

A project that supports community sustainability in Asia



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Report: VISIONS Asia Resilience Forum 2014



The VISIONS Asia Resilience Forum took place in Thailand from September 12th to September 14th, 2014. On Days 1 and 2, professors, researchers, representatives from NGOs, local governments and agencies and the private sector gathered at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok to discuss about Resilience in a multi-disciplinary way and share experiences. On Day 3, the group visited the Pathum Phani province and learned about Water Management at the Rungsit Klong 8 community and, at the same time, mapped the area with the help of a drone in order to increase the community's resilience to natural disasters.

[Program and Speakers is here](#)

Day 1

Resilience: A Multi-disciplinary Concept



After Vice President Pornpote Piumsonboon, Chulalongkorn University, gave a warm opening speech, Dr. Makoto Taniguchi from RIHN gave the first key note speech. He explained how increasingly the research on "resilience" in global environmental change studies and multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary research have gained the importance in order to effectively solve these issues. In his key note speech, a new international research platform "Future Earth" was introduced for academic participants, followed by his remark of RIHN project "Human Environmental security in Asia Pacific Ring of Fire: Water-energy nexus". The second keynote speech was given by Dr. Bharat Dahiya, Visiting Researcher, CUSRI, entitled as The Evolving Practice and Understanding of Urban Resilience in Asia - one of the critical issues in fast growing Asian economies. Reflecting Dr. Taniguchi's first keynote speech which set the comprehensive understanding towards "resilience", he elaborated the concept into "Urban Resilience in Asia" conceptually and practically, referring to his long experience at UN Habitat.

The screenshot shows a Facebook post from the page "visions" BeGood Cafe. The post is in Japanese and mentions an event on September 30th (Thursday) for environmental volunteers. It includes a photo of a man presenting to a group of students in a classroom setting.



Session 1

Chaired by Dr. Vithaya Kulsomboon, Director of CUSRI, Session 1 was kicked off and accommodated 4 panels; Dr. Sompong Sirisoponsilp (Former Director of Transportation Research Institute), Dr. Worawet Suwanrada (Dean of College of Population Studies), Professor Lawrence Surendra (Chairman of The Sustainability Platform), Dr. Danai Thaitakoo (Department of Landscape Architecture).

“Challenges in Building Supply Chain Resilience” was paneled by Dr. Sompong, and he presented the current status of literature about supply chain resilience in an increasingly interconnected global production chain.

As second panel, Dr. Worawet presented on “Resilience: from demographic change’s perspective” and implied that the current aging trend in Thailand has multi-dimensionally interlinks with socio-economic, and environmental impact horizontally and vertically, that is on every layer of individual, family, community, national level.

Professor Lawrence as third panel for “Choosing the resilient pathways – towards a critique: concept and construction for resilience” pointed out the critical perspective towards “resilience” research and shared the idea that academia can contribute through the “proactive resilience approach” rather than “reactive” resilience approach, by holding the academic conference like this occasion and connecting public policy activist to produce the workable framework.

Dr. Danai Thaitakoo in his presentation “Landscape Resilience – Community Resilience” illustrated how people adopt the change with increasingly changing landscape, utilizing his case field study.



Session 2

This session was chaired by Dr. Pornchai Sithisarankul, Chair of Social and Preventative Medicine, and another set of 5 panels; Dr. Ssanjay Srivastava (Chief, Disaster Risk Reduction Section, UN-ESCAP), Dr. Narumon Arunotai (Deputy Director, Social Research Institute), Dr. Phumin Silapunt (Deputy Secretary General, National Institute for Emergency Medicine, Thailand), Dr. Puntita and Dr. Suthirat (Environmental Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University).

Dr. Sanjay presented on “How far Asia is resilient to disasters in the changing climate?”, and stressed that even though the human loss has been constantly decreasing, the economic loss due to the increasingly frequent disaster has been more significant in the Asia Pacific region, where is experiencing the fastest economic growth in the world.

Dr. Narumon Arunotai followed with the presentation “Vulnerability and resilience: some observations from field researchers” and shared her research experience in the actual field through the conceptualized “resilience” lens. Putting the various definitions widely known in the public-health field, at individual/personal level, she interestingly expanded and interlinked its idea, specifically focusing on the

significance of “networks” among individuals.

“Applying Resilience Concept for Disaster Emergency Medicine in Disaster Management” was presented by Dr. Phumin Silapunt. After briefly introducing the function of National Institute for Emergency Medicine (Thailand) which promotes the engagement of local governments in the management of emergency medical system in disaster setting, he shared the experience of the institutes in effective coordination to enhance the societal resiliency, in collaboration with various institutes such as WHO, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), or ASEAN regional institutes.

