



Sustainable Japan Award 2022

Ceremony and panel sessions with award winners

Opening remarks by Chairperson Suematsu

Minako Suematsu
CHAIRPERSON AND PRESIDENT,
THE JAPAN TIMES CO. LTD.

The Japan Times' fourth Sustainable Japan Award ceremony on Sept. 15 was opened with remarks from Minako Suematsu, the chairperson of The Japan Times Publishing Ltd.

She began by giving a brief history of The Japan Times and its role in society not simply as a news publisher, but also as the oldest English-language newspaper focused on introducing aspects of Japanese culture to the



world. Japanese consider reservedness and silence virtues, and this may be one of the reasons why so many sustainability initiatives at Japanese companies have gone unnoticed in the media, she said. To help remedy this, the judging for the awards placed emphasis not on flashy new plans, but on the quiet steady progress that companies have already been making toward sustainability, away from the attention of the

main media outlets. Suematsu said the ability to make culture part of the conversation on sustainability is one of the things that set The Japan Times apart. In closing, she expressed her gratitude to the judges, her congratulations to the award recipients, and her fervent hope that the initiatives on display at the ceremony would serve as stellar examples to lead the entire world in sustainability efforts.

株式会社ジャパントイムズ主催、第4回サステナブル・ジャパン・アワードの表彰式が、ジャパントイムズ代表取締役会長兼社長 末松弥奈子の挨拶で開会した。冒頭、末松は日本最古の英字新聞として、政治や経済はもちろん、伝統芸能から映画、そして食なども

含めて、その時代時代の日本について、英語で国内外に発信することで社会に果たす役割を語った。多くの日本企業は、持続可能な社会にむけた真摯な取り組みを続けているが、その活動や成果を発信することが十分にできていないと主張。このサステナブル・

ジャパン・アワードでは、新しい取り組みよりも、誰かに気づかれる前から、地道に、そして継続して活動をし、成果を積み重ねてきた企業や団体にフォーカスし、その功績を表彰している。受賞者には、国内はもとより、世界の様々な地域で

持続可能な社会の実現に取り組む方々へ参考になる活動だと述べ、ジャパントイムズとして、しっかり世界に伝えていくと表明した。最後に、このアワードの趣旨に賛同し、実直に審査してくれた審査員に感謝を述べた。

Finance Minister Suzuki calls for promoting sustainable finance

Shunichi Suzuki
MINISTER OF FINANCE, MINISTER OF STATE
FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND MINISTER
IN CHARGE OF OVERCOMING DEFLATION

Japanese Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki sent a video message as an honored guest. In the message, he touched on the U.N. sustainable development goals and the Paris Agreement, an international framework for

combating global warming. "Making our society sustainable has become a major challenge," he said. "In order to encourage a shift to new industries and social structures, sustainable finance to realize a sustainable society is essential."



"We [as a financial regulator] position sustainable finance as an infrastructure that supports a sustainable economic society" he said, adding that agency staff members "are discussing measures in monetary administration" to promote sustainable finance. In 2002, Suzuki was involved in discussions in preparation for the Kyoto Protocol in his former capacity as the minister of the environment. Now, two decades on, the fight against climate change is an "urgent issue

across the globe," for which the Japanese government has pledged to make Japan carbon neutral by 2050, according to Suzuki. "We are actively working on initiatives," he said. Suzuki also referred to the "role of finance to support transition" of companies to become greener, which has been increasingly attracting attention since a few years ago.

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鈴木俊一財務相は来賓としてビデオメッセージを寄せた。「SDGs (持続可能な開発目標)」や地球温暖化対策の国際枠組みである「パリ協定」の採択などに触れ、「持続可能な社会の構築が大きな課題となっている」と現状を改めて説明。「新たな産業・社会構造への転換

を促し、持続可能な社会を実現するためのサステナブルファイナンスの推進が不可欠だ」との認識を示した。鈴木財務相は、「(金融当局として) 我々はサステナブルファイナンスを『持続可能な経済社会システムを支えるインフラ』として位置付けている」と紹介。サス

テナブルファイナンス推進のため、「金融行政における諸施策について議論を行っている」と述べた。2002年には、環境大臣として京都議定書の発効に向けた議論に携わっていた。それから20年が経ったいま、気候変動対策は「全世界で喫緊の課題」であり、

日本政府も21年に「カーボンニュートラル2050」を掲げ「精力的に取り組んでいる」という。また、近年特に注目が高まる「トランジションを支援する金融の役割」に言及し、「いわゆるトランジションファイナンスの重要性は国際社会でも共通認識と

METI official calls for funding decarbonization and growth

Yojiro Hatakeyama
DIRECTOR-GENERAL, INDUSTRIAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY, ENVIRONMENT BUREAU, MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, TRADE AND INDUSTRY

In his address as an honored guest, Yojiro Hatakeyama, the Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry's director-general of industrial science and technology policy in the Environment Bureau, said he aims to both solve environmental issues and achieve economic growth at the same time and put effort into developing a public-private environment that encourages the provision of funds for that purpose.

The Japanese government has pledged to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by 46% from fiscal 2013 levels by 2030 as part of its goal of making Japan carbon neutral by 2050. Measures to combat climate change have become an important issue for

経済産業省の畠山陽二郎・産業技術環境局長は来賓あいさつで登壇し、環境面での課題解決と経済成長の両立を目指し、そのための資金供給を促す環境整備に注力すると述べた。

日本政府は2050年のカーボンニュートラル実現に向け、30年度までに温室効果ガス排出を13年度比で46%減とする国際公約を掲げる。気候変動対策が世界的な課



the global community. Environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) investing has grown to total about \$35 trillion globally.

"Some companies are actively working to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and are attracting ESG funds and achieving growth," he said. "It is very important for this model

題となり、ESG（環境・社会・企業統治）投資額が世界で35兆ドル規模に拡大するなか、「二酸化炭素（CO2）排出削減に積極的に取り組む企業がESG資金を呼び込み、成長につながるというモデルが、当たり前ようになっていくことが非常に大事だ」と力をめた。

国内では、今後10年間に官民で約150兆円の投資が必要とされる。畠山・産技局長は、ESG投資とあわせて

to become the norm."

In Japan, combined public- and private-sector investment totaling about ¥150 trillion (\$1 trillion) is estimated to be necessary over the next decade.

As examples of efforts to develop a public-private environment that encourages the provision of funds required for reducing

CO2排出削減に必要な資金供給を促す環境整備の例として、「気候関連財務情報開示タスクフォース（TCFD）提言に関連するガイダンスの策定」や「TCFD提言の実践上の課題を議論するサミット開催などを通じた積極的な開示の促進」「多排出産業が脱炭素と成長の両立を実現するためのトランジションファイナンスの促進」を挙げた。「経済社会全般をサステナブルなものにしていくには、

carbon emissions, along with ESG investing, Hatakeyama cited "designing of guidance regarding the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures' recommendations," "promotion of active disclosure by organizing summits where issues in putting TCFD recommendations into practice are discussed" and "promotion of transition finance to help high-carbon companies achieve both decarbonization and growth."

"In order to make economic society as a whole sustainable, we need to drastically alter business models or behaviors of each and every citizen," he said.

"The key is to create a system under which sustainable efforts are evaluated appropriately," Hatakeyama said. "In that sense, the Sustainable Japan Award will play an important role."

He expressed hope that the award event will help accelerate efforts and investments in this area.

