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HOT ISSUE: Event Report

Discussions on Climate Change in Developing Countries

JICA-RI Visiting Research Fellow, Ryo Fujikura, and his team of international experts gather in London, UK, to hold a workshop on a climate change study. Discussions include climate change adaptation, capacity development assistance in Asia, and more.

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Ryo Fujikura (far right) with team in London



Reviews

Resource Governance & a More Social Perspective on Natural Resources

Visiting Research Fellow, Jin Sato, shares his thoughts on state influence on the control of natural resources, and the “bureaucratization of nature.”

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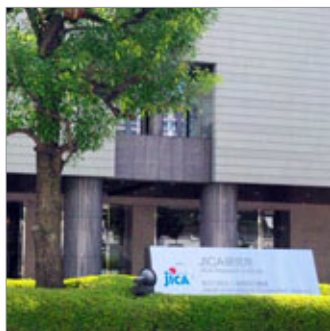


Previews

International Symposium on Japan-German Development Cooperation

Join international leaders and experts of the political and development world as they convene at this symposium, hosted by JICA-RI on November 7.

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Special

JICA-RI: One Year On

For JICA-RI's one-year anniversary, we interviewed JICA-RI Director Tsunekawa about the past studies and progress of research, as well as on trends surrounding international cooperation.

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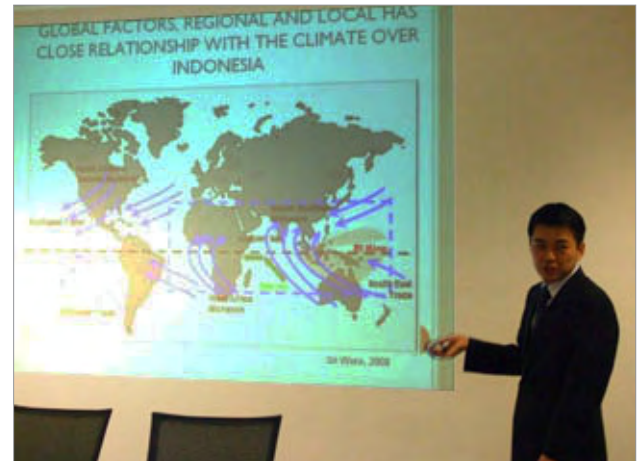
A Workshop on Climate Change Adaptation

Climate change adaptation was the theme of the JICA-RI workshop held on September 8 and 9 at the JICA office in the United Kingdom. Ryo Fujikura, JICA-RI Visiting Research Fellow and project leader, met with his team so they could update each other on progress of their ongoing project, "Adaptation to Climate Change in Developing Countries." The event also allowed them to present and discuss the project's finer points through an exchange of ideas and opinions.

Through this project, Fujikura and his team aim to guide public policy by anticipating the effects of climate change on Asian and African countries and analyzing how best to deal with them, thus fostering climate change adaptation in developing countries.

The workshop was attended by 12 team members who traveled from 6 different countries. Among them were the co-writers of the research papers: Masato Kawanishi, JICA Senior Advisor and Consulting Fellow, Dr. Lawrence Flint of the international NPO Environment and Development Action in the Third World (ENDA), and Professor Mohamed Hamza of the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI). During the workshop, a variety of topics were discussed based on case studies presented by each of the participants. They included institutions and climate policies, evaluation of water risks, and bilateral cooperation.

Kawanishi, using a Javanese farming technique as a case-in-point, illustrated how collecting rainfall from the rainy season and using it during the dry season



Kawanishi presents on climate change

when most needed can safeguard against the effects of climate change. Dr. Flint spoke on climate change adaptation on the community level with Africa as an example. Professor Hamza presented a case about "environmental refugees," victims of forced migration due to climate change.

Throughout the workshop discussions, three points of importance were highlighted with respect to climate change adaptation policy: First, understanding the economic capacity and idiosyncrasies of each local community is crucial. Second, climate specialists today are able to provide only long term, wide-area predictions, whereas local people are interested mainly in changes that pertain immediately to them in the short term. The information gap created from this scenario must be bridged. Finally the creation of information networks through which experiential data can be shared locally, regionally, and globally might benefit climate change adaptation by uniting climate experts and local people.

Regarding the workshop as a whole, Fujikura said it was substantive and satisfactory due to the high level of research outcomes that were presented and discussed. The workshop results will serve as the basis for the team's working paper which Fujikura hopes will make a meaningful contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), to be released by 2014.

This paper and works on other regions will be compiled into a book to be published by the end of 2010.



Lawrence Flint of ENDA presents
(Photo by: Yuu Shibata)

Where Natural and Social Sciences Meet: Resource Governance in the Middle

JICA-RI Visiting Research Fellow, Jin Sato, is working on a multidisciplinary approach to the study of natural resources that draws on both natural and social sciences. The relationship between natural resources and social structures has often been overlooked by researchers, Sato argues.

