

Day 3, Wednesday, 26 August 2009:

Symposium 5: *Satoyama* – A socio ecological production landscape approach to the sustainable use of ecosystem services and human development

Organized by Maiko Nishi, Scientific Assessment Coordinator, United Nations University, Japan and Anantha Duraippah, DEPI, UNEP

Report by Rebecca Selvarajah-Jaffery

Satoyama is a Japanese term for rural landscapes that comprise several types of ecosystems including secondary forests, agricultural lands, irrigation ponds, and grasslands, along with human settlements. These landscapes have been formed and developed through prolonged interaction between humans and ecosystems. It is considered that *Satoyama* comprises more than 40 per cent of Japan's total landmass. Importantly, *Satoyama* connotes a way of life illustrating the symbiotic interaction between humans and the environment, as central to the management of the ecosystems in *Satoyama* for the sustainable supply of ecosystem services essential for human well-being.

Prof Mohan Kumar from the Kerala Agricultural University compared Agroforestry in the Western Ghats of Peninsular India with the *Satoyama* landscapes of Japan. Masataka Watanabe from the UN University presented on the ecosystem services provided by *Satoyama*. Takakazu Yumoto from the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), highlighted the cultural service provided by *Satoyama* landscapes, and their role in biodiversity conservation. Yoshihiro Natori, also from the UN University spoke on the International *Satoyama* Initiative. Daizaburo Kuroda, Senior Councilor to the Minister of the Environment Japan was also present and made some remarks.

Prof Kumar started off by comparing the Agroforestry practices in the Western Ghats of Peninsular India with *Satoyama* landscapes in Japan. He presented the salient attributed of each, compared similarities and differences, and discussed possibilities for transferability of concepts and contributions between the two systems.

Watanabe then presented *Satoyama* in detail, showing the major components of the system and the contributions – products and services, including cultural ones. *Satoyama* landscapes currently

cover roughly 43% of Japan's landscapes. Globalisation and Urbanisation were cited as the main reasons why *Satoyama* landscapes are altering over time. Watanabe concluded by asking what the value of *Satoyama* systems are and what possible role they could play in Climate Change adaptation and mitigation.

The third speaker, Yumoto, delved deeper into the cultural services of *Satoyama* landscapes and their role in biodiversity conservation. He also gave historical examples of the use and value of *Satoyama* landscapes. Daizaburo Kuroda, Senior Councilor to the Minister of the Environment Japan, then remarked that he looked forward to seeing how Agroforestry perspectives could be linked to *Satoyama* landscapes to make them more applicable to today's challenges.

Yoshihiro Natori then talked about the International *Satoyama* Initiative. *Satoyama*-like landscape can contribute to the improvement of livelihoods - especially in developing countries - as well as the resolving of global issues such as food security, poverty and climate change. Therefore the government of Japan proposes the International *Satoyama* Initiative - to disseminate the concept of living in harmony with nature. The vision, objectives, and timelines were presented in detail and meeting dates were provided.

Q&A Session

The questions from the floor mainly centred on the intrinsic value of *Satoyama*, in light of today's global challenges. Japan is a net importer of food, and the *satoyama* landscapes do not focus on food production as the key output. If *Satoyama* landscapes are to be transferred to developing countries – how do we merge the idea of living in harmony with nature, with the objective of producing food from the same landscapes? Can we combine the thrust on protection of landscapes and biodiversity with an equal thrust on food production? Other questions included the transferability of *Satoyama* principles to east Africa, specifically Kenya. Delegates also asked about integrating *Satoyama* principles into dryland landscapes.