ビジネスモデルあるいは国民一人一人の行動を大きく変えていく必要がある」と指摘する。「サステナブルな取り組みが適正に評価される仕組み作りがポイントだ。その意味でサステナブル・ジャパン・アワードは重要な役割を果たしていく」と述べ、表彰イベントをきっかけに同分野の取り組みや投資が加速化されることに期待した。



Winners and officials at the Sustainable Japan Award 2022 ceremony Hiromichi Matono

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"The importance of the so-called transition finance has become a common view in the international community," he said. "The Financial Services Agency wishes to work with related government ministries and agencies to help create a market for transition finance."

According to Suzuki, the government is working on policies to realize a sustainable society from the perspectives of "enhancing information disclosure regarding companies' climate change measures," "developing an

environment that helps the financial capital market play its expected role" and "supporting borrowers and investees by financial institutions and managing climate change risk."

Suzuki observed that "moves led by private-sector entities are very active" in transition finance, in addition to government efforts. He expressed hope that these activities will further grow.

Noting that "disseminating information in English is said to be especially important in

promoting sustainable finance and transition finance," Suzuki said that notable initiatives in Japan made known overseas through the Sustainable Japan Award will play a major role in efforts to promote sustainable and transition finance.

In closing, Suzuki praised the awardees. "I am sure you have been awarded as a result of years of steady efforts," he said. "Your efforts themselves are sustainable. They are the beacon that lights the path we should lead."



っており、金融庁としても関係省庁とともにトランジションファイナンスの市場づくりに貢献したい」とアピール。持続可能な社会の実現に向け、「企業の気候変動対応に関する情報開示の充実」「金融資本市場の機能発揮に向けた環境整備」「金融機関による投融資先支援と気候

変動リスク管理」の観点から施策を進めていると語った。同時に、トランジションファイナンスに関しては、政府の取り組みに留まらず「民間主導の動きも大変活発だ」と述べ、今後の一層の進展に期待。そのうえで、「サステナブルファイナンス、トランジションファイナンス

では、特に英語での（情報）発信が重要とされている」と述べ、サステナブル・ジャパン・アワードを通じて日本国内の顕著な取り組みが国外に紹介されることが、サステナブルファイナンス、トランジションファイナンスの推進においても大きな役割を担うと述べた。

最後に鈴木財務相は、受賞者・団体に「地道に一步ずつ続けてこられた努力が形となったうえでの受賞だと思う。皆さまの取り組みこそがサステナブルであり、私たちが進んでいく道を指し示している」と祝辞を送り、挨拶を締めくくった。

the japan times
Sustainable Japan Award
2022
Selection committee



Michiyo Morisawa
PRI Secretariat Japan Head and CDP Japan Director



Ken Shibusawa
Commons Asset Management Inc. Executive Chairman and ESG Chief Executive Officer



Naonori Kimura
Industrial Growth Platform Inc. (IGPI) Managing Director



Takatoshi Kato
Japan Center for International Finance, Senior Adviser to the President



Kousuke Motani
The Japan Research Institute Ltd. Chief Senior Economist



Takashi Mitachi
Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University, Professor



Sustainable Japan Grand Prize

Shingo Konomoto

CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT & CEO, REPRESENTATIVE
DIRECTOR, MEMBER OF THE BOARD
NOMURA RESEARCH INSTITUTE LTD.

The Grand Prize was awarded to Nomura Research Institute Ltd. (NRI), whose president and CEO, Shingo Konomoto, accepted the award at the ceremony. “I was a bit surprised when I was notified of our company winning the Grand

大賞は野村総合研究所 (NRI) が受賞。表彰式には代表取締役 兼 社長の此本臣吾が登壇した。NRI は日本が国際社会にうって出るチャレンジの時代に設立された。NRI の設立趣意書には「産業経済の振興と一般社会への奉仕を目的として、この会社は設立される」

Sustainability requires the provision of social value, says the Grand Prize winner

Prize,” he said. In his remarks, he reiterated his company’s commitment to sustainability and provided an overview of NRI’s active business segments. A private think tank founded just after Japan’s postwar period of high growth began, it has expanded its capabilities with consulting and information technology solutions that it provides to other businesses. The solutions it provides today are always aiming to balance a company’s growth trajectory with sustainability. “It has become clear to me that the only companies that

will survive into the future will be those that entwine themselves with social issues,” Konomoto averred. He said businesses need to deeply consider what value they are providing to society, and so part of NRI’s role is to help them discover that through business-to-business consultations, workshops and study sessions, much as it has done in-house for many years already. “I am elated to receive this award, and to honor it we will continue to work hard toward fostering sustainable management teams,” he said.



一人一人が社会の課題に対し自分の仕事がどう関係しているかを改めて考える機会を創出している。「この賞に恥じないよう、これからも社会の課題と企業の成長がフィットする経営を続けていきたい」と締め括った。



Sustainable Japan Excellence Award

Takashi Sakaue

PRESIDENT, SAKAUE INC. LTD.

The Sustainable Japan Excellence Award went to Sakaue Inc. Ltd. After formally accepting the award, the president of the company, Takashi Sakaue, offered several observations. Due to climate change and the drastic impacts of Japan’s aging society on the agriculture industry,

サステナブルジャパン優秀賞は株式会社さかうえが受賞した。同社の代表取締役坂上隆氏は、農業が抱える課題、例えば近年頻発している自然災害による被害、若者の都会への流出に伴う働き手不足などを紹介し、これら課

Satoyama areas are an important part of Japan’s drive for a sustainable food supply

companies that have developed best practices, like Sakaue through its *satoyama* beef project, are of paramount importance. The project involves allowing cattle to freely roam and graze in fields that had been abandoned. “This,” he said, “makes the cows happier and healthier, as they get their nourishment directly from the land.” After the cows become meat in the form of *kuroge wagyu*, those who consume it should not forget that they are part of this natural cycle.

Sakaue highlighted just how important it is that Japan “learn from the past” and remember that we cannot forget our place living side by side with nature. With youths in the countryside increasingly moving to large cities for work, he said, we need to “revitalize” the satoyama idea if we want society’s food supply to be sustainable. “There is still a lot of work to do, but we want to continue being part of the solution going forward with our satoyama beef project,” he said.



て見直される、「里山の再生」につながるという。「まだまだ道半ばだが、これらの社会課題をどのように我々は農業や里山牛を通じて解決できるか、挑んでいきたいと思っています」と締め括った。

The Sustainable Japan Award is viewed as a ‘new commons’ for ESG initiatives

Takashi Mitachi

PROFESSOR, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
MANAGEMENT, KYOTO UNIVERSITY

The ceremony closed with a congratulatory speech from specially appointed professor Takashi Mitachi of Kyoto University’s Graduate School of Management. He expressed his view

that the Sustainable Japan Award’s purpose is twofold. Of course, it is an event held to shine a light on activities related to sustainability and show them to the English-speaking world. However, and perhaps more importantly, the event creates a



space to bring together ESG practitioners, giving them an opportunity to pick up on each other’s initiatives and join hands in creating something even better. “In overseas cultures, this is sometimes referred to as ‘the commons,’ which could be compared in Japan to what we call *satoyama*,” he explained. He gave the example of the Industrial Revolution, through which the people who first learned to leverage

the power of the Earth were able to increase the global population, which now is 7.8 billion. “However, we have overdone it a bit and have created unsustainable urban societies. What we need now,” he asserted, “is a new commons where positive connections leading to action can take place, and that is what I expect the Sustainable Japan Award to continue to be going forward as well.”

