

**Foreword for Special Issue :
Summary and Discussion of the Webinar on Social
Sustainability for the Prevention against the Water
Disaster in Japan, Korea, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia,
Norway, Sweden and Canada ***

Akio KAMIKO **

This paper intends to introduce to readers the outline of the webinar held on 18th of February, 2021 with the title, “Social Sustainability for the Prevention against the Water Disaster in Japan, Korea, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Norway, Sweden and Canada,” parts of whose content have found their ways into papers in this issue.

This webinar was hosted by “Research Project on Sustainable Society against Flood Disasters” of the Research Center for Sustainability Studies, Ritsumeikan University and was co-hosted by the ‘The Workshop of Sustainability Evaluation under Ritsumeikan Research Center for Sustainability Science’ and the ‘Environmental Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.’

The original idea to let the project team plan this occasion was like this.

The world is facing with many disasters as results of global warming and such. Local communities must prepare themselves for those disasters. To accomplish this, local authorities have to have top notch quality of competence and policies for a purpose of dealing with disasters to realise sustainable society. This webinar discusses these issues with emphasis on those policies around disasters caused by floods.

The titles of the presentations and the names of presenters are as the following and papers based on the presentation and discussion at the webinar are included in this issue.

* This Webinar was held as part of the research project for which Research Subsidy from Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (Kakenhi) was granted to Prof. Hiroshi Murayama and the author in FY2019. Following five papers are the fruits of the Webinar.

** Professor, College of Policy Science, Ritsumeikan University

- (1) “Risk Management and Preparedness for National Disaster of Flooding by the National Risk Assessment Strategy”
AHN, Young-Hoon
Chief Director of Public Policy Institute in Hansei University, Korea
Former Visiting Researcher, College of Policy Science, Ritsumeikan University
- (2) “Strategic Adaptation based on Sustainable Regional Policies dealing with Flood Disaster”
NAKAGAMI, Ken’ichi
Professor Emeritus, Ritsumeikan University & Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University
Member of the “Research Project on Sustainable Society against Flood Disasters”
Senior Researcher, Research Center for Sustainability Science, Ritsumeikan University
- (3) “Democratic Policy Implementation for the Flood Disaster Handling by the Sustainable Local Administration in Kyoto Prefecture”
MURAYAMA, Hiroshi
Professor Emeritus, Ritsumeikan University
Researcher, Research Center for Sustainability Science,
Member of the “Research Project on Sustainable Society against Flood Disasters”
- (4) “Regional and Local Policy Supporting Local Communities Flood Disaster Risk Reduction in Thailand”
TANWATTANA, Puntita
Senior Researcher, Environmental Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
PhD. (Policy Science, Ritsumeikan University)
Member of the “Research Project on Sustainable Society against Flood Disasters”
- (5) “Complementary Role of Community Hazard Map in Sharing Disaster Risk Information Policy: Mapping Practices of Disaster Prevention by Local Society”
MURAYAMA, Toru
Associate Professor, Nagoya University of Economics
Former Researcher, Research Center for Sustainability Science
Member of the “Research Project on Sustainable Society against Flood

Disasters”

- (6) “INTEGRATED SUSTAINABILITY: Implementing Regenerative Village Concept in Coastal Settlements, Semarang Border Area”

WARDHANI, Mustika K

Researcher, OIC Comprehensive Research Organization, Ritsumeikan University

- (7) “Disaster Management Planning in Rural Cambodia: Understanding the Role and Responsibilities of Local Governments”

ROSA, Yi

Lecturer, Department of Economic Development, Faculty of Development Studies, Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia

(PhD Student in Human Geography, Department of Geography, National University of Singapore)

- (8) “Sustainability of Railways through Disasters and the Roles of Local Governments”

YOSHIOKA, Taisuke

PhD. (Policy Science, Ritsumeikan University)

Researcher, Research Center for Sustainability Science and

KAMIKO, Akio

Professor (Special Appointment), College of Policy Science, Ritsumeikan University

Member of the “Research Project on Sustainable Society against Flood Disasters”

This occasion would have been planned as an international seminar in one of the countries the presenters are from, but since all the world is suffering from a new kind of disaster, Covid-19, the Research Group could not but plan it as an online, virtual gathering.

Some of the presenters were unable to produce a paper because of copyright problems about data or because of the fact that a paper strongly related to the presentation had already been published.

