
An international conference on environmental movements in Japan and the United States will be held on April 25-26, 2003 at the University of Kentucky Taylor Education Building Auditorium. The conference will bring together Japan and America’s preeminent environmental scholars, NGOs and environmental activists. The conference will offer pointed and thought provoking discussions of the current state and future prospects of the grassroots environmental movements.

An interdisciplinary group of scholars from economics, political science, sociology, geography and anthropology, NGOs and environmental lawyers and activists will discuss the issues and problems confronting today’s grassroots environmental movements and analyze their strengths and weaknesses. The conference will emphasize the ways in which the local environmental groups have worked in Japan and the United States to become more responsive to local concerns.

The dynamic history of the local citizen’s groups in the United States working to protect Kentucky’s waters and forests, promote sustainable development in Central Appalachia, grassroots movement opposing disposal of chemical weapons at the Bluegrass Army Depot, citizens efforts to clean up Nuclear Weapons facilities in Colorado, grassroots participation in civil-military environmental protection in Hawaii are among the specific case studies to be discussed at the conference by environmentalists from Kentucky, Georgia, Maryland, California, and Hawaii.

Japanese environmentalists from Tokyo, Hokkaido, Kyoto, Kanazawa and Nagoya will discuss grassroots movements opposing airport construction to protect coral reefs in Shiraho Sea, protection of farmland in Tokyo, citizen’s movement against nuclear power plants, sustainable development of the Tokyo Bay, local efforts to manage Japan’s Mountain National Parks, environmental friendly agriculture, urban environment conservation efforts in Kyoto, efforts to save the Kawabe River in Kyushu, wildlife protection in rural Japan, local efforts to protect tidal flats and “rights of nature.”

Through case studies the conference will highlight some of the opportunities and challenges for local environmental movements that have relevance for policy and action to protect local and regional environments. The experience of environmental movements in Japan and the United States carries important lessons for other regions of the world.

The conference, sponsored by the University of Kentucky College of Arts and Sciences, Environmental Studies Program, Japan Studies Program, Department of Geography, Asia Center and the Vice President for Research, is open to the public. For further details contact: Professor P. P. Karan, Department of Geography and Japan Studies Program. E-mail: ppkaran@uky.edu Tel 859 257-6953. Fax 859 323-1969.