表彰式の最後は、京都大学経営管理大学院の特別教授 御立尚資氏が締め括った。御立氏は、サステナブル・ジャパン・アワードの目的は2つあると述べる。サステナビリティに関わる活

動に光を当て、国内外に発信すると言う目的が1つ目。そしてこのイベントに ESG、Satoyama の実践者が集まり、お互いの活動を理解し、何か一緒にできるのではないか、協力して取り組めるのではないかと

う発見が生まれるきっかけを作ることが2つ目の目的だ。同氏は海外ではそのような場を「コモンズ」と言うで紹介。コモンズには「共有でよくしていく、財産にするところ」と言う意味がある。この場で出会った新し

い繋がりが、誇りを持ってこんなものがあると言える、社会にとってプラスになるような繋がりを作るコモンズになり、新しい価値を創出することを期待すると話した。

Minister: Building regional circular and ecological spheres is key

Hiroshi Ono

VICE MINISTER FOR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL
AFFAIRS, MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Ono Hiroshi, the Ministry of the Environment’s vice minister for global environmental affairs, discussed the efforts to make our society sustainable through the creation of regional circular and ecological spheres.

He began by saying the international trend toward realizing a sustainable society “is changing at an accelerated speed and gaining momentum.”

“Over the past year, many companies and organizations have put advanced initiatives into practice in the areas of climate change, biodiversity and circular economy,” Ono said.

The Ministry of the Environment is taking a broad range of measures with the aim to create



regional circular and ecological spheres — that is, decarbonize regions, conserve and restore the natural environment, and achieve comprehensive development of regional social economies — as called for in the Fifth Basic Environment Plan, approved by the Cabinet in 2018.

The ministry worked out a regional decarbonization road map in June 2021. The road map calls for creating at least 100 leading decarbonization areas by fiscal 2030 and introducing “measures to achieve decarbonization domino effect in regions across the nation and attract investment”

This past April, 26 regions were designated as leading decarbonization areas, and the “top runners have already started running,” Ono said.

The ministry also faces other related issues — “issues that are the other side of the same decarbonization coin.”

An example of those efforts tackling the issues is “Tsunageyo, Sasaeyo, Mori, Sato, Kawa, Umi” (“Connecting and Supporting Forests, the Countryside, Rivers and the Sea”), a project aimed at making it possible for the country to continue to enjoy the blessings of natural resources a long into the future.

“In order to simultaneously resolve the issues surrounding the Earth, we need to step up the coordinated efforts between the public and private sectors and export Japan’s successful examples in other parts of the world to make our society sustainable by creating regional circular and ecological spheres,” Ono said.

環境省の小野洋・地球環境審議官は、「地域循環共生圏」の創造を通じたサステナブルな社会実現のための取り組みを紹介した。

最初にサステナブルな社会の実現に向けた国際的な潮流について、「日々加速的に変化し勢いを増している」と説明。「この1年で多くの企業や団体が気候変動、生物多様性、サーキュラーエコノミーなどの分野

で先進的な取り組みを実践している」と述べた。

環境省は政府が2018年に閣議決定した第5次環境基本計画に盛り込まれた地域循環共生圏の構築、すなわち地域の脱炭素化や自然環境の保全・再生と、地域社会経済の統合的発展を目指してさまざまな施策を行っている。

脱炭素では2021年6月に「地域脱炭素ロードマッ

プ」を策定。30年度までに100カ所以上の『脱炭素先行地域』を設けるとともに、「全国各地に『脱炭素ドミノ』を生み出し、投資を呼び起こすための施策」を展開する。今年4月には脱炭素先行地域として26地域を選定し、「トップランナーがすでに走り出した」ところだ。脱炭素以外の課題にも、「脱炭素と表裏一体の課題」として向き合う。森里川海（自然資源）の恵みを将来

にわたって享受できる国づくりを目指すプロジェクト「つなげよう、支えよう森里川海」はその一例だ。

小野地球環境審議官は「地球を取り巻く課題を同時解決するためには、官民一体の取り組みをさらに推進し、また日本の成功事例を海外展開することで地域循環共生圏の創造を通じた持続可能な社会を実現することが必須だ」と述べた。

ESG Panel Session

Shining a spotlight on the efforts of ESG winners

Emi Maeda
Contributing writer

The Sustainable Japan Award ceremony featured a panel discussion by the four companies awarded in the ESG category, moderated by Michiyo Morisawa, Japan head of the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project).



Michiyo Morisawa
Director of CDP Japan

Speakers from Nomura Research Institute (NRI), which received the Grand Prize, Lion Corp. and Nippon Life Insurance Co., which received the Excellence Award, and the Japan Clean Ocean Material Alliance (CLOMA), which received the Special Award in the ESG (environmental, social and governance) category, participated in the panel discussion to talk about the initiatives of the companies, which are working diligently to achieve steady results toward a sustainable society, as well as the importance of working together with other stakeholders to address social issues and to create new future value.

Takeshi Hihara, senior managing director of NRI, said, “We gain an insight into the paradigm of a new society and assume the responsibility of realizing it.” A significant turning point was the merger between the former Nomura Research Institute Ltd., founded as Japan's first private think tank, and Nomura Computer Systems Co. Ltd., a systems integrator, in 1988. NRI is a class-leading business consultancy and information technology firm. It leverages its strengths to gain insights into the future and take on the task of making it real. This is where NRI's value lies, Hihara said. IT initiatives account for over 90% of its business, creating and operating systems and providing shared-use services. In the 2020s, the company created a sustainability-related consulting and corporate social responsibility (CSR) office as part of its social contribution activities. Already, around 2018, it had created a framework for sustainable management and included that in its interim management plan for 2019 and 2020. Compared to a situation in which each company builds and operates its own system, NRI's joint-use service — which is the de facto standard in the financial industry and boasts a high market share — reduces the



NRI is supporting Tsuruoka to create a smart city and digital government. The city is working on digital transformation in various social areas such as transportation, agriculture, disaster prevention, energy and health care.



environmental impact and emissions of carbon dioxide by 73.9%. To reduce its own environmental impact, it also uses renewable energy in its data centers, which require a large amount of electricity, and will soon reach 100% utilization. NRI provides digital transformation (DX) services of the three types DX1.0, DX2.0 and DX3.0, which respectively contribute to the transformation of existing business processes, resolve social issues and achieve paradigm transformation. The company has expanded its business by providing consulting services and visualization tools for decarbonization and aims to contribute to its customers through digital transformation and create value for society.



Takeshi Hihara Nomura Research Institute, Senior Managing Director

Lion: Healthy lifestyles

Lion Corp., a company making daily commodities such as toothpaste and laundry detergent, is committed to reducing the environmental impact of its business groups by doing what it can at each stage throughout product life cycles. Considering carbon dioxide emissions at the stage of transporting raw materials, the company is working on a new format in which the factories of several companies are located next to each other. The company also contributes to emissions reduction in logistics by working with other companies to deliver products. Since household consumption of electricity and water account for a large portion of the total, the company aims to promote healthy lifestyles to tackle the issue. “There is not much that one company can do. However, we want to contribute to the world by working with many people to change lifestyle habits,” said Tomomichi Okano, an executive officer the company.

Lion aims to “make a difference in every-

day lives by redesigning habits.” The reason for the significant decrease in cavities in the past 30 years is due to lifestyle changes, said Okano. People brush their teeth more frequently due to the efforts of the company, the dental association, the educational field and others. The company also aims for people to still have 20 of their teeth at the age of 80. Its statistics show that already, more than 50% of those 80 years old have achieved this goal.

One such initiative is to create the habit of not throwing away used toothbrushes. Used toothbrushes are collected at school recycling boxes, recycled into rulers, and returned to the schools that collected them. Another initiative is a joint effort by Kao Corp. and Lion to create a social infrastructure that allows the recycling of refill pouches made of composite materials, including those from other companies.

