



## **Pre-WBF2023 fieldwork and site visit with UCL, Cambridge, UW (2023/3/7 - 9)**

Theme : International research collaboration activities, the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami

Place : Iwate Prefecture: Miyako City, Fudai Town, Tanohata Town, Otsuchi Town, Rikuzentakata City

From 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March, international researchers visited areas in Iwate Prefecture that were affected by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami with IRIDeS faculty. The fieldwork was organized by Researcher (Specially Appointed) Miwako Kitamura (International Research Collaboration Office), and Associate Prof. Anawat Suppasri (Tsunami Engineering Lab) with the support of the Sanriku Railway company, and Elizabeth Maly (International Research Collaboration Office) also joined this activity. Held in the days before the 2023 World Bosai Forum (WBF), the 20 international participants who joined the fieldwork were researchers working on disaster science gathered in Tohoku to participate in the WBF. Participants included faculty, students, and disaster museum personnel conducting disaster-related research, from the UK, USA, Turkey, Thailand, Indonesia and other countries. The fieldwork included site visits to the Iwate Tsunami Memorial Museum in Rikuzentakata, the Tsunami Memorial Hall and Unosumai Tomosu in the Unosumai area of Kamaishi City, and Miyako Kankou Hotel in the Taro area of Miyagi Town. Participants toured affected and reconstructed areas in the Taro area of Miyako, and the also heard the experiences of disaster storytellers while walking the evacuation route used in the Great East Japan Earthquake in Otsuchi town.

Participants observed traditional cultural performances from this region, including a tiger dance in Kamaishi, deer dance in Otsuchi, and Kuromori Kagura in Miyako, to learn about the culture and history of the affected areas. In addition to seeing the damage caused by the tsunami, the field work included learning from a nature guide at Jodogahama to investigate the topography of the rias coast. Participants boarded the Sanriku Railway train and were given insight into the disaster through on the disaster storytelling by a Sanriku Railway employee who had experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake, who explained the conditions of the train at the time of the disaster.

The fieldwork participants from all over the world learnt a lot from this experience, not only about the damage caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake but also about the culture, history, topography and disaster tourism of the Sanriku coastal area. Students from UCL, Cambridge and UW presented their findings as a booth and an oral session at the World Bosai Forum where Tohoku University's Executive Vice President for. General Affairs, Financial Affairs and. International Relations (Prof. Toshiya Ueki) and Vice President for. Education Reform and Global Engagement (Prof. Masahiro Yamaguchi) also attended to made their opening and closing remarks accordingly.

We hope that the activities of these students and others will further promote international cooperation and exchange in both research and education at IRIDeS. These activities were supported by the Core Research Cluster of Disaster Science, Tohoku University and the JSPS's Inter-University Exchange Project.

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Disaster learning on the Disaster  
Storytelling tour onboard the  
Sanriku Railway train



At the related session at the WBF2023

More information:

Core Research Cluster of Disaster Science, Tohoku University

<http://dsmca.irdes.tohoku.ac.jp/en/about-en>

JSPS's Inter-University Exchange Project (Japanese)

<https://www.tohoku.ac.jp/japanese/2022/09/news20220908-01-mext.html>

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