

The Sustainable Gastronomy in Society 「SGS」

Newsletter

JAPAN-EUROPE
FORUM

SGS Goes Local!

EDITORIAL

For the last past weeks, SGS has relentlessly organized its mission to promote various initiatives since the inception of our landmark “Nara Forum” 2022.

Our platform of engagement is celebrating its second anniversary in 2023. We are just started to hold exchanges on this year’s Roadmap but we will be honored to extend to you the official invitation to participate with us.

Our Advisory Board members and team had their annual gathering as we relentlessly pursue our mission to engage and motivate people, find new forms of collaboration and ways to promote sustainable food practices, and improve food values and sustainable food behaviors.

More details in this newsletter, where you will also find the perspectives of launching working group across five areas of actions to push further on transforming the Food System through Sustainable Gastronomy – How SGS Engages with Local Prefectures.

Moreover, SGS will further embrace digital, social media <https://twitter.com/sgsjeforum> initially launched during March 2023. It will bring together stakeholders committed to the subject so that there is more and more viewpoints: from Japan and abroad. Finally, you will also find introduction of new members, and our analyses on our usual topics of interest concerning the notion of terroir and GIs issues from a Japanese and French stakeholders.

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Interview

Interview with Life Culture Collaboration Division, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan

文化庁参事官
(生活文化連携担当)

To take up the question asked to previous personalities, we would like to ask you to introduce the role of the Agency for Cultural Affairs in terms of food culture?

In 2013, "Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese" was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO. In 2017, food culture was specified as an example of Life culture in the Culture and Arts Basic Law. Subsequently, in 2020, the Agency for Cultural Affairs established the Counselor for Food Culture (Note: Later renamed as Life Culture Collaboration Division) as the department dealing with food culture.

In response to growing interest in Japan's unique food culture domestically and abroad, we are taking measures to pass on and promote food as a culture, clarify its cultural value, and raise awareness that food is in fact 'culture.'

From March 27, 2023, the Agency for Cultural Affairs moved to Kyoto, and the Food Culture Promotion Headquarters was established under the direct authority of the Commissioner. Could you tell us about future efforts that will be made by the Agency for Cultural Affairs regarding food culture?

To strengthen planning related to food culture policy and cultural tourism policy, which until then had been handled individually by related departments and counselors, under the leadership of the Commissioner, the "Food Culture Promotion Headquarters" and the "Cultural Tourism Promotion Headquarters" were newly established in Kyoto on March 27th, the day that the Agency for Cultural Affairs officially began operations in Kyoto.

The Food Culture Promotion Headquarters and the Cultural and Tourism Promotion Headquarters have already convened their first meetings on March 28 and April 4, respectively, and have begun deliberations.

These two headquarters will confirm and share current measures with the main theme of nationwide deployment of measures related to 'food culture' and 'cultural tourism,' and will implement initiatives targeting the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo. In addition to working on regional revitalization through the promotion of food culture and cultural tourism throughout the country, further cooperation measures with local governments will also be considered.

Is promoting Japanese food culture from Kyoto different in meaning than doing so from Tokyo?

As before, we will continue to work on the preservation and continuation of Japan's diverse and attractive food culture. At the same time, the relocation of the Agency for Cultural Affairs to Kyoto, where traditional culture has grown and gathered for centuries, has drawn the attention and expectations of many people. We would like to take advantage of this opportunity to spread the appeal of Japan's food culture to as many people as possible from the optimum position which Kyoto offers.

Kyoto 'culture and gastronomy are globally attractive and highly valued, how the agency can have a key role in building a nationwide attractive environment by enhancing hidden potential of other regions in Japan?

In order to disseminate and promote local food culture, it is imperative that the local people themselves first become aware of the value of their own local food culture. As the Agency for Cultural Affairs, we are working on disseminating information through the Food Culture Momentum Fostering Project in order to raise awareness of the cultural value of food culture in each region.

Interview

Can Kyoto's creativity and techniques of chefs be an effective governance mechanism at different scales from local to national to global that serve as a foundation to those goal ?

We believe that chefs are important conveyors of food culture. Last year, Kyoto cuisine was listed as one of Japan's registered intangible cultural properties, and as such, it was registered as a culinary technique that expresses 'Kyoto-ness' through food while integrating cooking and hospitality. In August 2022, the Kyoto Cuisine Preservation Society was founded, and is working to continue the skills registered as a cultural property. In the future, we hope that the work of chefs and many other people responsible for food culture will be properly evaluated, and that Japan's diverse food culture will be preserved and passed on.