Thus, five papers were here in this issue of Journal of Policy Science and the author would like to briefly introduce those papers.

The first paper, “Strategic Adaptation based on Sustainable Regional Policies dealing with Flood Disaster” by Prof. NAKAGAMI, Ken’ichi is a paper about the need for a renewed concept of flood. The need arose because of climate change, and the paper advocates a more practical method of flood prevention called “Integrated Water Resource Management.” This concept includes the use of

rainwater storage facilities and rainwater infiltration facilities. The paper stresses the need for social acceptance of rainwater storage and infiltration system.

The second paper, “Democratic Policy Implementation for the Flood Disaster Handling by the Sustainable Local Administration in Kyoto Prefecture” by Prof. MURAYAMA, Hiroshi discusses the democratic legitimacy of public policies, using flood prevention policies as examples. The author argues that policies need social sustainability and democracy, or the type of democracy, is a key element for the sustainability of public policies. _

The third paper, “Regional and Local Policy Supporting Local Communities Flood Disaster Risk Reduction in Thailand” by Dr. TANWATTANA, Puntita is a paper about policy implementation systems in Thailand looking into the layered system of national, provincial and district governments and communities. This paper discusses the issue in conjunction with disaster risk reduction. Especially, the need for the promotion of CDRMO (Community Disaster Risk Management Organisation) is stressed in this paper.

The fourth paper, “INTEGRATED SUSTAINABILITY: Implementing Regenerative Village Concept in Coastal Settlements, Semarang Border Area” by Ms. WARDHANI, Mustika is a paper written from a different point of view. The author is an architect and taking coastal settlements in Demak Regency, the settlements frequently suffering from flooding , as the field for observation, the author drew the conclusion that, “one of the variables that can facilitate integrated sustainability during disasters and post disasters period is networks in the ekistics element. Three aspects that need to be considered as network indicators in coastal settlements that are affected by tides are as follows:

Accessibility & direction of evacuation routes (accessible from land & water routes)

Bridge Design (maximizes the curvature shape so that the boats can pass)

Dock in front of houses (Design prototype is not only for fisherman’s house but for all houses)

The fifth paper, “Sustainability of Railways through Disasters and the Roles of Governments” by Dr. Taisuke YOSHIOKA and Professor Akio KAMIKO is about the damages caused by the natural disasters, among others, earthquakes and flood by heavy rains recently. The paper discusses the situation in Japan where, especially on the rural side, the damage has grave consequences. There, because of depopulation now generally seen in the rural areas in Japan, the local railway companies do not have necessary vigour to restore the damaged lines but

as railways are considered as durable infrastructure the local communities took for granted, damage by natural disasters would cause sudden and lasting disruption of expected normal lives in the area. In the cases of disruption of train services because of grave damages to the railway infrastructures, intervention of the government sector seems the only way to keep this kind of public transport. The paper looks into the central government's legal scheme for restoration of railways and reviews actual cases. Seeing that the process is more of political negotiation although conditions in the area in question undoubtedly play an important role, the authors propose that environmental consideration also should be taken into consideration.

The points emerged from the presentations in the Webinar and in these papers are as follows:

1. The world is facing a new dimension of disasters like dramatically increased precipitation, caused by new elements like global warming. This point is evident in all the papers but especially, Professor Nakagami and Ms. Wardhani shows this point.
2. To deal with disaster risks it is important to take appropriate decision-making processes. Some of the papers take up this problem of decision-making for provisions for risks including many elements of prioritisation. This leads to the discussion of governance systems best fit for preparation for disasters and to deal with actual ones. This is the main concern of Professor Murayama and Dr. Tanwattana also touches upon this point. Particularly, Professor Murayama argues that the style of democracy depends on the given characteristics of the society in which the democracy is in operation.
3. The disasters exert influence on many aspects of the human society. Some parts of the society like those on disadvantaged area or with social weakening caused by depopulation are especially vulnerable and they need special attention. Dr. Yoshioka and Prof. Kamiko stress this point when they argue the survivability of railways.
4. Human network is important to deal with actual and present disasters and this point is stressed by Dr. Tanwattana and Ms. Wardhani.

After all, disasters are more frequent in the present days and to cope with them, people must prepare themselves for them. This is a very political matter because it includes prioritisation of many things. Also the local governments and communities are very important players both in the preparation stage and during

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the disaster. In other words, human elements and governance system seem as important to prevent and alleviate the damages of disasters.