Lion focuses on how to change lifestyles, not the products it already has. When analyzing behavior, it is difficult to find out in what situations carbon dioxide is emitted. The company aims to visualize the issue by using digital technology.

Lifestyle changes that are enjoyable lead to sustainable habits. The company aims to realize adjustments to people's lifestyles so that we find ourselves living in an environmentally friendly way. Okano said: “The company's strength lies in its closeness with its customers. We take this advantage as our responsibility and aim to create a new culture together. “When you purchase home appliances, a house or a car, it is a major opportunity to change your lifestyle habits. We are eager to see what we can do within this new framework and are strongly interested in taking opportunities with companies with which we have never collaborated before,” concluded Okano.



Tomomichi Okano Lion Corp. Executive Officer



Lion employees with Kao sort collected pouches for easy recycling.

Nippon Life's initiatives

Kazuo Sato, director and managing executive officer of Nippon Life Insurance Co., introduced the company's efforts to address climate change, employees, human rights, and ESG investment and loans. As for efforts to address climate change issues, the company's 1,500 insurance sales offices across Japan are reducing power consumption by shifting to energy-efficient LED lighting and installing rooftop solar panels. All 19 sales offices in Tokyo and Osaka now use renewable energy. As an institutional investor, the company has targeted net-zero emissions of greenhouse gases. It has set 2030 interim targets in its investment portfolio to reduce total emissions by 45% or more compared to 2010 and emissions intensity — emissions per investment unit — by 49% or more compared to 2020. To achieve this, it is devising ways in which Japanese companies can promote ESG initiatives and working together with the companies it invests in.

The company has been committed to diversity and inclusion for more than 10 years and is steadily working toward this goal. The role of an insurance company is to be in the business of supporting the sustainability of the lives and livelihoods of its customers. To this end, the company focuses on developing personnel who can identify needs for insurance products and providing added value.

Continued on page 5 →

社会の課題に向けて、共に新しい未来を創る

Sustainable Japan Award 2022の授賞式では、ESG部門における受賞企業・団体4社によるパネルセッションが行われ、PRI事務局ジャパンヘッド兼CDPジャパンディレクターの森澤充世氏がモデレーターを務めた。大賞を受賞した株式会社野村総合研究所（NRI）の執行役員の松原猛氏をはじめ、優秀賞を受賞したライオン株式会社の執行役員全社環境戦略担当の岡野知道氏と日本生命保険相互会社の取締役常務執行役員の佐藤和夫氏、審査員特別賞を受賞したクリーン・オーシャン・マテリアル・アライアンス（CLOMA）の普及促進部長の森島千佳氏が登壇し、持続可能な社会に向けて、地道に継続的な成果を出して頑張っている各企業の活動に加え、社会の課題に向けて他社と共同し連携する重要性や、新たな未来の価値に向けた取り組みについて語った。

大賞を受賞したNRIの松原氏は、「新しい社会のパラダイムを洞察して、その実現を担う。」と語った。コンサルティングとITソリューションという二つの素質を持ち合わせたNRIが、自社の強みを磨き、未来を洞察して、その実現までも担うことにNRIの価値があると言う。各々の企業が個別最

適にシステムを構築し稼働する場合と比べ、金融業界で高いシェアを誇りデファクトスタンダードになっている当社の共同利用型サービスによって、環境へのインパクトを抑え、CO2排出量を73.9%削減できると試算している。自社の環境インパクトを減らすためにも、当社のデータセンターでも再生エネルギーを使用し、利用率はもうすぐ100%に到達する見込みである。カーボンニュートラルやサーキュラーエコノミーをテーマに、コンサルティングと脱炭素化の可視化ツールを提供しながらビジネスを広げ、デジタル変革でお客様に貢献し、社会への価値を創出していくことを目指す。

生活必需品を扱うライオン株式会社は、原材料調達、生産、物流、消費者による使用、破棄に至るまでの流れを循環する中で、グループ事業がそれぞれの場面でできることをしっかりと取り組み、環境負荷を減らす。原料を運ぶことを簡素化するために、複数の企業の工場が並ぶ新しい形態に取り組んでいる。物流においても、商品の配送を他社と一緒に行うことでCO2削減に貢献する。また、消費者の商品使用段階におけるCO2排出と水使用量が多いことから、生活習慣を変えることに

も着目している。執行役員全社環境戦略担当の岡野知道氏は、ここ30年で虫歯が大きく減ったのは、当社をはじめ歯科医師会や教育現場などの働きかけで歯磨きをする回数が増えたという生活習慣の変化が背景にあるとし、一社でできることは少なくても、多くの方々としっかりと生活習慣を変えていくことで、世の中に貢献したいと考えている。その一つとして、捨てない習慣を作る取り組みを行う。使用済みの歯ブラシは、学校のリサイクルボックスで集めていただき、定規など学校で利用できるものにリサイクルし、集めていただいた学校に返却する。また複合素材のパウチは再利用が困難なため、他社のものと一緒に回収できるインフラづくりと、回収したパウチを再利用できる技術開発を目的に、花王とライオンが共同開発に取り組む。「リサイクリーション」という活動のもと、再利用パウチを世の中に提案したいと考えている。「お客さまとの接点を強みしながら、またこれを責任と感じながら、一緒に新しい文化を作っていくことを目指している。」と岡野氏は語った。

日本生命保険相互会社の取締役常務執行役員の佐藤和夫氏は、気候変動に対する取り組み、従業

員、人権尊重、ESG投融資の推進について当社の取り組みを紹介した。気候変動問題への取り組みは、まず事業として、全国にある1,500の保険営業所では、LED化による消費電力を削減し、事業所の屋上に太陽光パネルを設置し、電気を賄っており、東京、大阪にある19棟全ての営業所では、再生可能エネルギーを使用している。機関投資家としては、資産運用ポートフォリオにおける排出量について、2030年度中間目標として、総排質量2010年度対比で45%以上削減、インテンシティは2020年度対比で49%以上削減を定めて取り組んでいる。当社が投資家として取り組むというよりは、どのようにESGの取り組みを日本企業が進めているかを考案し、企業とタッグを組んで進めている。

10年以上前からダイバーシティ&インクルージョンを掲げて、着実に取り組んでいる会社でもある。保険会社の役割は、お客様の生活と人生の持続可能性をサポートする事業である。保険商品は、目に見えない商品のため、ニーズを顕在化し、付加価値を提供できる人材を育成することに力を入れている。女性管理職の目標数字を掲げながら、その候補者の育成をおこなう。また、男性の育児休暇を推

→ Continued from page 4

It has set a target number for female managers and is training candidates for these positions. It also promotes parental leave for male employees and has achieved a 100% utilization rate for nine consecutive years. Regarding respect for human rights, the company is working to raise awareness of human rights among its 70,000 employees, particularly sales staffers, and its human rights due diligence program to explain the status of human rights initiatives and management at its business partners.

As part of its promotion of ESG investment and loans, the company has been promoting investments in decarbonization. It has set up a decarbonization finance facility of ¥500 billion (\$3.4 billion) from this fiscal year to support Japanese companies' efforts in this area. It has also encouraged Japanese companies to support transition finance and innovation initiatives. The company also participates in international initiatives. This year, it is strengthening its efforts to communicate Japan's position and commitment to the formulation of international rules for deoxygenation, the reduction of oxygen in the ocean due to carbon emissions.

The company is also actively participating in international initiatives such as the Principles for Responsible Investment and the U.N.-convened Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance. It has stepped up its efforts to communicate its views and commit itself to formulating international rules for deoxygenation from a Japanese perspective.

