

HSI Report: Introduction to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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Attracting more than 30 students, the “Introduction to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” is one of this year’s Hokkaido Summer Institute (HSI)’s Pickup Courses—highly recommended courses by the organizers. Throughout five consecutive days, the students were making themselves familiar with the most fundamental aspects of sustainability in this lecture-based course.



Taking place at Hokkaido University’s Student Communication Center, between June 13th-17th, 2022, Professor Satoru Kato (Institute for the Advancement of Sustainability, Hokkaido University) shared his profound knowledge and experience pertaining to SDGs. To accommodate those who were unable to attend the HSI on campus, the lectures were conducted in a hybrid mode.

The lecture started off with the most basic, yet important, topic: the history of sustainability, which rooted from environmental concerns. As the day advanced, the topic went further into more practical themes, such as the details of each of 17 goals, the framework in SDGs promotion and development, United Nations' role, etc.

“On the background of SDGs, there are fundamental human rights, support for developing countries, and global environmental protection. By understanding these backgrounds, we can backcast our activities and research activities to improve society effectively,” said Professor Kato on the importance of proper SDGs learning.

Gourav Nath is a 4th year undergraduate student from Institute of Technology Madras who is taking part in the STSI Inter-University Exchange program, the exchange program between Hokkaido University and three Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) in India. Driven by a research interest in sustainability, particularly in Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), he chose this course. “India, my home country, unfortunately ranks very low in sustainability. It is interesting that SDGs are being taught from an early age in Japan. I think it is important.”



Professor Satoru Kato

“SDGs is a new concept; most adults grew up without knowing that concept. It is never too late to learn about it, and we should begin to teach it to our children too. So, SDGs should be learnt with humility,” said Professor Kato.

For evaluations, students did not only submit written reports, but also gave short presentations pertaining to their plan in working towards SDGs achievement. Because of the highly diverse academic background, from humanities to natural sciences, the presentations provided fresh and unique points for reflection.

“Hokkaido University was ranked 10th in the world in THE Impact Ranking 2022 and the SDGs are at the center of the University’s mid-term plan and goals. With courses such as this, students and faculty members are encouraged to think and work together to achieve those goals,” added Professor Kato.

To learn more about Hokkaido Summer Institute, visit their website:
<https://hokkaidosummerinstitute.oia.hokudai.ac.jp/>

Related links:

[Hokkaido University ranks 10th in the world \(and 1st in Japan\) in “THE Impact Rankings 2022”](#)
[Sustainability is encoded in the DNA of Hokkaido University](#)

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