the land, it is absolutely imperative that local communities participate in these initiatives.
- The community-based approach, where communities play a leading role in a series of planning processes, from program formulation to actual management and assessment of the land, has been shown to be effective. Good examples are the establishment of committees composed mainly of local residents for managing land in accordance with “protected forest”, “usable forest” or “regeneration forest” zoning, or community forest initiatives that promote environmental education for the purpose of imparting knowledge to children about the utilization of local resources.
- On the other hand, it is also important that the many diverse stakeholders who are beneficiaries of the ecosystem services provided by the land participate actively in such initiatives, form alliances and practice consensus-building. It is imperative that urban consumers, companies, local government bodies, NGOs and other stakeholders share information for the purpose of managing ecosystems and the burden of any associated costs and manpower. New systems that are based on alliances between diverse stakeholders must be developed in order to manage the land. At such times, technical support will be absolutely crucial for raising community awareness, providing education and implementing initiatives.

**(4) Striking a balance between land management and the maintenance and development of local lifestyles, history and culture**

- Sustainable methods of utilizing land and managing resources are the product of the efforts of people who worked hard in those environments to efficiently and sustainably exploit the ecosystem services provided by the land to their maximum potential over a long period of time. For this reason, many of the things that need to be learned may be found in the systems employed by various communities in their traditional land and resource utilization practices.
- On the other hand, the forging of new, harmonious relationships between people and nature, relationships that are capable of adapting to the significant socio-economic changes that have occurred in recent years, are vital. In order for this to happen, the scientific rationale for such traditional land usage and resource management must be revealed and integrated with modern scientific techniques.
- When this happens, it is important that the ecosystem services provided by the land be reassessed for the

purpose of establishing initiatives that contribute to the enhancement of local economies through the creation of new value in local resources.

- For example, much attention should be focused on the development of eco-tourism and the environmentally-conscious utilization of biomass resources.
- It has become apparent that organic crops and other types of agriculture that are mindful of biodiversity issues are being embraced by the market and that they also generate added-value and lead to enhanced incomes for local residents.
- Respect for the history and culture of communities and their individual perspectives on nature is essential in order to produce unique benefits that are in context with such local history and culture.
- Thus, endeavors for sustainable use/management of natural resources and land must, in particular, be linked to improvement in the lives of local people and promote economic and cultural stability. It is particularly essential that such endeavors result in the alleviation of poverty.