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SDGs Workshop

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Applicable principle

Principle 9: A commitment to promoting sustainability through education

1. Background of the activity

Since 2021, the university has cooperated with Iwate Prefecture, participating as the "Iwate Satellite" in the "Co-JUNKAN" Platform towards a Beyond "Zero-Carbon", led by the University of Tokyo as the representative institution, as part of Japan Science and Technology Agency's "Co-Creation Opportunity Formation Support Program (COI-NEXT)".

The aim of the Beyond "Zero-Carbon" is to create a society where we can consider concrete and attractive measures to combat climate change not by thinking back from the point at which we achieve carbon neutrality, but from a point further in the future where we've achieved the future we want to achieve.

In this research, the Iwate Satellite is participating in Research Theme 2 "Co-learning Basis for the Region to Achieve Endogenous Transformation". Through the development of a system that will be the basis for co-learning and field experiments, we aim to establish a regional model to realize a zero-carbon society while deploying regional talent development programs; create a community hub ("ba-zukuri"). Here, people in the region can naturally gather and a diverse range of people can interact. From there, people can design and run a place for people to learn autonomously and experientially to develop a sustainable regional circular social system; create things ("koto-zukuri") so that people of the region can learn with experts, and develop and implement a co-learning workshop method where people can talk and think deeply about a vision for the region's future; and nurture people ("hito-zukuri"). Central to this, will be sharing programs implemented by the University and the know-how from classes, while also leveraging tradition to build a talent development program that "learns from the region and contributes to the region."

In addition, as a region where population decline and aging are advancing ahead other rest of the country, the University is also developing a leading model where the industry, academia, and government together aims to solve decarbonization and other environmental issues at the same time as regional development, leveraging the region's abundant resources and the development of a high-speed transportation network.

2. Progress of the activity

In 2023, as part of the research above, we held a seminar workshop in Ichinohe-cho and a SDGs workshop at Kuzumaki High School and Ichinohe High School.

(1) Seminar workshop

Ichinohe-cho had been holding the "Ichinohe SDGs Mirai Cafe" for Ichinohe-cho for the town to hear the citizens' opinions and policy proposals, and the seminar workshop was held to complement and support this initiative.

The seminar workshop was a future design workshop for Ichinohe-cho Town Hall staff. Future design is a way of designing a society's mechanisms for the current generation to exhibit future potential (thinking and acting to benefit future generations). This acknowledges the problem that, although modern society is facing long-term issues that span generations such as climate change, resource and energy issues, financial issues, and infrastructure maintenance and management, the voices of future generations cannot be heard in current policy decisions.

This workshop was held on Friday, November 17th, with 18 people in attendance. It was an opportunity for staff to think about the solutions to the issues facing Ichinohe-cho through activities such as casting back to 30 years ago and considering what decisions made then, have influenced the town today, and pretending to time travel to Ichinohe-cho 50 years in the future to discuss how it has changed, and to identify things that will have an impact 50 years from now.

According to the participant questionnaire, this workshop deepened the participants understanding of future design and raised awareness of the need for it.



Seminar workshop (Ichinohe-cho)

(2) SDGs Workshop

While high schools in Iwate Prefecture are making rapid progress in initiatives to achieve SDGs, there has been almost no progress made in terms of decarbonization. With this in mind, it was decided that the SDGs workshops that were already being implemented will be expanded to encompass decarbonization.

In 2023, three workshops were held each for students at Kuzumaki High School and Ichinohe High School. The same workshops were held in both schools.

The first workshop was an "SDGs Workshop" in which students played the "SDGs de Regional Revitalization", a card game to help people understand the interplay between the region's declining population, economy, society, and environment, and to also deepen their understanding of concrete regional revitalization policies.

The second workshop was a classroom-based workshop in which students used a future simulator and a textbook that showed how the region affected by global warming and other factors would look like in the future.

In third workshop was a "Decarbonization and Future Workshop" where students split into teams of 4 to 6 people. Based on the lectures so far, each team identified the issues facing their region, considered the policies that could solve those issues, and described them on a poster. Each team then presented the policies they had come up with, and received feedback from the town staff. Many of the issues the students focused on were related to regional and social problems, such as population decline, low birthrates and an aging population, an increase in vacant houses, the decline of agriculture and forestry, and a shortage of medical and nursing care. The presentations were well received and reflected the high level of interest and concern that the students had.

The participant questionnaire showed that these workshops served as an opportunity for students to think about the future of their town, deepen their understanding, and raise their awareness. It also showed that group work was effective for communication, and demonstrated the effectiveness of the workshops.



SDGs workshop (Kuzumaki High School)

3. Future activities

In 2024, the SDGs Workshop will continue to be held at Kuzumaki High School and Hokuou High School (established in 2024 with the merging of Ichinohe High School and Fukuoka Technical High School).

"Trash in the Sea Class", an environmental learning experience, will also be held for elementary schools near the coastal area. Students will pick up trash from the sea, research and classify the trash, and create pieces of art using trash as an activity for environment maintenance, which include reusing resources.



SDGs workshop (Ichinohe High School)