

## **Report on Participation in Thailand Field Trip 2015**

**Anom Sigit Suryawan**  
**Year level: M2**  
**Faculty/Graduate School of: Economics**  
**Kyoto University**

First of all, I would like to thank Kyoto University, especially to my supervisor Professor Hisano, for giving me the opportunity to join the Thailand Field Trip 2015. It was such a great experience and I really enjoyed every second of it.

Regarding the preparation, I think the faculty members, i.e. Lambino-sensei and Souk-sensei, have done a great job in terms of organizing and stimulating the participant to be well-prepared for the international student workshop in Chulalongkorn University, which was the main agenda of the trip. I really appreciate the idea that the students had to submit their power point slides one week before the departure so that the faculty members could check and give some feedback. Indeed, it turned out to be very helpful for me.

All of the lectures that I attended were very good and I learned many things from them. These lectures mainly focused on ASEAN and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) that will be commencing in December this year. The discussion included the history of ASEAN, key provisions in the AEC agreement and its potential impacts for the social, political and economic environment of the region. There were also lectures from the people from NGOs and social movements such as BioThai and Freetrade Watch. I really like these kinds of lectures because they tried to look at the coming AEC from critical perspectives by using CP Corporation and Thai's free trade agreement with China and Japan cases respectively as an example. They have made me conscious about the negative impacts of free trade agreements that are happening in Thailand and all over the globe. I also learned that analyzing an issue critically is very important in academic work because it will enable us presenting a more objective and balance view of what is happening.

I would say that the most memorable experience for me was the visit to organic farmers and NGOs, particularly Khao Kwan Foundation. Practical steps on how to carry out organic farming from the very beginning were explained in detail and were very easy to understand. I learned that organic farming is all about knowing the nature and living with it, and that the conventional way of farming, e.g. using extensive chemicals, is exactly the opposite of these principles. I think the director of this foundation was such a great man and I really respect him. He is one of those people who genuinely wants to help his society to be in better condition, both economically and environmentally, by introducing a more sustainable way of farming.

Thanks to Fary-san, we also visited some international organizations located in Bangkok such as UNIDO, World Bank, and the Malaysia Tourism Board. We learned that sustainable development has been adopted as the basis for the global development. It is like a buzzword everywhere. Even though we still have no clue on how this concept is going to be measured and implemented by each institution, but at least, I think it is safe to assume that these international organizations take the concept of sustainable development seriously in carrying out their projects, and thus, we can expect positive results from this.

Last but not least, I also had a great time during our stay in Bangkok. We stayed in an excellent hotel and it is located near Thammasat University as well as near the main tourist area of Bangkok. It was also relatively easy to find halal food in the city, and the taste was good. Overall, the trip was great and I did enjoy my time in Bangkok. There is of course still room for improvement, but all I can say is that thank you for having me in this memorable trip.

*Otsukaresamadeshita!*