Morisawa, the moderator of the session, pointed out that Nippon Life Insurance's efforts are an advanced activity among investors and indicate the global trend. Major investors around the world are already committed to achieving net-zero portfolios. In other words, she said, investors aiming to achieve net-zero emissions of greenhouse gases in their investment portfolios would be the subjects of such investment and loan targets.

In addition to Nippon Life's commitment to human rights issues, Morisawa said it is important not to be left behind in addressing climate change. Access to water and sanitation are



Kazuo Sato Nippon Life Insurance Co. Director and Managing Executive Officer



Nippon Life Insurance has introduced renewable energy at certain buildings it owns and plans to use LED lights and highly energy-efficient facilities when constructing new buildings.

recognized as human rights. Corporate activities that fail to address climate change will also lead to human rights issues.

CLOMA: Cross-industry ties

The Japan Clean Ocean Material Alliance was launched in 2019 to proactively fulfill the social responsibility of companies and organizations that make or use plastics to also tackle the issue of ocean plastic waste. Currently, 478 companies and organizations have joined the alliance. The companies, mainly those involved in products for general consumers, are working to collect plastics that have already been retained and to prevent new outflows. Through public-private partnerships, CLOMA aims to accelerate innovation and reduce plastic waste to zero through the evolution and promotion of the "3Rs" (reduce, reuse and recycle) and the use of alternative materials. And it wants the world to adopt a Japanese model for a solution aimed at eliminating marine plastic waste. In addition to people from various links in the value chain, such as producers of raw materials, container manufacturers, brand owners and retailers, its members include machinery manufacturers, trading companies, consulting firms and industrialists. Moreover, local and national governments, nongovernmental organizations, research institutes and financial organizations are members, with local governments providing places to practice and research institutes providing technical support. These Japanese industries will bring together the technologies and knowledge they have cultivated over the years to ensure the recycling and utilization of plastics. "Being an alliance of cross-industrial companies is a unique characteristic and strength of CLOMA," said Chika Morishima, chair of dissemination and promotion at the alliance.

To achieve 100% recycling of plastic products by 2050, CLOMA has defined and categorized its activities in detail and promoted them.

CLOMA aims to contribute to the world through collaboration and networking with ASEAN and global organizations to disseminate Japan's various eco-friendly designs, recycling and system technologies, etc., to solve the problem of marine plastic waste. It holds events for business matching and has an online matching platform, and exhibits its activities at symposiums. In addition, the scale of its practices has been expanded by collaborating with local governments to set up collection boxes. Through these activities, its alliances have increased, and an increasing number of them have become commercialized. It also will promote initiatives that include a "backcasting" approach, describing an ideal future and then working backward to identify the actions that can make it happen.



Chika Morishima Japan Clean Ocean Material Alliance. Chair of Dissemination & Promotion WG



A CLOMA technical seminar introduces members to best practices and new technologies from research institutes.

Getting everyone involved

It is necessary to work with other stakeholders to address social issues that are difficult to solve through individual company initiatives. NRI's Hihara said, "We need to be ahead of the curve to revitalize industry and tackle environmental issues." He added that it is important to work with stakeholders and the government to make changes.

Kao and Lion's joint effort is another example of how companies that have competed with each other can work together to create a single social infrastructure. Okano from Lion thinks there are technologies that can be standardized and shared to benefit many stakeholders. Morishima from CLOMA also said it is difficult to tackle social issues alone, and we need a larger framework that transcends industries and business sectors, as well as cooperation between the public and private sectors.

Morishima also said it is important to link activities with business advantages, so they are more than just a way to exchange information. CLOMA urges member companies to actively and sustainably engage in its activities. It is also important to engage in activities that enable people to change their lifestyles naturally and tackle social issues on an ongoing basis rather than forcing them to do so, Okano said

Sato from Nippon Life Insurance mentioned the company's efforts to develop local communities. With 12 million policyholders nationwide, Nippon Life Insurance takes the initiative on local issues for its customers. For example, in areas with high rates of cancer, sales staffers distribute leaflets to encourage health checkups to increase the cancer screening rate. At an office in central Tokyo, staff members deliver surplus food from companies, cafeterias and restaurants to a food bank. While conducting its main business of supporting the sustainability of society by providing life insurance, Nippon Life Insurance also hopes to continue to solve its customers' problems through various activities.

The efforts of the winning companies and organizations to envision the future and take action for it has something in common with the activities of local governments in *satoyama* upland areas. ESG and *satoyama* activities have been considered different fields, but the two are actually linked from a sustainability perspective, Morisawa concluded.

にも、他社と手を取り合って実現していく必要がある。「花王とライオンは、今まで競い合っていたものが手を組んで一つの社会インフラを作る取り組みだが、今まで手を取り合ったことがない企業とも接する機会を増やし、新しい枠組みでできることはないかと考えたいと強く願っている」とライオンの岡野氏は語った。またCLOMAの森島氏も「一社だけでできることに限界あり、業種業界を超えた取り組み、あるいは、官民の連携といった大きな枠組みが必要」と述べた。

未来を描き、その未来のために各受賞企業・団体が行う取り組みは、里山の自治体の活動とも共通点があり、持続可能性といった視点において、ESGと里山が一体化しながら、共同しているのだと森澤氏は最後に語った。



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Sustainable Japan Grand Prize

Nomura Research Institute Ltd.

Since our foundation, we have co-created shared values with our clients for solving social issues via consulting and IT solutions. We will continuously take on the challenge of realizing a sustainable society with our corporate philosophy, "Dream up the future."



株式会社野村総合研究所

私たちは創業以来、コンサルティングやITソリューションを通じて、お客様と共に社会課題を解決してきました。企業理念「未来創発」のもと、持続可能な社会づくりに挑み続けます。



Sustainable Japan ESG Excellence Award

Lion Corporation

Upholding its founding spirit of "benefiting society through its business activities," Lion makes efforts to solve environmental and social issues, provide products of toothpaste and detergent, etc. and create environmental friendly habits with consumers.



ライオン株式会社

ライオンは、創業の精神「事業を通じて社会に貢献する」を受け継ぎ、環境や社会の課題の解決、歯磨や洗剤等の商品提供、生活者の皆様とエコの習慣化に取り組んでいます。



Sustainable Japan ESG Excellence Award

Nippon Life Insurance Co.

Nippon Life has been one of Japan's leading life insurance companies, with approximately 14 million customers and ¥80 trillion in total assets for the entire group, operating with the philosophy of "co-existence, co-prosperity and mutualism" since its founding in 1889.



日本生命保険相互会社

1889年の創業以来、「共存共栄」・「相互扶助」の精神で事業を営み、グループ全体で約1400万人のお客様数と約80兆円の総資産を有する、日本を代表する生命保険会社です。



Sustainable Japan ESG Special Award

Japan Clean Ocean Material Alliance

It has become necessary to promote efforts to overcome the marine plastic litter issue. To decrease such litter, appropriate control of waste is urgently needed. CLOMA was established as a new platform that helps stakeholders to collaborate and accelerate innovation.



