

**Report on the mutual exchange program of young scholars in Integrated Area Studies by using Field Station (Kyoto University, 1<sup>st</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2009)**

*Hla Maung Thein,*  
**University of Forestry, Myanmar**

I will frankly say that the word or the theme of the program “Toward Sustainable Humansphereis” which is quite new word and theme to me. Even though it is still confusing and need more time to study insights, but now I am getting clear that what is “humansphere” and “sustainability of humansphere”, because I have realized various issues learning on humansphere, biosphere and geosphere from both of the exchange program and symposium.

I would like to put a few words deal with present condition of environment even though everybody realizes about it because of being prerequisite to be aware. The natural resources specifically the forests have a feature of human’s existence and provided human’s basic needs and the homeland of millions of peoples. But the forests are rapidly disappearing and have led to environmental problems in terms of climate change, frequent flood, cyclone, earthquake, land slide and erosion, water and air pollution, habitat destruction and biodiversity degradation. It is mainly due to impact of increasing population and their demands. Consequently humansphere is very insecure and unsustainable situation linked with Biosphere and Geosphere. One example, it was very regrettable event: huge numbers of people were damaged in Myanmar because of severe cyclone “Nagis”. Therefore every country is becoming increasingly aware of the need to balance economic development and sustainable uses of natural resources and our environment to be secure humansphere. The fact is that natural resource conservation and proper management is definitely crucial to create the sustainable humansphere. It is absolutely important in obtaining knowledge on the whole spectrum of all factors in term of social, economical and ecological factors with broaden expect of sustainable humansphere.

Regarding this, researchers from various countries in this program have gathered over the two weeks to exchange information, knowledge, experience, discussion and link each other to be deep consideration on the sustainability of humansphere. I have learnt a lot of things from this exchange program workshop and symposium through the sharing experience among the participants and particularly discussion with scientists from Japan.

During the excursions and general observation around Kyoto, I have seen and learnt the Hozu river conservation and its historical events and current activities, the traditional life style of rural Japanese people in Miyama, general information of Shiga prefecture, the

activities of Environmental research center of Biwa Lake in terms of water quality research, the situation of population change between native and non-native fish species and its measures for the restoration of native fish species and exhibition in Biwa Lake Museum, which were very interesting to me. Moreover, I am very much appreciated to the communities that the fisher men and the people living near the lake have recognized that forest habitats play a significant role to conserve biodiversity, clean water resources and environment in Biwa Lake and their efforts for the conservation and restoration the forest in Biwa watershed. By observing in excursion, I am very impressed on culture, historical life style of rural people, traditional food and the economic development.

Although the program is really quite perfect, my sincere suggestion has two points. Firstly, field of study in the program should be more specific to be insights discussion and clear way of resolution among the professionals. Secondly, JSPS should take into consideration the equality of assistance to the resource persons to be active participation because they are almost equal contribution to the program.

It is my hope that there would emerge from the program positive steps forward to exchange and cooperate among the participants continuously so that we can work together to ensure a healthier environment and a better quality of life towards to our goal of sustainable humanosphere in future. I believe not only to me but all the participants the program and symposium are very helpful, valuable, enjoyable and productive courses. So the participants do bring a worthwhile exchange of ideas, fruitful deliberation, new knowledge and friendships as well as the step forward to a closer cooperation among different parts of area studies and positively contribution to promote the sustainable development of individual area study. The lessons from the program remind me of our future endeavor, what should have to be done. Particularly, what my expectation is that close collaboration between University of Forestry and Kyoto University will consistently continue for area study.

In conclusion, I will say again that I really feel very much impressive on the focusing the establishment of the sustainable humanosphere. At the same time, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to JSPS and co-organized agencies CSEAS, ASAFAS for giving the opportunity to join the program and all the people who kindly support and help me during my stay in Japan.