The last panel in the second session “Applying resilient concept for climate change study and disaster management in Thailand context: concepts and lessons learned” was jointly presented by Dr. Puntita and Dr. Suthirat. They interestingly pointed out the difficulty to seek a united definition of resilience concept by comparing various “resilience” definitions and its varied understandings applied among different research disciplines, from the lessons they have learnt at the workshop that ERIC has organized in July 2014.



Session 3

Chaired by Dr. Lawrence Surendra, Session 3 was themed a specific focus on energy resilience with experts from Japan, India, Thailand; Dr. Go Yoshizawa (Osaka University), Professor Tatsujiro Suzuki (Former Vice Chairman of Japan Atomic Energy Commission and currently Vice Director of Research Centre for Nuclear Weapons Abolition at Nagasaki University), Dr. Ukrist Pathmanand (Institute of Asian Studies, CU), Kensuke Yamaguchi (Tokyo University, Energy Research Institute, CU), and Mr. Sunandan Tiwari (Deputy Director of ICLEI South Asia) who kindly accepted our last minute invitation for the forum.

“The Valley of Resilience” presented by Dr. Go Yoshizawa provided the deeper conceptual understanding towards “Resilience” and highlighted the possible redefining of resilience concept based on the distinct spatial structure by phase and scale of impact of the disaster.

Professor Tatsujiro Suzuki joined with his video message regarding the controversial Fukushima incident triggered by the disastrous earthquake in Japan in 2011. As he was a former vice chairman of Japan Atomic Energy Commission during the disturbing time in 2011, he shared his thoughts and messages over the resiliency towards the man-made disaster. In his video message, he highlighted how the national level policy can potentially regain the public confidence and trust which appears to be vital to secure the resilience of the social system.

The two speakers, Dr. Ukrist Pathmanand and Mr. Yamaguchi presented on “Mekong Belt: Escaping the local resource curse”. Looking towards the AEC in 2015, while the regional energy market in ASEAN appears to face the several critical questions regarding the sustainability and resiliency – environmentally, socially, and economically.

As a final speaker of the session, Sunandan Tiwari (ICLEI) was invited for the stage as a guest panel to present his institute’s resilience project, entitled “Promoting Urban Resilience”. ICLEI is the international organization who has been active in promoting the global networks of cities dedicated to sustainable development which they focus on climate and disaster-resilient city as its 8 institutional goals and agendas. He also announced that Resilient Cities 2015 Asia will be held in Bangkok next year, in collaboration with UNEP, GIZ, APAN, UN ESCAP, Rockefeller Foundation, and Municipal League of Thailand.



Panel Discussion

Professor Makoto Taniguchi (RIHN) chaired the interactive panel discussions with all the participants, by casting questions; (1) what kind of issues, tools are required for the multidisciplinary research, and (2) why we need the multidisciplinary research approach – why not single discipline approach cannot solve the issues. Indeed, the participants admittedly agreed that the distinct understanding of resilience concept subconsciously remains among the disciplines depending on how you see the social problems and no even one commonly shared definition is available; however, participants also agreed on the necessity for the multidisciplinary research approach in order to effectively solve the issues on the ground.

Dr. Taniguchi, in this light of discussion, reiterated the significance of his “Future Earth” global platform which promotes not only incorporating the multi-disciplinary perspectives, but also the engagement of multiple vertical layered of stakeholders such as locals, regional, national, international, and global.

Day 2

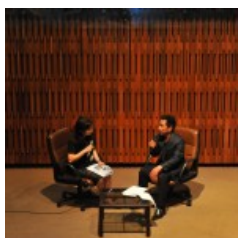
Resilience: From Concept to Practice



Plenary Session

Mr. Kiyoshi Shikita greeted all the participants and talked about the VISIONS project, its past activities and future challenges. Then, he invited Dr. Royol Chitradon (Director of Hydro and Agro Informatics Institute – HAI, and Director and Secretary-General of Utokapat Foundation). Mr. Royol gave an overview of the water management system in Thailand, emphasizing the importance of collaboration with local communities.