クリーン・オーシャン・マテリアル・アライアンス
CLOMAは業種を超えた幅広い関係者の連携を強め、イノベーションを加速するためのプラットフォームとして海洋プラスチックごみ問題の解決に挑戦する企業アライアンスです。



進し、取得率100%を9年連続達成した。人権尊重においては、営業職員を中心に、約7万名の職員に人権意識を啓発しながら人権デューデリジェンスを設定し、取引先の人権に関する取り組み・管理状況について説明ができる取り組みを進めている。

ESG投融資の推進として、脱炭素化に向けての投資を進めてきたが、今年度から脱炭素ファイナンス枠を5,000億円設定し、日本企業で取り組んでいるトランジションファイナンスや、イノベーションの取り組みを後押しできるよう日本企業への働きかけを行っている。

また国際的イニシアティブの参画も積極的に行っており、脱炭素にむけた国際的ルールの方策定にあたって、日本の立場でしっかり意見発信してコミットしていくことを強化している。

海洋プラスチックごみ問題を解決するために、プラスチックを作る、または、利用している企業・団体が社会的責任を積極的に果たすことを目的とし、2019年にクリーン・オーシャン・マテリアル・アライアンス (CLOMA) が発足した。一般消費者向け商品のサプライチェーンを担う企業を中心として、官民連携で3Rの進化や推進、代替素材の活

用を通したイノベーションの加速とプラスチックのゴミのゼロ化を目指し、日本初のソリューションをジャパンモデルとして世界に発信する。現在、一般消費者向け商品のサプライチェーンを担う企業を中心として、さまざまな領域の478社・団体が加盟しており、普及促進部会長の森島千佳氏は、ここが当社の大きな特徴であり強みであると指摘する。海洋プラスチックごみ問題の解決への日本のさまざまな環境適合設計やリサイクル・システム技術等をASEANやグローバルな団体との連携・ネットワークによって世界への貢献を目指す。企業間の連携として、ビジネスマッチングを目的としたイベントや、Web上でマッチングプラットフォーム、シンポジウムでの活動の展示などを行い、積極的に活動をPRしている。さらに、自治体とも連携し、回収ボックスの設置など、実践の場の規模が拡大している。これらの活動の経緯によりアライアンスが増え、事業化に至るものが増えている。今までの活動に加えて、理想像・未来からのバックキャストでの発想も入れた取り組みも推進している、海洋プラスチックごみの問題解決を目指す。

個社単独の取り組みでは解決困難な社会の課題

Satoyama Panel Session

Highlighting the work done by satoyama winners

Maiko Muraoka
Contributing writer

In the panel session for the satoyama category of the Sustainable Japan Award, moderated by Kosuke Motani, a chief senior economist at the Japan Research Institute Ltd. and an adviser to the consortium as well as one of the judges of the satoyama awards, four award recipients talked about their activities and future goals.



Kosuke Motani
The Japan Research Institute Ltd. Chief Senior Economist

Sakaue's satoyama beef

Sakaue Inc. Ltd., based in the Kagoshima Prefecture city of Shibushi, won the Sustainable Japan Excellence Award. The company has established a circular production model that consists of growing various crops such as kale, potatoes and green peppers as well as producing and selling corn silage, grazing *kuroge washu* cattle for its *satoyama* beef project on self-supplied feed, and using the composted manure for agricultural production. "Beef from cattle raised on pastures, eating fresh grass and silage we produced without depending on imported grain, tastes totally different" from stall-fed or grain-fed beef, said CEO Takashi Sakaue. In many rural areas of Japan, a rise in abandoned farmland due to the aging of farmers and a shortage of successors has been a key issue, and Shibushi was not an exception. Sakaue utilizes idle farmland for its vegetable farms and range land, contributing to solving the regional issue through its business.

Motani mentioned the fact that Japanese livestock and agricultural products are highly dependent on feed and fertilizer imported from overseas, meaning the industry is no longer sustainable. "The impact of the weak yen is tormenting many farmers," he added. He highly evaluated Sakaue's efforts in achieving a cycle of production within the region.

"Agriculture has a long history dating back to the time when humans began to barter and store food, but as time passed and the Industrial Revolution took place, the form of agriculture and people's lives changed as efficiency became more important. Along



Beef cattle that are pastured in a stress-free natural environment produce meat that has a natural taste and is easy to eat.



with these changes, the roles of satoyama have also changed," Sakaue observed. "We are taking over the sustainable qualities of the old ways and trying to update them to suit the current era using the latest technologies." He shared some examples of ongoing projects. One is the launch of the Digital Transformation Department within the company to improve operational efficiency. Another is a collaboration with universities, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and other organizations to use satellites and other new technologies to monitor and analyze the movements of cattle, the amount of grass in pastures, types of microorganisms in the soil as well as other data that may be useful in increasing production efficiency. The collaboration aims to spread this model to other areas in Japan.



Takashi Sakaue Sakaue Co. Ltd. CEO

Sakaue was 24 years old when he took over what he called "an ordinary family farm." He turned the family business into a company of 116 employees, including many young people, which is noteworthy given the fact that a labor shortage in primary industries due to aging has been a major issue across the country. His next goal is to export satoyama beef to the world. "I am not just trying to sell meat. I am aiming to help Japanese people regain their pride in being Japanese. Historically, Japanese people find sacredness in nature and have the idea that they are kept alive by its energy. I want the world to know the way we think of nature," he said.

Hayama: Clean and green

Mayor Takahito Yamanashi attended the talk session representing his town of Hayama, which received the Sustainable Japan Satoyama Excellence Award. Hayama, in the Kanagawa Prefecture district of Miura, is a sanctuary surrounded by mountains and sea only an hour's drive from central Tokyo. The town has made many efforts in collaboration with local people and business operators to maintain its beautiful environment. One effort has to do with reducing waste. It took years to raise residents' awareness on separating garbage and reducing its amount, and now about half of the waste generated by the population of close to 33,000 is recycled.



Takahito Yamanashi
Hayama Town Mayor

"The beach cleanup activities started in 1996. At the beginning, we used to collect 2 tons of trash in one day, but last year we collected only 320 kilograms," Yamanashi said. This means there have been decreases in not only the trash left on the beaches, but also the trash carried by the rivers that flow into the sea, indicating a change in awareness throughout the town.

As an act to pursue U.N. sustainable development goals, the town launched the Hayama Clean Program to reduce plastic waste. "No beverages in PET bottles are sold at public facilities in Hayama. Our town officials are not allowed to carry PET bottles and plastic bags into the town office buildings. Instead, there are water stations here and there in the town, so you can fill your own water bottle if you

carry it around," Yamanashi said.

The town is also making every effort to communicate its attractiveness. The newsletter it publishes through its own efforts, without relying on a public relations company, won the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications Award this year in a national public relations contest. The town's official Instagram account has more than 37,000 followers.

Thanks to these efforts, the number of people moving to Hayama has been increasing in recent years. "The prolonged pandemic situation may have added momentum to the trend. Some real estate agents are saying that there are not enough properties available to meet the need," said Yamanashi, who also came to Hayama from the outside. "I am originally from Tokyo, and I have traveled to many places in Japan and the world, but as I repeat-

Continued on page 7 →



Hayama Ethical Action, which started this year, is promoting ethical consumption through industrial, governmental and private partnerships to achieve the SDGs. The town's website also introduces the efforts of stores and organizations that support this project.

