



SATOYAMA  
INITIATIVE

# Summary Report of the Ninth Global Conference of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative

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**Date:** 8 – 11 July 2023

**Venue:** Akita International University, Akita, Akita Prefecture, Japan

**Co-organised by:** Secretariat of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative

(United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability);

Akita International University;

Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan

*(Conference costs borne by UNU-IAS were made possible through the financial contribution of the Ministry of the Environment, Japan)*

**Hosted by:** Akita International University

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## OVERVIEW



*IPSI-9 participants at the closing plenary. Photo by AIU.*

The Ninth Global Conference of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI-9) was held from 8 to 11 July 2023 at the Akita International University in Akita, Akita Prefecture, Japan. IPSI-9 was co-organised by the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) as host of the Secretariat of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI), and the Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MOEJ), and hosted by the Akita International University (AIU). Like previous IPSI Global Conferences, IPSI-9 consisted of a meeting of the IPSI General Assembly and a Public Forum. The Nineteenth Meeting of the IPSI Steering Committee (SC-19) was also held back-to-back with IPSI-9 on 11 September.

The IPSI General Assembly is made up of diverse IPSI member organisations, and its meeting at IPSI-9 was attended by 187 representatives of IPSI members from all over the world, plus UNCTAD as an observer, and members of the general public. The General Assembly covered several items related to the operations and strategic planning of IPSI, including reports from the IPSI Steering Committee, the Sub-Committee for the revision of the Strategy and Plan of Action, and the IPSI Secretariat. Discussions also resulted in IPSI's endorsement of the new 'Strategy and Plan of Action 2023-2030 of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative', which lays out five new strategic objectives to guide members and partners to contribute to implementing activities related to the Satoyama Initiative at the local, national, regional, and international levels and contribute to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The theme of the IPSI-9 Public Forum was 'Reshaping Our Future: Youth Empowerment and Contribution to Living in Harmony with Nature'. The event was co-organised by the IPSI Secretariat, the Global Youth Biodiversity Network, and the Akita International University and was well attended by

more than 100 participants from both IPSI members and non-members. The forum included presentations on IPSI's role in the GBF, the power of youth in the implementation of the GBF, and two panel sessions in which IPSI members discussed intergenerational knowledge transfer and barriers for youth engagement in socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS).

After the plenary and breakout sessions, participants were invited to study tours hosted by AIU to sites around the Akita Prefecture. Participants could observe activities related to traditional knowledge and production practices in addition to enjoying the local cultural landscape and foods.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The IPSI-9 General Assembly meeting was held on the morning of 8 July, with registration by 187 representatives from 90 IPSI member organisations. The meeting opened with welcome remarks by Shinobu Yume Yamaguchi, Director of the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS); Yoshitaka Kumagai, Vice President of AIU; Hideki Kawai, Deputy Director of MOEJ; and Hideyuki Jinbu, Vice Governor of Akita.

A provisional agenda and chair for the IPSI General Assembly were proposed by the IPSI Secretariat by email before IPSI-9, and both were adopted without objection before the conference took place. Kazuhiko Takeuchi, President of the Institute for Global Environmental Studies and Visiting Professor at UNU-IAS, acted as chair for the General Assembly.

Agenda Item 1 was a Report from the Chair of the IPSI Steering Committee. Steering Committee Chair, Oteng-Yeboah, reported on the new members accepted and collaborative activities endorsed since the last IPSI Global Conference, IPSI-8.

Agenda Item 2 was a report from the IPSI Secretariat on the various activities performed by the secretariat since 2019 and on ongoing and future projects. Makiko Yanagiya, Deputy Director of the IPSI Secretariat, reported on new modalities for the Satoyama Initiative Thematic Review (SITR) publication series and the Satoyama Development Mechanism (SDM). She also presented an overview of plans for future activities, such as events focused on ecosystem restoration contributing to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, implementing the new IPSI Strategy and Plan of Action (PoA), and revising the SEPLS resilience indicators.



*IPSI-9 speakers. From left to right: Yoshitaka Kumagai, Kazuhiko Takeuchi, Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, Hideyuki Jinbu, Shinobu Yume Yamaguchi, Yoko Watanabe, Hideki Kawai, Tsunao Watanabe. Photo by AIU.*



*IPSI members present at the opening plenary. Photo by UNU-IAS.*

Suneetha Subramanian, Research Fellow at the IPSI Secretariat, gave an overview of the upcoming guidance document on integrating landscape approaches into NBSAPs development and implementation that the secretariat is developing in collaboration with IGES and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Maiko Nishi, Research Fellow at the IPSI Secretariat, gave an overview of the eighth volume of SITR, which will be published in 2023 and is on the theme of 'Ecosystem Restoration through Managing SEPLS'.

Agenda Item 3 was a report from the sub-committee chair, Yoko Watanabe, on the new IPSI PoA. She presented the updated vision and mission and the five new strategic objectives: 1) Knowledge Co-Production, Management, and Uptake; 2) Institutional Frameworks and Capacity Development; 3) Area-Based Conservation Measures; 4) Ecosystem Restoration; 5) Sustainable Value Chain Development. The final item, Agenda Item 4, was guidance on the breakout sessions for the following day, after which the General Assembly was brought to a close by Prof. Takeuchi.

## PUBLIC FORUM



*Participants at the Public Forum. Photo by AIU.*

The IPSI-9 Public Forum was held on the afternoon of 8 July. The IPSI Public Forum is an event held at each IPSI Global Conference to share knowledge and inform the general public about IPSI and its activities. Participants are invited to hear presentations by IPSI members and others actively engaged in a wide variety of promising activities for the revitalisation and sustainable management of production landscapes and seascapes worldwide, and to engage in lively discussion.

