

## **Martin Dallimer: JSPS Fellows Experience**

Type of fellowship undertaken:  
JSPS Short term invitational Fellowship.

Dates of Fellowship:  
Feb 26<sup>th</sup> 2015 to March 21<sup>st</sup> 2015.

Fellow:

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During my recent JSPS Short Term Invitational Fellowship I was hosted by Dr Hisako Nomura from the Faculty of Agriculture, Kyushu University in Fukuoka. The Fellowship comprised research field trips to potential case study sites and visits to collaborators. The focus of here was to establish the personal relationships that are so important when building international networks of researchers. In particular the explicit aims of the Fellowship were to explore how funding proposals might be developed based on our mutual research interests in ecosystem services, sustainable agriculture, green consumerism and green tourism, rural livelihoods and the use of revealed and stated preference methodologies.

As our research is all field and case study based, it was essential that we spend the majority of the Fellowship in the field. I was therefore fortunate to travel widely through Japan and meet a huge variety of people, from farmers (e.g., tea farmers in Kakegawa, beef farmers in Mount Aso National Park, shiitake mushroom farmers in Kunisake) through to academics (at Kyushu University, Tokai University and the National Institute for Agro-Environmental Sciences in Tsukuba).

One particularly memorable field trip was to visit tea farmers in the Kakegawa area of Shizuoka prefecture where they still practice the Chagusaba traditional tea farming methods. Here, the local community is beginning to actively promote the area for domestic and international tourism, through training of volunteer guides and the instigation of farm stays, guided tours and farming 'experiences' (e.g., tea harvesting, grass cutting and harvesting, tea tasting). Some farmers are also experimenting with ways (e.g., labelling, packaging, direct marketing and internet sales) to add value to their product. A second field visit was hosted by cattle farmers who utilise traditional breeds and vegetation burning practices within Mount Aso National Park on Kyushu. Here we visited a farmer who is instrumental in maintaining these traditional practices

whilst at the same time trying to open up new income streams via farm stays and farm tours to boost his income, and that of the local rural community.

With a network of potential collaborators and stakeholders now in place, across multiple disciplines and institutions, the Fellowship has put my host and me in a much stronger position to pursue future funding opportunities. In the short term we will focus on strengthening our track record through the joint supervision of Masters students. In the medium to longer term, we plan applications to UK and Japanese research funders. I also hope to be able to maintain the links I have developed via initiatives such as the JSPS Bridge Fellowships.



Tea



Tea Landscape