How do you believe that local culture, art can contribute to enhance local food culture ?

Many local food cultures strongly reflect the climate and unique culture of the region. For example, last year, the 'Ishiru and Ishiri production techniques in Noto,' were registered as a national registered intangible folk cultural property, and is a traditional Japanese sardine that has been passed down for generations in Noto region of Ishikawa Prefecture. It has a flavor similar to soy sauce and 'Ishiru' or 'Ishiri' is a registered technique for manufacturing fish sauce. We believe that there are various possibilities for regional culture and art to enhance the food culture of the region, such as cooking with local chefs using Ishiru and Ishiri, as well as serving food in historic buildings.

Culture and food are core components of human heritage. Hence, culture and food traditions play a central role in society, how the agency intend to enhance link between the people and food culture?

With Japan's declining birthrate and aging population, rapid changes in eating habits due to changes in lifestyles and tastes, and fewer opportunities to demonstrate skills due to the impact of the pandemic, the passing on of food culture has become an even more urgent issue. We will support efforts to clarify and add value to food culture, disseminate information that raises awareness of the cultural value of food culture, and support measures and efforts led by the private sector to promote food culture. Agency for Cultural Affairs intends to continue working on preservation and the continuation of cultural heritage.

Our organization (SGS) supports food traditions by enhancing healthy, diversified and culturally appropriate diets to play a role in re-balancing tradition a modern food habits, how do you think SGS should seek to cultivate a healthy relationship between people and food?

In recent years, due to changes in lifestyles, customs and techniques related to food have not been sufficiently carried onward; as a result their diversity is being lost. Food is something that everyone around the world experiences on a daily basis, and food culture can be shared not only among people who have a common food culture, but also among people who have different food cultures, both at home and abroad. The sharing of food culture can contribute to deepening interpersonal exchanges and bonds. Based on this point, we hope that efforts by local communities and individual citizens to pass on food culture will increase.

Intangible cultural assets including gastronomy and the arts need to be protected. Do you believe the power of technology (AI) can be creative for that purpose? In addition to enable a wider spectrum of society as stakeholders what range of projects would you like to implement?

There are increasing expectations for private companies and other organizations to use technologies such as AI. Here at the Agency for Cultural Affairs, we are also creating VR videos so that even people who have not been especially interested in food and food culture will develop an understanding of Japan's food culture. We would like to promote more effective initiatives in line with future social trends and the characteristics of technology.

Interview

SGS' approach is to pursue our activities in partnership and we look forward to working with a wide range of stakeholders in the spirit of open innovation to contribute to the well-being, but how do you think of the collective power to produce benefits that can be measured based on long-term economic gains for society and individuals ?

From the perspective of cultural and economic activities, food culture plays an important part in Japanese culture. It is a cultural resource that contributes to regional revitalization through tourism that utilizes food culture and also enhances Japan's 'brand power' through international exchange. It is also recognized that Japan's food culture has been passed down through the years thanks to the tireless efforts of a wide variety of people. It is hoped that with the support of many people, we can continue to move forward together in order to pass along Japan's highly attractive food culture to future generations.

On November 15, 2022, SGS Statement of Ambition was announced with a call for "collaborative governance towards a resilient and sustainable food system based on the notion of respect for terroir", how could we together sustain the nation' cultural heritage ?

As an example, in order for the toji and kurabito to embody 'Traditional knowledge and skills of making sake' registered as a national intangible cultural property, grains such as rice, koji mold, and water are required as raw materials. We believe that it is extremely important to protect the producers of raw materials and pass on their unique skills while respecting the characteristics of each region. In addition, there are many food cultures and liquor-producing cultures that have been passed down in countries around the world, and we believe that mutual development can be achieved through dialogue between these cultures.

SGS Advisory Board and directors meet during their 2nd Annual meeting in Tokyo



On 30 March, under the leadership of Koichiro Matsuura, chair of our Advisory Board and co-chair Yoichi Suzuki, The SGS director team, the Advisory Board, and all stakeholders convened for the final preparation of the 2023~24 Actions Plan set to be undertaken from the new fiscal year April 2023.

Pursuing our efforts involving new nominations from civil society, business, and other stakeholders, we are pleased to introduce three new advisors to support our collaborative governance initiative as a movement-setter by working collaboratively toward a vibrant local food system.



