

Concept and Practices of Satoyama Satoumi Sub-Global Assessment in Japan

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In 2000, then United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for a scientific-based assessment of the state of the world's ecosystems. The following year, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) was initiated, and for the next 4 years over 1,300 experts across the globe were asked to assess the changes in ecosystems and the consequences of those changes to human well-being. Published in 2006, the MA framework has since been applied to continued ecosystem assessment analyses as follow-up work to the MA.

Efforts in Japan to join other sub-global ecosystem assessment work gained momentum in 2006 and scoping for a Japan Sub-Global Assessment (Japan SGA) was initiated by the Ecosystem Assessment programme at the United Nations University-Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS). In the fall of 2007, geographically delineated assessment teams referred to as clusters were formed and the Satoyama Satoumi Sub-Global Assessment (Japan SGA) began. The findings are to be published in the months leading up to the Tenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10) in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010 in an effort to contribute to global discussions of biodiversity and sustainability.

This paper will introduce the governance structure of the Japan SGA along with the conceptual framework of the MA. This will be followed by exploration of the scoping process, specifically why satoyama and satoumi were selected as the focus for the Japan SGA, examining evolving working definitions of the concepts. Satoyama satoumi concept examination will be followed by a look at assessment efforts of the Hoku-Shinetsu Cluster. Working closely with non-academic stakeholders to collect data of satoyama satoumi over the last 50 years, this cluster applies a bottom-up approach. The strengths, limitations and potentials of multi-stakeholder bottom-up assessments will be identified in hopes to provide insight into future potentials of bottom-up approaches to ecosystem assessment in areas where financial and human capacity may be limited.

One of the overarching aims of the Japan SGA is to link the findings to effective comprehensive policy making both at the local, regional and national levels in Japan. Further, the Japan SGA aims to link their findings to other SGA efforts around the globe, contributing to global discussions of sustainable resource use and conservation based on culturally diverse approaches which effectively combine traditional ecological knowledge with environmentally sound science and technologies. Whether or not the Japan SGA achieves these aims cannot be answered until the



report is completed in 2010, however for the purposes of this paper, the potentials of satoyama satoumi assessments in Japan will be explored in hopes to identify common challenges and solutions of sustainable marine resource use, management and conservation that integrate locally-specific and universally applicable approaches.