

## **12th Conference of the Pacific Rim Community Design Network: "Looking Back and Looking Forward: Community and Justice in Crisis": Conference and site visits (2023/9/16-18).**

Themes: Community recovery, community planning, disaster reconstruction, recovery, The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, nuclear disaster, Fukushima, International Symposium,

Place: IRIDeS, Sendai City, Futaba Town, Namie Town, Minami-Soma Town, Tomioka Town

URL: <http://prcdnet.org/working-conferences-papers/2023-tohoku/>

From Sept. 16-18th, the 12th Conference of the Pacific Rim Community Design Network: "Looking Back and Looking Forward: Community and Justice in Crisis" was held in Tohoku, including a symposium at IRIDeS, and field visits to disaster-affected communities in Fukushima. With more than 115 participants, this event was co-organized by the International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS) of Tohoku University, co-chaired by Assoc. Prof. Maly Elizabeth (International Research Collaboration Office), and the Foundation for Ecological Democracy, in collaboration with the The Pacific Rim Community Design Network.

The Pacific Rim Community Design Network was first launched at the University of California, Berkeley in 1998, and for the last 25 years has been bringing together leading community design scholars and practitioners from Japan, Taiwan, and the United States. The network has provided a vehicle for collaboration and mutual support, as well as a forum for a comparative understanding of community design in the fast-changing political and social context of the Pacific Rim, with network members now in countries including Australia, Canada, China, Ecuador, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and the United States.

A celebration of the 25th anniversary of the network, this event was the first time to meet in person post-pandemic, and as the first meeting in Japan since 2010, it was also the first time for the network to gather in the disaster-affected area after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 11, 2011. Taking the theme of justice and community design, the focus of the event was on visiting and understanding the current situation of disaster-affected communities in Fukushima.

On Sept 16th, participants visited Futaba Town together, and from the evening and on Sept 17th, split into 4 smaller groups, who stayed in and visited different communities in Odaka in Minami-Soma, Tomioka, Futaba, and Namie, exploring different themes including youth, storytelling, and community recovery. Coordination for the field visits was carried out with the collaboration of many network members, and from Tohoku University: Assistant Professor Julia Gerster (Disaster Culture and Archive Studies) and Prof. Aya Kubota (Graduate School of Engineering, Architecture and Urban Design Course, Tohoku University)

On the 18th, participants came back together for the Big Table gathering at IRIDeS, in Sendai. In the morning, each group shared what they had seen and learned, followed by a special presentation from Prof. Kota Kawasaki of Fukushima University, a comment from Professor Emeritus Randy Hester (Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at the University of California Berkeley), and a discussion with all participants. More than 40 participants presented their research in poster presentations, including IRIDeS faculty: Assoc. Prof. Maly Elizabeth, Researcher (Specially Appointed) Miwako Kitamura (International Research Collaboration Office), and Visiting Researcher Naomi Chiba (Disaster Humanities and Social Science Division).

In the afternoon, a symposium on the 25th anniversary of the network included a special keynote presentation from Prof. Randy Hester, looking back on the history of the network, and a panel discussion looking forward.



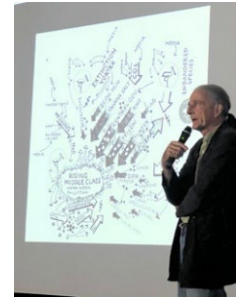
Large group photo of all participants on Sept. 16 in Futaba Town



Small group participants who visited Tsushima area of Namie Town, on Sept. 17



Big Table Gathering on the morning of Sept 18, sharing their field visit experiences



Special Keynote Presentation from Prof. Randy Hester in the Sept 18 Symposium



Panel discussion



Group photo of participants