Session 1 – Lessons from Disasters



Session 1 started with an insightful talk between Dr. Royboon Rassameethes (Director of Agro Informatics Division and Collaborative Management and Corporate Communication Division at Hydro and Agro Informatics Institute and deputy secretary-general of Utokapat Foundation) and Mr. Aksorn Noisawang, Chief Executive of the Bueng Cham Aor Sub-district Administrative Organization (SAO). Both discussed the effects of floods in local communities and the recovery from disaster. Ms. Chizumi Okumoto (President of the NPO Press Center) explained the major effects of the 2011 Disaster in the Northeastern part of Japan. She also

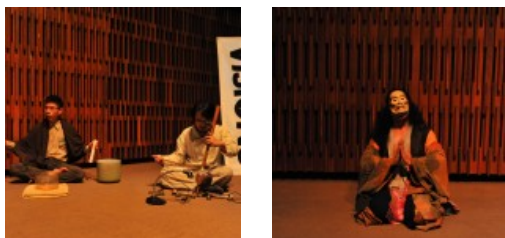
mentioned some of the actions that have the aim of increasing resilience in Japan, such as Race for Resilience and Code for Fukushima.

Session 2 – Resilience Solutions with ICT (Information and Communication Technologies)



In session 2, Mr. Taichi Furuhashi (Chairperson of Race for Resilience) talked about ways that ICTs can help build disaster resilience. He introduced latest applications that have been developed with the aim of improving resilience.

Dance performance



Mr. Jun made a performance of his “Kabuku mai” dance with the help of the musician Thitipol Kanteewong. Mr. Edgard Guevara, Mr. Bambang Paningron Astiaji and Dr. Kampanart Buahombura voluntarily performed with Jun and Thitipol in an improvised way. The result surprised the entire audience.

Session 3 – Prevention of Disasters



Session 3 concentrated on sharing experiences from representatives from NGOs from different countries in Asia. Firstly, Mr. Edgard Guevara (GEOFARM, Philippines) talked about innovative solutions to natural disasters, such as his Rescue & Survival Village Project (RSVP), as well as other solutions that help promote a environmental-friendly lifestyle.



Mr. Bambang Paningron Astiaji from Indonesia talked about how artistic events, such as the Asia Tri Jogja Festival, are helping Yogyakarta recover from the deadly 2006 earthquake that hit the area.



Dr. Kampanart Buahombura, founder of the Ban Thorphan organization in Thailand, gave an insightful lecture on ways that make people live free and in a sustainable way, which is an important factor to build community resilience.

Session 4 – Revitalization of villages in Japan struggling with Depopulation



Mr. Kazuo Nishiguchi, Chairperson of the NGO Ueyama-tanadadan, introduced the Ueyama community in Okayama Prefecture, which has been revitalized by community-oriented actions, such as the recovery of abandoned terraced rice fields. Mr. Jun from Salon de AManTo, based in Osaka, talked about the community of Nakazakicho in Osaka, which is a successful case of revitalization with the involvement of the community in theater pieces, gallery exhibitions and many other kinds of activities. Both Mr. Nishiguchi and Mr. Jun are drawing a lot of attention in Japan today as “heroes” that were able to change their communities.

Panel Discussion



The key message of the Day 2 was “tools for resilience” in order to disseminate the concept into practice. For

instance, the creativity or art can be one of the means to promote the awareness of resilience into community. In addition, the highly advanced technology such as geospatial maps or apps for mobiles can also enhance the resiliency of the community as a large number of populations now have smart-phones in the region. The panel discussed and interacted with the audience about how to strengthen and expand this network.



Day 2 ended with a big collective hug.

Day 3

Excursion to Pathum Thani

Coordinated by Toshiba Foundation Thailand and BeGood Café, the excursion was conducted in Rungsit Klong 8, Pathumthani for the water management tour and geo-mapping experience.



Dr. Royboon showed the group around the area where the community has successfully diverted the flooded water into productive usage, by constructing the irrigation alley.



The unique feature was the unstructured design for the community to be more resilient, that is this irrigation alley and palm tree plantation were designed, built, managed, and shared by the community for their own, rather than the top-down spatial design.



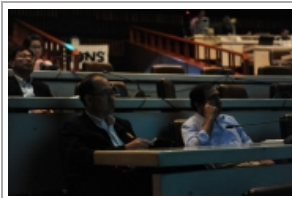
Mr. Furuhashi followed for the mapping excursion, utilizing a drone (the small plane equipped with the camera). The drone was programmed to take photos and where to fly and come back, and the pictures taken by this drone can be shared in his OpenStreetMap which anyone can edit, and share.



This kind of open sourced technology, as his key message, can also be critically helpful in the disaster settings.

PHOTO REPORT

[Show slideshow]



Organizer : **BeGood Cafe**