

## **Ishikawa-Kanazawa Biocultural Region –Local platform by different sectors and academic network fostering creativity -**

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### **Background Study**

Kanazawa city and United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) have been jointly conducting research on the biodiversity conservation and utilization of ecosystem services in Kanazawa city. Through the study on the linkage between the city's traditional culture and local ecosystem services including climatic and geographical conditions, the intrinsic interdependence between cultural creativity and local biodiversity has been highlighted. The study not only explored the physical and social background on how the traditional culture was continuously influenced by local biodiversity, but also emphasized that the linkage is still vital and can contribute to the current development of local modern culture and its innovation.

### **Policy recommendation and implementation**

At the UCCN Kanazawa 2015, UNU-IAS held an international symposium to report on the above study outputs and suggested "Ishikawa-Kanazawa Biocultural Region" for integrated conservation of local biodiversity and cultural diversity based on the reciprocal relationship of both factors. Such conservation will contribute to the sustainable use of internal and the surrounding healthy ecosystem that constantly produce rich ecosystem services.

The concept includes "dual" integration: 1) integration of policy development processes of different political issues such as cultural promotion and biodiversity conservation, and 2) integration of different sectors including civil society, academia and policy makers as well as vertical integration of different administrative scales such as the city and surrounding municipalities for synergetic collaboration.

The concept described above can be referred to as a "Biocultural Region. This strategy "was introduced into Kanazawa city's biodiversity strategy that was developed in 2015. It is expected that the city's strategy will be implemented in the above-mentioned integrated manner with some specific key projects. In addition, Kanazawa city aims at promoting the acclaimed craft art "Kogei" to attract leading consumers of cultural services and goods. "Kogei" can be associated with other cultural activities such as music, media art and gastronomy. Rich biological resources underlie these cultural products/activities and provide authenticity to them.

### **Implication for UNESCO Creative City Network**

Furthermore, this study marked the importance of linking the academic community with the policy development process. This interaction played a critical role in building a local platform that can attract the participation of many stakeholders from various social sectors and domains. This collaboration by different stakeholders led to the authenticity of cultural initiatives. This approach could be scaled up at global level as part of an emerging UCCN academic network.

In this session, Kanazawa city's biocultural policy, which was developed in collaboration with a variety of participants, will be explored. The experiences of joint policy making with the public and private sector in Kanazawa will be further discussed to target a future academic hub for scientific and research activities associated with the UCCN. Case study presentations in this session include 1) visualization of the linkages between local ecosystem services and locally developed culture, 2) initiatives for fostering cultural creativity by local NPO, 3) theoretical analysis of sustainable resource use for future regional development through the biocultural diversity concept. This session will conclude with a panel discussion on how to enhance the Ishikawa-Kanazawa biocultural region and the implications for sustainable regional policy.

References: The Ishikawa-Kanazawa Biocultural Region: A model for linkage between biological diversity and cultural prosperity. UNU-IAS OUIK (2015).