地域の中から生まれる、地域を持続可能にする方法

Sustainable Japan Award 2022 Satoyama 部門パネルセッションでは、日本総合研究所主席研究員の藻谷浩介氏をモデレーターに、4名の Sustainable Award の受賞者が各々の活動について、また今後の目標について語った。

Sustainable Japan Award 優秀賞を受賞した株式会社さかうえは、鹿児島県志布志市を拠点に、ケールや馬鈴薯、ピーマンなどの農作物を生産する農業を営みつつ、国産牧草飼料の製造販売から、黒毛和牛の放牧まで手がけ、畜産で生じる糞尿を堆肥化して農産物栽培に活用するという循環を生み出している。「飼料穀物を海外からの輸入に頼らずに、放牧地に生える草と自社生産のサイレージ(飼料牧草)とを食べて育った放牧牛は、味にも違いが出る」と代表取締役の坂上隆氏。農地や放牧地として耕作放棄地(遊休農地)も活用しており、地域課題の解決にも貢献している。

このセッションのモデレーターでもあり、Satoyama 部門の審査員でもある藻谷氏、日本の畜産物や農産物が、海外から輸入した飼料や肥料に依存して成り立っているということ、その上昨今の円安によるコスト増大で苦しんでいることに触れ、さかう

えの取り組みを高く評価した。

坂上氏は、「農業には長い歴史があるが、時代を経て産業革命が起こり、効率性が重視されるようになる中で農業の形も、人々の生活の形も変わってきた。里山の形も変わってきた」と指摘した。また、「昔のやり方の良さを、最新の技術を使って今の時代に合うようにリニューアルすることに挑戦している」と語った。現在、大学等と人工衛星を使って牛の運動量などを分析する、社内に DX 部門を立ち上げて業務効率改善を図るなどの取り組みが進行中だ。「普通の農家」を24歳で継いでから、従業員数116名の現在のさかうえを作り上げてきた坂上氏の次の目標は、里山牛の輸出だ。「肉を売るだけではなく、日本人が日本人としての誇りを取り戻すことを目指す。自然の中に神聖さを見出す日本人の思想を世界に伝えたい。」

Sustainable Japan Award Satoyama 部門の優秀賞を受賞した神奈川県三浦郡葉山町からは、町長の山梨崇仁氏が出席。東京都心から車で約1時間の距離にありながら、山と海に囲まれた街、葉山町では、町民や事業者と連携した数々の取り組みが

行われている。長年ゴミの分別や削減に関する住民の意識向上に取り組み、今では人口約33,000人が出すゴミの約半分が資源化されている。「1996年にスタートしたビーチクリーンの活動では、かつては1日で2トンものゴミが集まっていたが、昨年は320kgだった」と山梨氏。これは、海岸で発生するゴミだけでなく、川から流れてくるゴミも減っていることを意味しており、街全体における意識の変化が見てとれる。

2019年からはSDGs達成を目指す行動項目、「はやまクリーンプログラム」を宣言し、プラスチックごみの削減にも取り組んでいる。「公共施設ではペットボトル入りの商品は一切販売しておらず、職員によるペットボトルやレジ袋の庁舎内への持ち込みも禁止。その代わりに、街のあちこちにウォーターステーションを設置しており、マイボトルを持っていればどこかで水が汲める」と山梨氏は述べた。

街の魅力発信にも余念がない。町が発行している広報紙が全国広報コンクールは今年総務大臣賞受賞。PR会社に頼らず、町役場が自力で勝ち取った。町の公式インスタグラムアカウントは37,000人以上にフォローされている。

こうした努力の甲斐あって、ここ数年、葉山に移り住む人が増えている。もとは山梨氏自身も移住者だ。「選手として葉山沖でウィンドサーフィンをするうちに、これほど海から見た景色が素晴らしいところはない、この街を守っていきたい、と思ったことが原点」と話した。

今年6月に始動した「はやまエシカルアクション」では、町のホームページで環境や人、社会、地域に配慮した取り組みを実施している事業者や団体を紹介している。「現在まだ60数軒。1,000ほどある商店すべてを登録すること、つまりすべての商店にエシカルな活動をしてもらうということが目標だ」と山梨氏は語った。

同じく Sustainable Japan Award Satoyama 部門優秀賞を受賞した Satoyama Experience を運営する株式会社美ら地球(ちゅらぼし)の山田拓氏もまた移住者だ。奈良県生駒市で生まれ育ち、外資系のコンサルティング会社2社での勤務を経験したのちに2年間の世界旅行へ。帰国後の2007年に移り住んだのが岐阜県の飛騨市古川町だった。

2010年にガイドツアー「飛騨里山サイクリング」を開始。発想の原点は、アフリカで体験した、農村

→ *Continued from page 6*

edly visited Hayama for windsurfing, I started to think that there is no other place where the view from the sea is so beautiful. I strongly felt that I want to protect this town, which is how I became part of the town myself,” he said.

On the town’s website, the project Hayama Ethical Action, launched in June, introduces businesses and organizations that implement initiatives contributing to the natural environment and the community. “We only have about 60 of them listed on the page so far, but we aim to post information on all 1,000 or so shops and organizations, which means we expect every one of them to participate in ethical actions,” Yamanashi said.

Satoyama Experience renews

Taku Yamada, the CEO of Chura-boshi Co., which runs Satoyama Experience, the other winner of the Sustainable Japan Satoyama Excellence Award, also moved to a rural town from elsewhere. He was born and grew up in the city of Ikoma in Nara Prefecture, went to university in Yokohama and worked at two global consulting firms before he set off for a two-year trip around the world. After he came back to Japan in 2007, he went looking for a nice rural area to settle in with his wife and their unborn baby, hoping to have a slow life surrounded by nature. That was how he found Furukawa, a formerly independent town that is now part of the Gifu Prefecture city of Hida and is commonly known as Hida Furukawa.

He launched Hida Satoyama guided cycling tours in 2010. They were inspired by a horseback tour of rural villages he experienced in Africa. He introduces not only the rural scenery of the area, with valleys surrounded by mountains, but also the daily lives of the residents to guests from all over through the cycling tours. “The local people say that there is nothing in this town, but it is full of special charms for people from around the world,” he said. Out of about 5,000 people who participated in the tours in 2019, about 90% were from abroad.

The company opened two inns under a project named Satoyama Stay in 2020. One of them was an old Japanese-style bar that has been part of the town for decades. The other is a new building designed to fit in with the nostalgic townscape. The renovation and building were done by local carpenters using local materials. The furniture and accessories also were made by local craftsmen. The two inns are located only 500 meters apart. Yamada explained that the most effective way of revitalizing and protecting a townscape is to focus on small area. “The higher the concentration is, the better the visibility of changes and higher the value will be,” he said.



Taku Yamada Chura-boshi Co., founder and CEO

At the same time, applying his experience with consulting firms, Yamada connects with various other regions in Japan and provides business-to-business services to launch and support projects to promote the value of satoyama areas to the world. “In some places, such projects are run on a voluntary basis, which is not easy to continue. We take a business-based approach,” he said.

Creating and concentrating value in a small area of Hida Furukawa while using a network of people preserving and revitalizing regional attractions across Japan in order to promote the value of satoyama areas to the world — Yamada will keep moving on these two wheels.



A tour guide explains about life in satoyama areas.

Preserving Shishitsuka

One organization has been conducting activities on a voluntary basis for more than 30 years: the Certified Non-profit Organization for Nature Conservation and History Transmission of Shishitsuka Satoyama, winner of this year’s Sustainable Japan Satoyama Special Award. It was established in the Shishitsuka area of the city of Tsuchiura in Ibaraki Prefecture in 1989. Executive Director Nobuo Morimoto had been a researcher at the National Agriculture and Food Research Organization. Soon after he moved to the Shishitsuka area, which was close to where he worked, he noticed that a rich satoyama environment remained intact, which was quite rare because forests had been lost in many places in Ibaraki at the time due to extensive urban development to create a university town and residential districts. He became alarmed that Shishitsuka might also be a target of development and decided to take action together with the local people to preserve the environment. In that era at the height of the bubble economy, when all that mattered was making and consuming new things, just gaining people’s understanding for such activities was hard enough.