(from the left) Mr. Makoto Osawa, Executive Advisor Norinchukin Bank; Former Director General for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAAF); Mr. Tatsuya Terazawa, Chairman and CEO of the Institute of Energy Economics; Former Japan Deputy Director-General for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI); Mr. Nobuo Tanaka, CEO, Tanaka Global, Inc; former Executive Director, the International Energy Agency (IEA).

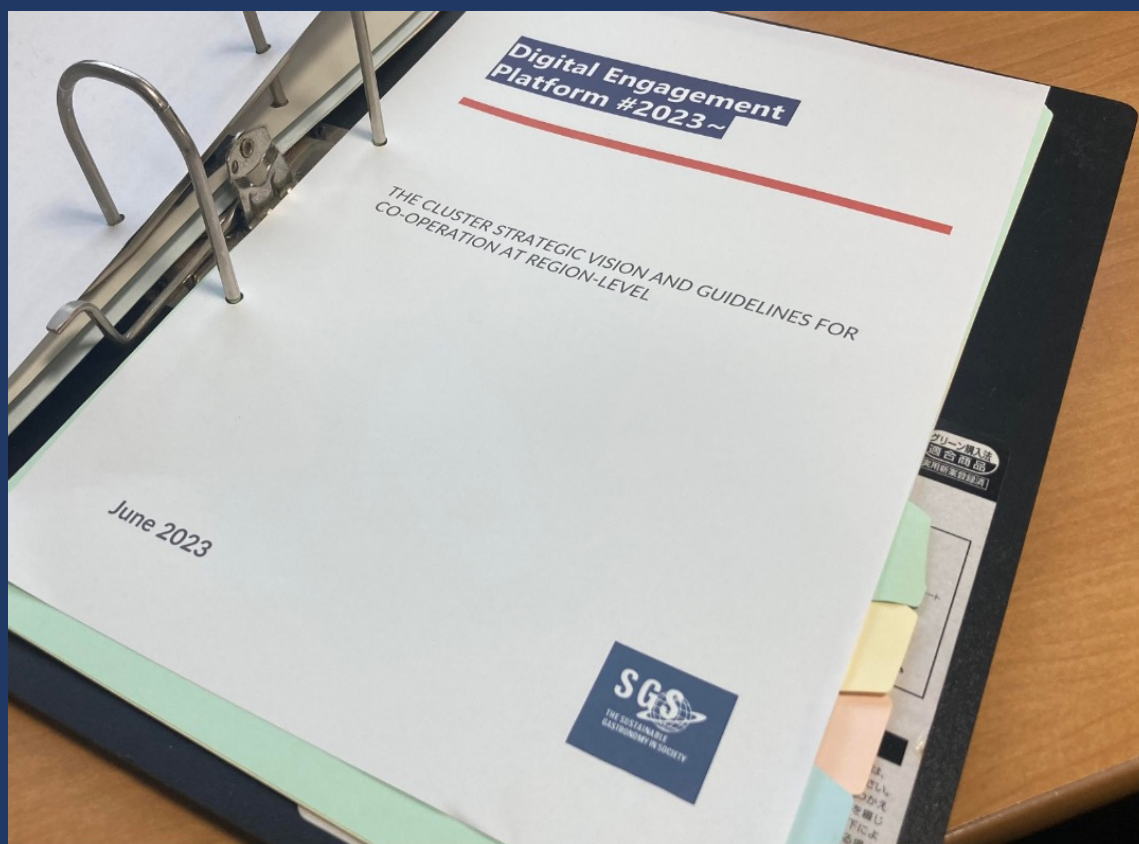
Setting the First Expert Group Engagement (SGS sub-committee)

Creating a sense of common purpose

Tentatively, the SGS Working Group will be taking on how engaging prefectures and citizens are in sustainable gastronomy. The four main components of the Working group approach are: 1) Collaboration; 2) Becoming Knowledgeable; 3) Sharing Ideas; 4) Efficacy to achieve Outcomes.

These will provide outcomes of Sustainable gastronomy on the Food System through collaborating with prefectures involved in seeking and creating change to promote their vibrant food ecosystem.

1st WG on Engagement Platform illustrates it:



Introducing a new Director of SGS: TerraCycle Japan

TerraCycle is an international leader in innovative sustainability solutions, creating and operating first-of-their-kind platforms in recycling, recycled materials, and reuse. Across 21 countries, TerraCycle is on a mission to rethink waste and develop practical solutions for today's complex waste challenges.



