

COMPLETION REPORT

Socio-cultural Aspect of Citizen Participation Governance in Tama River Basin (Japan) Conservation

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Japanese environmental management is characterized by three aspects: a triangular model of actors (government, public and business), stakeholders relationship build on a consensus-oriented negotiation process, and a strong basis in environmental ethics and values. All these aspects were rooted in Japan's political-economic structure, social norms and cultural context. Japanese National Character Survey revealed that, since 1953 until 2008, the perception, sense and attitudes of Japanese people toward their relation with nature or environment is changing. There were increasing opinions that man must 'follow and obey the nature' in purpose for happy life, contrast to the decreasing of 'make use and conquer nature' attitudes. Long history of public participation in Tama River Conservation (*Tama Gawazukuri*) shows that shared knowledge about natural resources itself is important for building environmental ethics; respected leadership of key persons and organizations, moral standards and mutual trust are proven important for building good consensus; and the three party of stakeholders can achieved benefit relationship with the respect for people empowerment and social learning process.

Public involvement in *Tama Gawazukuri* started since 1964 when the River Law was enacted. In 1970, the first civil group for Tama River, 'Association for Nature Conservation in Tama River' was established. In 1974, an umbrella organization for multiple groups, the 'Association for Nature Conservation Groups in Tama River System' was formed. However, at that time Tama River still polluted by household and chemical waste, and in 1975, was dishonored as the 5th worst first-class river in terms of water quality. A decade after, in 1986, Tama River Summit, the first roundtable conference of river management stakeholders was held.

In 1992, the Workshop on Springs and Cliff Lines declared a resolution entitled 'The Three Principles and Seven Rules', in purpose for building partnership among different stakeholders in a manner that avoids waste of time over conflicts on unimportant issue. The Three Principles are: (1) Free discussion, (2) Full/thorough discussion, (3) Prior consent of stakeholders before taking action. The Seven Rules are: (1) Speakers may express opinions which are not necessarily on behalf of those organization to which they are belong, (2) No one shall ever be assailed with hostile questions, (3) Fair play and fairness shall be strictly observed, (4) Discussions should be based on scientific data, (5) Discussions should be aimed at reaching agreement among the members after clarifying the points in dispute, (6) The issues in dispute should be discussed only with reference to a particular case and should never be generalized, (7) Projects should be divided into long-term projects and short-term projects. Opinions that are offered should be practicable. This resolution is the first socio-cultural basic for Tama River management that adopted formally. Therefore, good consensus can be achieved in order to enhance social bonding (*kizuna*) between peoples based on the values of mutual trust, loyalties, and sense of home place.

In 1994, The Tama Center was established and became the platform for NPOs activities. Then, in 1998, six years after the resolution of '3 Principles & 7 Rules' adopted, Tama River Basin Conference was held, proceeded with 8 times roundtables and seminars, also 5 times River Basin Commission meetings. They finally reached an agreement of Tama River Basin Improvement Plan in 2001. The whole process involved 26,600 peoples consists of local government, residents, NGO, industry, academics and river administrator. Between those activities, in 1999, Tama River Ecomuseum (*Nikaryou Seseragikan*) was established and develop as a learning center. The visitors consist of active residents, school children, authorities, NPO, and river related communities from all over Japan. It

is also become a meeting place between young and senior generation; between peoples with different interest, for example: bio diversity experts, story teller, environmental education for children activist. This communities continuously activities with high effort and passion can be regarded as an important development for public participation process improvement. Furthermore, the discussion held for 10th anniversary of the *Nikaryou Seseragikan* revealed that some cultural values shared by the communities influenced the spirit of *Tama Gawazukuri*. The relation between public and the government described as ‘children grows by looking at their parent’s back’, means the character of public participation depends also on government action. The communities sense of rootedness to Tama River can be seen in their activities on making the chance to be presence and feel the nature by one’s own hands and foots, that gives an emotionally touching spirit. Those cultural values are nurtured and become a basic for environmental ethics.

Lesson learned for Indonesia, the local government should develop methods for encouraging more active public participation based on informal and formal consensus between stakeholders and intensive communication between key persons. It is also important to build synergic knots as a space for social learning, either a temporally regular events or an established learning center, which will improve the society’s social bonding.



Pic. 1. Shukugawara Weir in Tama River



Pic. 2. Tama Riverbed side



Pic. 3. Nikaryou Seseragikan



Pic. 4. Communities activities display in NS

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