

ISAP SESSION SUMMARY 7

PL-8: Green Economy and *Satoyama* Initiative: Building Resilient Societies at the Local Level

Wednesday, 24 July 2013, 10:00

In times of rapid social and environmental change, ecosystems can be highly vulnerable, with serious consequences for the local livelihoods and ecological integrity. Options for building resilient societies to respond to external drivers are thus needed. A green economy is one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. The *Satoyama* Initiative aims to conserve sustainable human-influenced natural environments, or Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS) through broader global recognition of their value. Given the advantages of SEPLS, which support subsistence while generating incomes and regulating ecosystem services, this session explored how the *Satoyama* Initiative can contribute to strengthening the resilience of SEPLS and building a green economy at the local level.

Prof. Abdul Hamid Zakri, IPBES, spoke on the links between the IPBES and the Green Economy. IPBES aims to provide sound science for policy decision-making, through prioritization and identification of key policy measures, regular assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and support for policy formulation and implementation. He highlighted the issue of valuing nature as an important element of discussions in IPBES. He also pointed out that the local communities, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, can serve as microcosms for bridging different knowledge systems in order to develop solutions that are relevant at local scales.

Prof. Kazuhiko Takeuchi, UNU, introduced the relationship between SEPLS and the Green Economy. He highlighted three essential elements of SEPLS: building resilience, establishing a new commons through co-management systems between rural and urban populations, and creating new business models based on natural capital. He explained that the *Satoyama* Initiative is working with developed and developing country partners to facilitate collective action.

Mr. Naoya Furuta, IUCN, spoke on ecosystem-based solutions for disaster risk reduction. He pointed out that biodiversity and ecosystem services are closely linked to risk reduction, but tend to be forgotten in discussions. He highlighted that ecosystems, such as well-managed SEPLS, are more cost efficient than green infrastructure, and can provide benefits under normal conditions.

Ms. Yoshiko Mikasa, Toyooka City, introduced the successful development of sustainable agriculture in Toyooka City using habitat conservation of Oriental White Storks as a flagship species. She explained that Toyooka City established a strategy for environmental economy in order to promote awareness among consumers and to market sustainably produced rice. This has brought success, with 505 shops across Japan now selling sustainably produced rice from Toyooka City, as well as the replication of similar measures across Japan.

Key messages of the session

This session illustrated the need for a paradigm shift towards sustainable ecosystem management, which requires a shift in values and the way we measure them. The speakers explained that bridging different knowledge systems with scientific knowledge will be vital for building a green economy at the local level. High value-addition to agricultural products is also an essential aspect for coexistence of biodiversity and agriculture, and will provide incentives for the business sector and consumers. Speakers concluded that local initiatives are important for demonstrating resilience and coexistence with nature, as well as for sharing lessons in order to disseminate good practices.