About Japan' launch

TerraCycle Japan was established in January 2014 as a subsidiary of TerraCycle, a company headquartered in New Jersey, USA, that was founded back in 2003. TerraCycle Japan works with companies and brands to develop and operate programs to collect and recycle used empty product containers, as well as recycle and commercialize the collected plastic waste. They also operate a circular shopping platform called Loop, which sells products in reusable containers to realize circular economy. The product categories of the recycling program currently operated by TerraCycle Japan include: beauty products such as cosmetics and hair care products; daily necessities such as detergents and toothbrushes; kitchen items such as sponges and plastic bags; beverages in pouches and plastic bottles; sandals and goggles; writing instruments such as pens. The recycling programs range from a wide variety of products.

The One For Ocean Project

In December 2021, the ONE FOR OCEAN Project, conducted in collaboration with Yamaguchi Prefecture, Marukyu and Nissui collected ocean plastic waste that had washed ashore on the prefecture's beaches and recycled some of it to produce recycled plastic. In 2022, oyster pipes were collected and used to make shopping baskets.

Food waste is also a significant environmental problem. In addition to the organic waste material produced, food packaging also poses waste dilemma as one of the largest sources of single use plastic. The most recent project they have undertaken with food and beverage manufacturers is the "Nescafe Dolce Gusto Recycling Program" that was launched with Nestlé Japan to recycle their capsules.

The Osaka-Kansai Expo 2025

TerraCycle Japan will participate in the Co-Design Challenge' program, the theme of TerraCycle Japan's selected project is "Designing the Trash Bin (Resource Collection Box) of the Future". The Osaka-Kansai Expo will be an international venue providing a platform for sharing challenges and solutions. Through this program, they hope to raise awareness of the need to address the problem of plastic waste and show the world that through cooperation, they can build a model for waste reduction through resource recycling. With the common goal of participating in the Expo, their program will work with communities across the country to collect and recycle discarded containers and design a waste collection and sorting station that makes recycling from the raw materials a fun experience.



Introducing a new Director of SGS:

DSM Japan K.K.

Operating in the field of Nutrition, Health and Sustainable living those three words symbolized the science-based company' values and purposes here in Japan and beyond.

[会社情報 \(dsm.com\)](https://www.dsm.com)



People-Planet-Profit

DSM is purpose led as the company' strategy is believing that the biggest transformation is yet to come. It is the transformation from a company with solid fundamentals in sustainability to fully purpose driven whilst having and maintaining good financial returns, going beyond the conventional wisdom that a company either predominantly focuses on profit or on doing good for society.

As humanity, we face a combination of a lurking climate catastrophe, an unmanageable four-fold overclaim on earth's resources and hundreds of millions of people being hungry or obese. These are large and complex problems that DSM as a mid-sized multinational company is addressing.

A series of leading Forums

The company advocacy takes many forms. As an example, DSM Japan under the leadership of Kaz Maruyama pursued the so called "DSM Sustainability Forum " for the fourth time in September 2022.

Amid the challenges: a reminder that Greenhouse gas emissions from livestock production account for 14.5%* of total global emissions and their reduction is a pressing issue in the fight against climate change. Policy and technology development is underway around the world to address this issue, and products such as DSM Bovaer® are being developed to reduce ruminant methane emissions by 30% or more when added to feedstuffs. This forum discussed how we can accelerate this change based on the latest information on technologies, regulations and on-farm initiatives to make livestock and dairy farming sustainable, both in Japan and globally

THE ANALYSIS

“Terroir, an asset for local development, an opportunity for the world and for Japan in particularly ”

Jean-Robert Pitte

Président de la Société de Géographie

Membre de l’Institut de France (Académie des Sciences morales et politiques)

At a time when free trade is on the rise around the world, it is important to reflect on how to deal with it, not through protectionism, but through an offensive based on the originality of the production and its cultural, landscape and tourist context.

Eating is not just about taking in calories, proteins, carbohydrates, fats and vitamins, all of which are by the large-scale industrial agriculture. Eating well invites us to seek out and healthy, but also bear their own history and geography, resembling the people who their history and geography, resembling the people who produce and process them, as well as their history and the landscapes where they were born.