The IPSI Global Conference's Public Forum aims to (1) strengthen collaboration and synergies among IPSI members and other relevant initiatives and programs and (2) enhance understanding and raise awareness of the importance of socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS). Over 180 people were present for the event.

The theme of the IPSI-9 Public Forum was ‘Reshaping Our Future: Youth Empowerment and Contribution to Living in Harmony with Nature’. The event discussed how to engage young people to advance local and global conservation efforts.

The Public Forum started with opening remarks by Shinobu Yume Yamaguchi, Director of the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability; Monte Cassis, President of the Akita International University; and Christian Schwarzer, Co-founder of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network.

Two keynote presentations were given. The first presentation was by Alexandra Franco, Communications Associate at UNU-IAS and the IPSI Secretariat, on the role of the Satoyama Initiative for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Introducing the mission and objectives of IPSI, she explained that it aimed to support the implementation of the GBF by promoting sustainable production, traditional knowledge, and community engagement.

The second keynote speech was by Melina Sakiyama, Co-founder of GYBN, on ‘The Power of Youth in the Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework’. She stated that young people sought a fundamental, system-wide strategic reorganisation across sectors, emphasising that society lacked a good understanding of how to work with youth. She added that youth engagement should avoid tokenism and must acknowledge diversity among youth voices and experiences.

The keynote speeches were followed by two panel sessions, with experts from all over the world, with discussions focused on the potential of youth engagement in promoting socio-ecological production landscapes (SEPLS), intergenerational knowledge transfer, and overcoming barriers to youth engagement. Panellists discussed the urban–rural divide, the lack of universal access to technology, and the reluctance to include youth in decision-making due to lack of experience. Solutions proposed included mentorship programmes; opportunities to participate in local policymaking; workshops, and collaborative projects to gain practical experience; and financial support for youth-led conservation efforts. Speakers agreed that age was not the only dimension of youth — rather, open-minded attitudes and enthusiasm are needed to solve the biodiversity crisis.



The first panel session was made up of Katsuki Onishi, President of Akita Satoyama Design; Kien To Dang, Program Coordinator of the Social Policy Ecology Research Institute; Nutdanai Trakansuphakon, Coordinator of the Pgakenyaw Association for Sustainable Development; Jasmine Black, JSPS Researcher of the University of Tokyo and UN University; and Griselda Alvarado of GYBN Latin America and the Caribbean region.

*Panelists of the first panel session. Photo by UNU-IAS.*

Panellists of the second panel session were Daksh Beeharry Panray, Vice President and Project Leader of the Environmental Protection and Conservation Organisation; Hsi-Chun Chen, Engineer of the Soil and Water Conservation Bureau, Council of Agriculture Executive Yuan; Paulina Karimova, Post-doc Researcher at the National Dong Hwa University; Hideki Kawai, Deputy Director of the Ministry of the Environment Japan; and Irene Natukunda from GYBN Uganda region.



Panelists of the second panel session. Photo by UNU-IAS.

Closing remarks were given by Kazuhiko Takeuchi, President of the Institute for Global Environmental Studies and Visiting Professor, UNU-IAS; Irene Natukunda from GYBN; Akitoshi Inoue, a student from AIU; and Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, Chair of the Ghana National Biodiversity Committee and the IPSI Steering Committee.

## BREAKOUT SESSIONS

On July 9th, IPSI-9 attendees were divided into five groups for detailed discussions on the themes of the new strategic objectives. Before this, the morning plenary showcased case studies from IPSI members, which included the BioTrade Initiative from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Asian Development Bank's ecosystem restoration activities, and two SDM-funded projects. The presentations can be found on the IPSI website, click [here](#).



Isao Endo from the Asian Development Bank. Photo/UNU-IAS.



Lika Sasaki from UNCTAD. Photo/UNU-IAS.



Anara Alymkulova from ISDS. Photo/UNU-IAS.



Bibiana Vila from VICAM. Photo/UNU-IAS.

Facilitators from each thematic discussion summarised group discussions in the plenary. Some of the main issues discussed during the breakout sessions, IPSI members noted the need to integrate knowledge systems, such as inter-generational knowledge transfer and cross-learning between members, clarify concepts and objectives within IPSI, raise awareness of the SEPLS concept among decision-makers, and strengthen social and financial capital to support SEPLS actors.



Photos by UNU-IAS.

## CLOSING PLENARY

A closing plenary was held on 11 July to give final reports on outcomes from the Public Forum and adopt the IPSI Strategy and Plan of Action 2023-2030.



Presentation by Melina Sakiyama. Photo by UNU-IAS.

First, Melina Sakiyama, Co-founder of GYBN, reported on the outputs of the Public Forum and gave recommendations for further cooperation and engagement between youth and IPSI. Among their recommendations were providing targeted support to youth groups such as IPLC youth, women youth, and other marginalised youth communities; including specific actions focusing on youth in IPSI PoA; and including youth in IPSI committees. GYBN also added actions they could do to support IPSI, like enabling spaces for intergenerational dialogues, co-creating communications materials to improve the visibility of SEPLS, and assisting in enhancing youth participation in the design and implementation of IPSI projects.



Isato Kunisada. Photo by UNU-IAS.

The IPSI Secretariat reported on the final changes made to the strategy and plan of action based on discussions during the conference. The new IPSI Strategy and Plan of Action 2023-2030 was adopted.

Closing remarks were given by Isato Kunisada, State Minister of MOEJ; Monte Cassin, President of AIU; Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, Chair of the Ghana National Biodiversity Committee and the IPSI Steering Committee; and Tsunao Watanabe, Director of IPSI Initiative Secretariat.