

East Asian Sustainable Development Studies Exchange Programme

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My motivation for coming to Kyoto University was to learn more about sustainable development as I had been exposed to the topic previously, but not in a rigorous academic setting. The course also exposed me to many other fields of inquiry and provided me with the motivation to think more about how sustainability could be incorporated into my usual fields of research in economics. The issue of sustainability had been on my mind before, but the programme made it clear that for development and growth to be sustainable and inclusive, it must be worked into every discipline. The international nature of the programme made me to be interested in doing work and study in a similar atmosphere in the future.

Studying in Kyoto University, and living in Kyoto in general, were a very pleasant and interesting experience. The university campus was beautiful and historically poignant, especially with autumn colours on display. The academic atmosphere was very open and inclusive, involving people from many different fields and experiences and this made the conversations and discussions very lively. The city of Kyoto was welcoming, and the many sights gave me life changing experience. The university and the experiences in the classroom provided us many opportunities for wide-ranging discussions with discussants from many different fields and backgrounds and it was a very interesting experience.

The programme offered us many different windows into the issue of sustainability. The sociology-focused classes exposed me to new and alternative methods of study that my own training as an economist made me usually avoid, while the environmental management classes showed me new ways to think about how companies, people and society need to approach the issue of sustainability. The field research class provided us a glimpse of the very heated and much needed debate on the issue of nuclear power; the field trips themselves proved to be very educational. The classes on sustainable development in ASEAN allowed me to share some of my views and experiences, as well as to listen to the thoughts of others both from within and outside the region. Overall a wide range of courses were offered that covered a lot of ground in a very short time, yet remained tied together by the issue of sustainability.

My experience in Kyoto University definitely made me consider my options for the future. I enjoyed my time studying here, and it made me think again about further study plans as well as career options. Though I would certainly like to come back to Japan on a more permanent basis as I have enjoyed my time here thoroughly, the language barrier remains a definite issue especially as I would like to continue studying and working in the field of economics. In a broader sense, the things I have learned here about sustainability have altered the way I approach issues, and I am now more aware that I need to take many other things into consideration as I pursue my research. My career and academic experiences have, over the past few years, narrowed down my fields of interest and inquiry; my time in Kyoto University has opened them up once again. I hope to be able to apply the experiences I have gained here in my studies and my future career.