

## The issues with ASEAN-Korea trade

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### 1. What I hoped to earn and what I earned as an exchange student: Academic Outcomes

I've never thought about the topic of sustainable development when I first applied for an exchange student, nor have I thought it as a large problem. So, I regarded the meaning of sustainable development as too big of a theme and an unsolvable problem.

The actual class enabled me to think about the problems facing rural communities, agriculture, development, and industry. As I studied in Korea and Southeast Asia where the problem of sustainable development wasn't handled deeply, it was a topic too distant from myself and I was able to look back on how our society had been ignorant about it. Although things that affect the modern society directly such as economy and trade are important, I believe we as Asians shouldn't be negligent about the changes in our rural communities and the structural problem of agriculture. Also, I was able to contemplate about the corporate culture and structure our society faces. For the same reason, I believe that the opportunity to take a class in such topic (unfamiliar yet important in Korea and Southeast Asia) was a benefit of this semester in Japan.

### 2. Class and Activities

**Comparative Development Studies-** It was a class in form of a seminar. In the first section, we learned about sustainable agriculture in Europe. We could learn about the environment-friendly policies and international retail structure. Especially impressive was the fact that the customer mindset about agricultural goods and consumer culture were well established. In the second section I could think about the theoretical and practical approach to sustainable development. Sustainable development is a broad topic that is difficult to find the correct solution. I believe it is an issue that needs a strategic approach of the group starting from interest and preservation of one's region.

**Comparative Industry Policy Studies-** It largely consisted of agriculture and industry. In the agricultural sector we learned about GMO foods and the destruction of traditional agriculture, and also about the fair trade and human rights of coffee production. It was time to ponder about the environmental and human rights issue of our food. In the industrial sector we learned about the Japanese corporate structure, problem of public enterprise, and theory about comparative advantage. I could think about the class in relation to Korea's corporate and public enterprise problem and their reality.

**Kyoto Graduate Seminar-** I could engage in debate after a lecture of sustainable development with participation from other European and Asian students. Agriculture, corporate culture, and economics were all topics that were unfamiliar, but it was a good experience and I was able to exchange thoughts with students in such major from other countries. I especially remember the farm we visited in the field trip. I was intrigued by the current status of the farms and the vegetables sold there.

It was memorable to see other students engage in fervent debate, although it was difficult for me to participate, and after the class I had a strong impression that the unfamiliar issue of sustainable development was being left out in our society despite it being very important in our everyday lives. Since the topic related to Sustainable issues is unfamiliar and there are no numerical results or correct answers, it needs our attention and to be preserved.