“We began by listening to the elderly in the area as they talked about how they lived and worked in old days and writing it down. Through this process, I think we managed to build a relationship and share the same idea about what we want to preserve,” Morimoto said. There were many moments when he felt that he was being tested, though. When he visited one landlord and asked if he and his organization members could enter an untended grove

belonging to the landlord and take care of it, the landlord responded by suddenly cutting down 150 bamboo plants. “I think that the landlord was testing us. We did our best in clearing away all of them. That was how we gradually gained the trust of the local people who were initially skeptical,” Morimoto said, looking back.

One of their main activities is conducting surveys on the area’s biodiversity. “We have confirmed about 850 species of plants alone in this area, which is home to 48 threatened species too,” Morimoto said. Over the last 33 years, people who wish to hand this rich satoyama environment to the next generation and also are willing to participate in volunteer activities to make the wish come true have gathered together. The scope of their activities has been expanding — participating in an ongoing survey as part of the Monitoring Sites 1000 Satoyama project conducted by the Ministry of the Environment, restoring traditional houses, providing environmental education, supporting rice farmers through group purchasing of rice and maintenance of paddies, conducting environmental preservation initiatives and holding other events to promote the benefits of satoyama. Their monthly newsletter, put out since the foundation of the organization, will soon reach its 400th issue, and they also have an English version of a brochure that introduces the region.

“Our next challenge is to train young successors, and we will at least need a place where they can get changed, wash their hands and feet, and use the toilet. I believe that such a basic improvement of the environment for our staff members will make the satoyama preservation effort sustainable,” Morimoto said. For that, they are renovating a century-old traditional-style neighborhood house named Hyakunen-tei, meaning “100-year home,” and raising funds for their future activities.



The interior of the old folk house Hyakunen-tei in the Shishitsuka woodlands. Crowdfunding is being carried out until Oct. 21 to revitalize the house, which is a symbol of sustainable satoyama conservation activities and interaction with the local community.

Photos by Hiromichi Matono



Nobuo Morimoto Certified Non-profit Organization for Nature Conservation and History Transmission of Shishitsuka Satoyama Chairman

Sustainable Japan Excellence Award

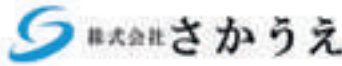
Sakaue Co. Ltd.

Sakaue Co. Ltd. is an agricultural company based in Kagoshima, southern Japan. We aim to contribute to society by creating new agricultural value. Our business ranges from large-scale vegetable cultivation to production of satoyama beef from pasture-raised Japanese Black cattle.



株式会社さかうえ

鹿児島県志布志市で『野菜の契約栽培事業』、『牧草飼料事業』、『放牧畜産事業』の3つの事業を軸に、既存の農業の枠にとらわれない農業ビジネスを展開しています。



Sustainable Japan Satoyama Excellence Award

Satoyama Experience

Satoyama Experience is a one-stop service to support travelers seeking authentic and unique experiences in Takayama. Our guided tours and accommodations are designed to connect travelers with locals and operated in a sustainable way.



SATOYAMA EXPERIENCE は、暮らしを旅するガイドツアーとローカルにこだわった分散型ホテルを通じて、ゲストに里山のサステイナブルな暮らしを伝えています。



Sustainable Japan Satoyama Excellence Award

Hayama

The town of Hayama, a serene and immaculate community, is just a breath away from metropolitan Tokyo. It is famous for its beautiful beaches, which face Mount Fuji to the west, and iconic offshore red shrine gate, which mesmerizes all who gaze upon it.



葉山町

東京から約1時間の距離にあり、御用邸の町として知られる葉山町は、海と山の豊かな自然に囲まれており、その美しい海岸線は「日本の渚・百選」にも選ばれています。



Sustainable Japan Satoyama Special Award

Certified Non-profit Organization for Nature Conservation and History Transmission of Shishitsuka Satoyama

The Shishitsuka satoyama in the Ibaraki city of Tsuchiura is an area rich in biodiversity and historical heritage. In this satoyama, our activities include nature and history research, nature conservation, farmer support, nature observation, environmental education and publishing.



特定非営利活動法人穴塚の自然と歴史の会
茨城県土浦市にある穴塚の里山は、生物多様性と歴史的遺産に富んだ地域である。この里山において、調査、保全、農家支援、観察会、環境教育、広報などの活動を行っている。



部をめぐるホースバックライディングツアーだった。サイクリングツアーを通して、山に囲まれた盆地の農村風景だけでなく、そこに住む人々の暮らしの営みを、世界中から集まるゲストに伝えている。「住民は、『ここにはなんもない』と言うが、世界から見ると非常に魅力的なところ」と山田氏は語った。2019年には年間約5,000人が参加したがそのうち9割が外国人だったという。

2020年には SATOYAMA STAY と称した2つの宿をオープン。一軒は何十年も飛騨古川の街に溶け込んできた和風スナックを改装し、もう一軒は新築ながら町並みに合わせてデザインされ、地元の材を使って地元の大工の手によって仕上げられた。この二軒の間の距離は500mほど。町並み、景観を作り守るという活動は、まずは小さなエリアに絞って磨きをかけることが効果的だと山田氏は言う。「濃度が濃いほうが変化が見えやすく、価値も集約されることでより高まる」と語った。

一方で、全国各地とつながって、里山の価値を世界に知らしめるためのプロジェクトを立ち上げたりサポートしたりという B to B 事業も行っている。「町並み景観保全などボランティアでやってい

るところもあるが、継続が難しいことも。我々は事業活動を通じてやるというアプローチだ」と話した。

逆にあくまでボランティアでの活動を30年以上も継続しているのが、Sustainable Japan Award Satoyama 部門審査員特別賞を受賞した特定非営利活動法人穴塚の自然と歴史の会だ。学園都市や住宅地の開発で森林が失われつつあった1980年代の茨城県。勤務地に近いこのエリアに引っ越してきた理事長の森本信生氏が、穴塚には里山の環境が残されていることに気づき、それを守るための活動を地元住民と共に開始したのはバブル真っ只中の1989年。新しいものを作っては消費するばかりの時代に、里山を守る活動は周囲の理解を得るだけで一苦労だった。「まずは地元のお年寄りから、かつての里山での暮らしや生業について話を聞いてそれを書き留めていく、聞き書きから始めた。この作業を通じて互いに思いを共有することができた」と森本氏。雑木林を手入れをさせてほしいと地主を訪れたときには、いきなり竹150本を切り倒されたこともあるという。「やれるものならやってみると言わんばかりだが、それを一生懸命片付けた。そうして少しずつ信頼を得た」と森本氏は振り返った。

環境省の「モニタリング1,000里地調査」における継続的な調査、古民家の修復や環境教育、米の共同購入や水田の管理などを通じた農家支援、環境保全、里山の良さを伝えるための各種イベントの実施など今では活動の内容は多岐にわたる。会の発足当時から毎月発行されてきた広報紙は400号近くにもおよび、地域の紹介を英語で綴ったリーフレットも用意されている。

「会の今後の課題は若い後継者の育成であり、そのために清潔なトイレや汚れた手足を洗う水の確保、汚れた服を着替えるなどの場が必要であり、基本的な環境整備が持続可能な里山保全につながるものと考える」と森本氏。そのために、約100年の歴史を持つ地域の古民家「百年亭」を改修して資金を募っている。



その他の記事をご覧ください→

Democrat vs. Republican

America vs. China

White vs. Black

Economy vs. Ecology

Wealth vs. Health

Urban vs. Rural

Government vs. People

Dogs vs. Cats

Coffee vs. Tea

Man vs. Woman

Monopoly vs. Share

Privacy vs. Surveillance

Politics vs. Science

Think vs. Do

Reject vs. Embrace

You vs. Me

Argument vs. Dialogue

Where there's division,
there's an opportunity for progress.

#BeyondVS

Dialogue matters.

thejapan times