

Perspective and problems on the partnership between citizens and specialists in the academic activities and policy formations on the basis of local features

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Coastal environmental conservation activities demand that the decision making of local communities along the coast follows the same vision to realize. Especially, in the closed local communities, many specialists, researchers and conservationists are tending to be treated as visitors. Then, it is essential that visitors act to minimize friction between stakeholders and respect their locality and history to build and maintain the partnership between visitors and local domestic people.

I am a scientist on coastal environmental conservation. My study sites, mudflats in Oita Prefecture are located at the western part of Setouchi Inland Sea. Main industries of coastal villages and cities are fishery and agriculture. Recently, port constructions and rice fields developments were executed there. These developments were estimated to affect the coastal environment, but local peoples could not object the projects. Because the atmosphere of closed local community did not allow each person mention on it freely. Visitors must pay attention the situation of local people, because in the cities such situations are totally different. Then, in the policymaking and environmental planning, philosophy and methodology to respect local situations are essential.

However, in the academic world, recent trends are to make universality and global vision. Case studies and endemic materials are tends to be neglected. Then, case studies and research on local community base environmental problems are hard to be continued. And technical standards of the nation are also the problem. Because, these standards sometime restrict realization of local-base ideas and.

Breakthrough of these situations, local groups of natural history and endemic cultures are powerful agents. Most of them are of small members, but they know the local situations. Their activities are long-term monitoring of environmental changes and states. Local people can understand the group activity and vision in usual communication. Of course, the big and international NGOs and networks are essential. It is necessary for specialists, researchers and policy makers to make partnership with both of “big and international” and “small and local” NGOs.

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