

## Field Trip Overview

Field Oriented Leaders in Environmental Sectors in Asia and Africa, FOLENS conducted a field trip to Iida and Ina city of Nagano Prefecture on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Dec 2011.

The field trip has been initiated as a part of 3rd FOLENS International Symposium. It was an excursion based on the theme 'Sustainable Energy Strategies: Challenges of local communities for local energy generation for local consumption'

It's only few months I am in Japan and it's really interesting to visit some interesting places with FOLENS' group of interesting people.

I was so excited even just to hear the background of the city as 'a sustainable city - power of citizens'.

The title itself stimulates me to visit there as soonest possible. So I was desperately waiting to see and understand what are those elements which transform the city into sustainable.



*Iida is not only famous for fruits, like apples, pears, and strawberries but also known as a city to introduce local energy generation for local use as a sustainable energy strategic model. The picture taken from Sangitei Hotel who use overflowed hot spring water for a heat pump and wood wastes for heat generation as the sustainable source of energy*

Even more, I was curious to understand what really is 'a sustainable city'. Does it mean that the city itself is sustaining on its own energy utilization?

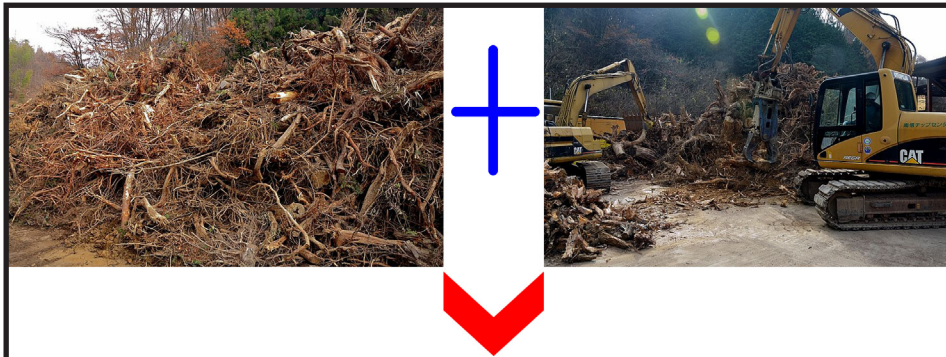
I was, indeed, wondering to understand the ways of using resources by the local community for their livelihoods & for the business along with the sustainable energy strategies and the challenges facing by the community members. I was planning to closely observe if there were any model that can be taken as an example to be practiced in some other places where necessary.



I have understand the various concepts of local communities promoting local energy for local consumption in terms of technology, socio-economic, natural and environmental impacts. Sakura Farm was one example who utilize the mushroom bed wastes for heat generation for the farm was one of the most interesting things for me as it can be further digged out for the development of same model in other developing like Nepal.



Another interesting visit was the visit at Nanshin Biomass Cooperative where local businesses promoted the wood pellets utilizing thinned woods as an alternative energy source. The Picture below



Our visit to Hasenakayama Community Micro Hydro Power Station and Inadani Natural Energy Micro hydro power generating system owned and managed by a local community group was another benchmark for the excursion.

We have visited Mibugawa Small-Scale Hydro Power Station which as the small-scale hydro power generating facilities.



Overall, the feedback on the evaluation was extremely positive. The field trip was described as “wonderful, one-in-million, educational, inspirational and the best experience ever had.” When asked what accomplishments were achieved, responses included: being pushed to new levels, knowledge of Japanese culture, making friendships and connections with other students interested in environmental issues.

At last but not the least, the lines from Ohisama Shimpo as follows are the most memorable and the great earning of this tour for me.

- Local energy production for local consumption
- Community building by ourselves
- Changing money flow to change our society
- Deciding and realizing our desirable future

*Taking our energy back to our own hands...*

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