



**RESEARCH  
RETREAT  
ENVIRONMENT  
&  
DEVELOPMENT  
SEMINAR C  
PROFESSOR  
PUTHENKALAM  
JOHN JOSEPH**

DATE: 27<sup>TH</sup>-28<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023

LOCATION: ATAMI, JAPAN

## **Research Retreat Objective**

The Research Retreat aimed to bring together Master's and PhD students for a focused exploration and critical analysis of their individual research topics. It provided a platform for in-depth discussion, knowledge exchange, and collaboration among students working on diverse topics within the broader theme of sustainable development. Additionally, students observed Green Tourism practices in the city of Atami and experienced rich Japanese culture through a museum visit.

## **Arrival: 27<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) & Atami**



Upon our arrival in Atami at 1 p.m., we embarked on an exploration of the city through the lens of sustainable development. The city's landscape provided valuable insights into the impacts of mudslides and earthquakes, highlighting the challenges faced in this densely populated area where buildings are closely situated.

Our exploration extended to understanding Atami's rich seafood cuisine culture, which, in turn, led us to discover the city's commitment to achieving SDG 2—zero hunger—through their food education program. This initiative aims to promote awareness about healthy dietary practices and provides hands-on experiences, such as rice planting tours, to educate citizens about the food production process.

Within Atami's food education program, the focus is on addressing SDG 2 by improving eating habits. Their plan, "Enjoyable eating enriches the soul," underscores the importance of fostering a connection between humans and food production. The objective is to instill a profound love for and sustainable attitude towards how food is sourced and utilized. By actively engaging in initiatives like rice planting tours, Atami seeks to create a meaningful link between the community and the process of food cultivation, contributing to the overall well-being and sustainable practices in the region.



## Presentation Session: 27<sup>th</sup> December 2023



On the 27<sup>th</sup> of December, at 4 p.m., we initiated the presentations of various PhD and Master's thesis by the attending participants. Professor Puthenkalam began the session with opening remarks, emphasizing the paramount importance of clarity and context in research endeavors. He outlined the specific requirements of the GENV program regarding research, setting the stage for students to share their ongoing research projects.

The process for each student's presentation adhered to a structured format:

- The students introduced their respective topics by highlighting key points:
  - Driving factors that inspired their research endeavors.
  - Background information.
  - Research objectives.
  - Research questions.
  - Methodology.

The student presentations occurred within 30-minute intervals, followed by a question-and-answer and feedback session:

- Professor Puthenkalam conducted a thorough analysis of each student's presentation, offering valuable guidance on improvement areas and structuring thesis papers.
- Other students engaged in a question-and-answer period, seeking clarification on the presenting student's research, exploring research directions, and delving into details regarding primary data collection.
- Collaboratively, students worked to reinforce and support the presenting student, brainstorming solutions and methods to address areas highlighted by Professor Puthenkalam for improvement.
- Students also took the opportunity to express what they found intriguing about their peers' research, offering words of encouragement and affirmation tailored to the various stages each student occupied within their research projects.

This dynamic exchange facilitated constructive critique while empowering the students to enhance their grasp of best practices in research presentation and construction. The exercise cultivated a supportive environment where students actively contributed to each other's academic growth, fostering strong team-building ties among the attendees. The interactive

nature of the feedback sessions significantly enriched the overall learning experience for everyone involved, providing a platform for students to build confidence as they progress with their respective research topics.

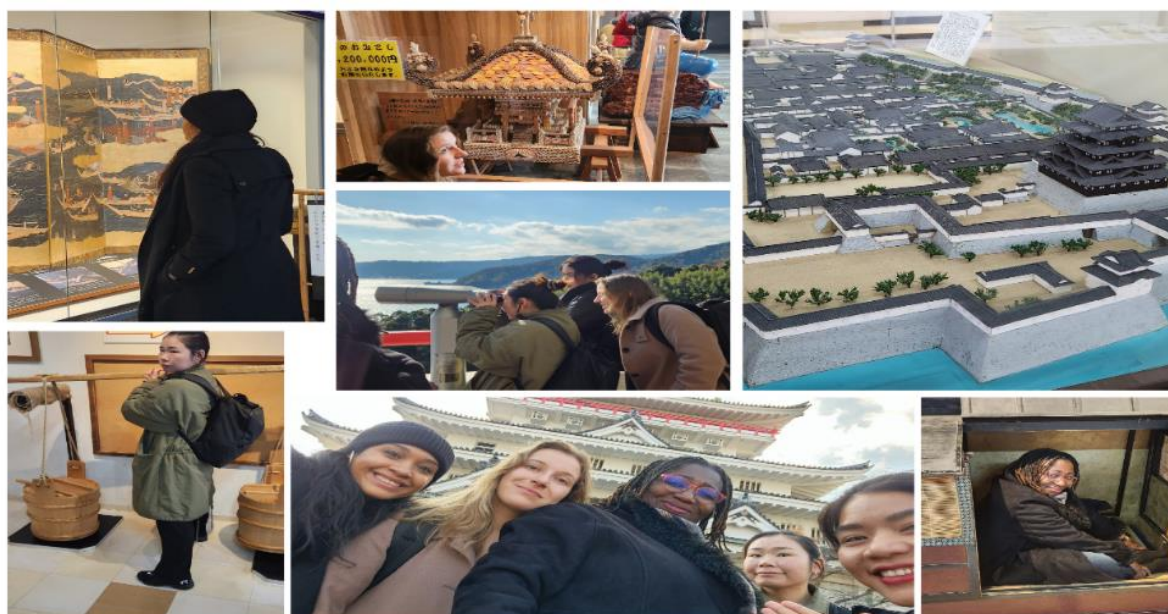


### Atami Green Tourism Practices – Cultural Exchange visit to Atami Castle

A foundational pillar of green tourism, essential for achieving sustainable development, is the promotion of cultural respect through cultural exchange facilitation. Atami boasts various museums and spaces that serve as hubs for cultural exchange, contributing to the mutual understanding between tourists and locals while demonstrating respect for local culture, tradition, and heritage.

During our visit to Atami Castle, we delved into the Edo period, gaining insights into what life was like during that era. The museum facilitated a dynamic cultural exchange through interactive stations, allowing us to immerse ourselves in traditional experiences. We had the opportunity to don traditional clothing, engage with traditional methods of carrying water, handle samurai swords, and explore traditional modes of transport.

Moreover, the museum provided an avenue for interaction with eco-friendly pieces of art, such as a traditional structure crafted entirely from seashells. These experiences not only enriched our understanding of Atami's cultural history but also fostered a deep appreciation for the sustainable practices integrated into the local art scene. The interactive nature of the museum visit allowed us to actively engage with and respect the cultural heritage of Atami, aligning with the principles of green tourism.



We extend our sincere gratitude to the Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies for their generous partial financial support, which played a crucial role in making this research retreat program possible. Their support has significantly contributed to the success and enrichment of our academic endeavors during this valuable experience. We appreciate their commitment to fostering academic exploration and the pursuit of knowledge in the realm of global environmental studies.

Written by Kunar Nikita Akasha Vandana