As project leader of a study entitled “Resource Governance & Public Action: Evolution and Space for Local People in a Cross-National Perspective,” Sato, along with a team of researchers as well as co-authors, are examining the historical expansion and process of state influence on the control of resources in Asia. One aim is to determine how these factors have resulted in both bureaucratic confrontation and cooperation among administrative agencies, and to better understand the decision-making mechanisms under these circumstances. By doing so, the team hopes to develop a framework in support of these mechanisms.

This project is unique in two ways, says Sato.

First, the research team includes experts in many areas in both natural and social sciences such as law, engineering, political science, and area studies. This collective and multidisciplinary approach is an attempt to tear down traditional academic boundaries and overcome institutional fragmentation, Sato says. The ecological study of forests in developing nations, for example, also requires a study of the land issues as well as consideration of the local people.

The second unique feature of his study is its emphasis on government and administrative agencies. One great asset of JICA-RI, according to Sato, is its well-established connection with governmental bodies around the world. Sato is reviewing government policy in an effort to trace the evolution of resource governance. Parts of his project are done jointly with policymakers in Thailand. These officials jointly

author research papers on different topics within the study.

Sato’s research encompasses three countries. He attended a field trip to Thailand in August, where he investigated the historical evolution of governance systems and the “bureaucratization of nature.” Thailand was a logical choice for his study, he says, since it was never colonized by Western powers – as opposed to Indonesia, the second country of his investigation. His third choice, Japan, like Thailand, was never colonized, but it is heavily influenced by the West. In comparing the history, resource endowments and population differences among the three, Sato hopes to create a framework for a better model to govern natural resources.

Sato argues that topics in economics are well-recognized fields of study and most people readily understand what is being done or can relate to it. The study of natural resources in social scientific terms requires further explanation. Sato’s overarching goal is to change the general mindset that natural resources fall under the natural sciences only and not under socio-political ones.



A Thai village. Governance of natural resources inevitably involves governance of people.

International Symposium on Japan-German Development Cooperation

Advocates of Japanese and German development cooperation will convene November 7 in the JICA-RI International Conference Room for an international symposium entitled “Challenges for State-building in Asia: Global Responsibility in Development Cooperation of Japan and Germany.” Sponsors of the symposium are JICA, the Japanese-German Center Berlin, and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Foundation of Germany.

The event will be a follow-up to the Japan-German symposium held in Berlin in January of this year and is expected to further promote cooperation between the two countries in international development. It will be attended by key figures in the field from both countries, including policy makers, diplomats, those involved in international development and the media. World Bank representatives, and other professionals and academics from Asian countries also will attend.

The main purposes of the symposium are to share information on actual efforts undertaken by Japan and Germany in the areas of human security and nation-building, to consider experiences and lessons from Japan-German cooperation in development work in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia, and to discuss future initiatives.

A keynote address by JICA President Sadako Ogata will start the symposium. This will be followed by three sessions: “Germany’s and Japan’s Roles in the State-building Process,” “German and Japanese Development Cooperation in and with Southeast Asia,” and “German and Japanese Development Cooperation in and with Afghanistan.”

Presentations will be made and discussions for the sessions will be led by Keiichi Tsunekawa, JICA-RI Director, Masataka Nakahara, JICA Southeast Asia Department Director General, Shigeyuki Hiroki, Japanese Ambassador to Afghanistan, Birgit Schnieber-Jastram, member of the European Union Parliamentary Committee on Development, and Wolfgang Schmidt, Deutsche Gesellschaft

für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) Managing Director.

From Asian countries, presentations on nation building in Cambodia, Indonesia and Afghanistan will be made, respectively, by Cambodia’s Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce Cham Prasidh, by the Indonesian Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Foundation Jusuf Wanandi, and by former Interior Minister of Afghanistan Ali Ahmad Jalali. One session will be chaired by World Bank Special Representative and Director of the World Development Report on Conflict and Fragility, Sarah Cliffe.

This symposium is open to the public, and registration can now be made via the [JICA](#) and [JICA-RI](#) websites.

Special

JICA-RI: One Year On

A year has passed since a new JICA was established by integrating the former JICA and the overseas economic cooperation division of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) on October 1, 2008. On that day, JICA Research Institute was also established combining the research functions of both organizations.

As political and economic situations continue to change in Japan and around the world, what kinds of roles should JICA-RI play? In commemoration of its one-year anniversary, Director Keiichi Tsunekawa talks about ongoing studies and progress of research as well as recent trends surrounding international cooperation and development. Visit the [JICA-RI website](#) to learn more.