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Office of Communications
53-70, Jingumae 5-chome
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8925
Japan

Tel.: +81-3-5467-1212
Fax: +81-3-3499-2828
E-mail: media@unu.edu
Website: <http://www.unu.edu/>

UNU to Host Symposium on Sub-global Assessment of *Satoyama* and *Satoumi* in Japan

- Event:** International Symposium “Sub-global Assessment of *Satoyama* and *Satoumi* in Japan: Launching the Cluster Findings towards CBD/COP-10”
- Date:** 23 May (Sunday), 1:30 – 5:30 PM
- Venue:** U Thant International Conference Hall, UN University Headquarters, Tokyo
- Organizer:** United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS)
- Co-organizer:** Ministry of the Environment, Japan
- Cooperator:** Global Environment Outreach Centre (GEOC)

Satoyama, commonly found in rural areas in Japan, encompasses various ecosystems along with human settlements that have been formed and maintained through prolonged interaction between humans and the ecosystems. This interactive concept also has extended to *satoumi*, which includes marine and coastal ecosystems that have similar functions and interactive mechanisms. *Satoyama* and *satoumi* contribute in significant ways to human well-being by providing material and non-material services; however, a variety of factors — including increased rural–urban migration, land-use conversion, abandonment of cultivation activities, trade, and advancement of science and technology — are causing extensive degradation and loss of *satoyama* and *satoumi*. Such changes to the ecosystems and their services are not peculiar to Japan, but are part of the global trends reported by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA).

The Sub-global Assessment of *Satoyama* and *Satoumi* in Japan (Japan SGA) was launched in 2007 to assess the ecosystem services derived from *satoyama* and *satoumi* and to provide a scientific base for conservation and sustainable management actions. Following the MA approach, it represents a major multi-stakeholder effort; more than 170 authors and stakeholders took part in the assessment process, which was conducted based around policy-relevant issues and users’ needs.

The open process and the bottom-up approach of this SGA have led to the selection of a variety of assessment sites that have been grouped into five major clusters across Japan. The assessment findings are expected to be used in local and national plans, strategies and policies, and will contribute to relevant international processes. In particular, it is intended to provide substantive inputs to *Satoyama* Initiative, through which the SGA will feed into the Tenth Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/COP10), to be held in Japan in October 2010. The *Satoyama* Initiative is an international effort to promote the concept of socio-ecological production landscapes – a part of which is *satoyama* and *satoumi* in Japan – for worldwide application to realize societies in harmony with nature.

The symposium will begin with three introductory presentations by Prof. Thomas Elmqvist of Stockholm University, Prof. Koji Nakamura of Kanazawa University (Science Assessment Panel Co-chair for the Japan SGA), and by Ms. Fumiko Nakao of UNU-IAS. Prof. Kazuhiko Takeuchi of UNU (Board Co-chair for the Japan SGA) will then chair a panel discussion to discuss the cluster assessments’ findings and significance with the focus on their contributions to the CBD/COP10, in which the first two presenters will be joined by the Japan SGA cluster co-chairs/coordinators including Dr. Junko Morimoto of Hokkaido University, Prof. Takaaki Koganezawa of Miyagi University of Education, Prof. Tatsuhiro Ohkubo of Utsunomiya University, Prof. Yukihiro Morimoto of Kyoto University, and Prof. Osamu Matsuda of the Research Institute for the Seto Inland Sea.

Simultaneous Japanese– English interpretation will be provided. For those who are unable to attend, the symposium will be webcast live (and archived) at <http://videportal.unu.edu/event/52>.

Media representatives are cordially invited to attend. Please contact Ms. Hanano Sasaki, UNU-IAS (tel: 045-221-2332; e-mail: sasaki@ias.unu.edu) to reserve your space.

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