Terroir production is today an intelligent solution for promoting agriculture, agri-food industry, tourism and, more generally, a diversified economy and prosperity economy and prosperity around the world.

A truly humanistic diet, one that is in keeping with the richness of human intelligence and sensibility, must make use of a very wide range of human intelligence and sensibility, must have recourse to a very wide range of nuanced flavours that vary from one moment to another (the season), from one place to another (terroir, terowaru in Japanese).

It must express the personality of the area and landscape from which it comes, of those who made it, transported it and sold it, of those who prepare it with the help of culinary know-how and in an affective approach.

There is no question of a timid defence and confinement of each society in its terroir, as well as in its cultural identity in general.

Let us add that quality local products create beautiful landscapes and are therefore a major tourist potential. They sell all the better because many visitors come to consume them occasionally in their terroir and appreciate their evocative power. They contribute to sustainable development, as they involve better management of the environment and a reduction of chemical inputs that weaken the typicity and harm health.

As in France since the end of the 18th century, the taste for local products has existed in Japan at least since the Edo period. Rice from Akita, sake from Niigata, tea, mandarins and eels from Shizuoka, tsukemono from Kyoto, mentaiko from Hakata, kasutera from Nagasaki, for example, are renowned and sought after throughout all over Japan.

These are travel souvenirs called omiyage, which give rise to a flourishing trade in the country's railway stations and airports. Still Today, it is still possible to buy lunch boxes containing regional specialties (ekiben) in railway stations, and in the bullet-trains (shinkansen), the contents of these bento boxes change according to the region you are travelling through.

The Shinto religion partly explains this tradition: it is important for a Japanese to commune with their seasonal and landscape environment, which is understood through the five senses. The terroir is a reality that the Japanese perceive very spontaneously and intensely.



Focus on
Georgia

WIPO Worldwide Symposium on Geographical Indications – June 16 2023

Contact: Mr. Olivier Bruyere, Wipo



ACCORDING TO WIPO, GIs ARE GLOBAL PHENOMENON AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT AS WELL AS A TREMENDOUS TOOL OF TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT, WHICH CAPTURES SEVERAL OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS OF THE ONGOING DISCUSSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

Geographical Indications : Worldwide Symposia

Every two years, the Worldwide Symposium on Geographical Indications (GIs) in cooperation with an interested member state, brings together representatives of member states' administrations, geographical indications (GI) producers and non-governmental organizations, and international experts, representing academia.

The symposium provides a forum for exchanging ideas on various issues, such as the socio-economic impact of GIs, how intellectual property may be used in branding strategies for commodities, and the management of GIs (e.g. the organization of producer groups, traceability and control issues relation of the use and protection of GIs).

The symposium contributes to the ongoing debate on GIs at national and international levels. Some 1,000 participants from 66 countries gathered in presence and online.

Topic I –

“ Branding and Marketing Strategies for Geographical Indications ”

Geographical Indications can function as collective and geographical origin-based brands. Marketing and branding strategies need to take account of the specificities of geographical indications.



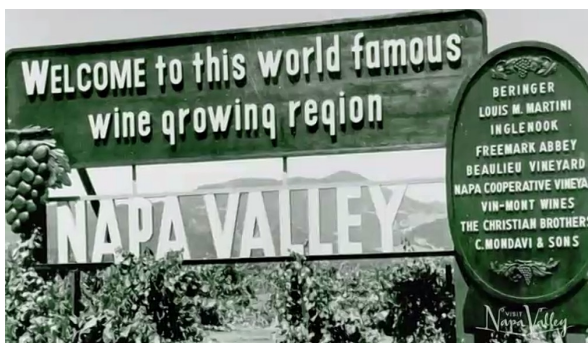
Moderator and panelists, Tbilisi

Topic II –

“ Geographical indications in the Tourism Value Chain : Gastronomy Tourism ”

Linsey Gallagher, President Visit Napa Valley, United States presented the transformative journey of the Napa Valley tourist trail and the role it played in enhancing regional development, economic advancement.

Focus point was the effects that the promotion of GIs can have on the tourism sector in the areas from which GIs origin.



Introduction of Visit Napa Valley

Topic III –

“ Governance and Quality in Geographical Indications ”

Prabuddha Ganguli, Chief Executive Officer, Vision-IRP, emphasized on various approaches to this subject and the challenges for community or individual producers, on effective governance and quality control to ensure of the success of GI products.



Introduction Vision-IRP, Mumbai