

# Satoyama & ESG Awards

(Sponsored content)

## Conservation, environmental efforts gain recognition

The Japan Times Satoyama and ESG consortiums have selected Obata Sake Brewery in the satoyama category and Fuji Oil Holdings Inc. in the ESG category as the Grand Prize winners of The Japan Times Satoyama & ESG Awards 2020.

In its second year, the awards are given to companies, organizations and individuals who have made notable achievements in satoyama and ESG-related activities. The awards aim to showcase the successful undertakings of those recipients in and outside Japan.

ESG stands for "environmental, social and governance." These factors are increasingly considered essential for corporate management and activities as investors place more importance on this nonfinancial information.

"Satoyama" refers to rural mountains and forests tended by residents for the sustainable use of existing natural resources.

"Through these awards, we hope to introduce Japanese organizations that are not necessarily well known in the world and are trying to create a sustainable society," said Minako Suematsu, president of The Japan Times, who heads the two consortiums.

In the satoyama category, Fisherman Japan and the city of Toyooka in Hyogo Prefecture received the Excellence Award. Mie Prefecture was presented with the Special Award.

Obata Sake Brewery, based on Sado Island in Niigata Prefecture and headed by Rumiko Obata, has contributed to community development by producing special sake rice and sake in its brewery for some 130 years. It also turned a closed elementary school into a sake brewery in 2014, where it now offers sake production lessons and workshops.

Fisherman Japan is actively making connections between the fishery industry and consumers, helping to brand new fishery products. They also offer training programs for future fishermen. Their work is based

on three principles: "Be cool, successful and innovative."

Toyooka, led by Mayor Muneharu Nakagai, worked hard to successfully revive the natural stork population while also promoting art-related events and education by setting up an art university and center. Mie Prefecture won the accolade for utilizing its rich ocean produce and preserving traditional fishing methods by ama female divers.

In this category, judges were Kosuke Motani, chief senior economist at the Japan Research Institute Ltd. and Takashi Mitachi, senior adviser of Boston Consulting Group K.K.

In the ESG field, Fuji Oil won the top prize for its efforts in ESG management and working to eliminate child labor at cacao farms by 2030. It also uses satellite images to prevent child labor and to protect the environment.

The Excellence Award winners were Suntory Holdings Ltd. and Shizen Energy Group. Suntory promotes energy saving and the recycling of pet bottles. Their two plants in Japan had also received certification from the Alliance for Water Stewardship, which confirms that it has met the global benchmark for sustainable water management.

Shizen Energy Group has helped local communities build renewable energy power plants and engaged in many overseas projects to generate power by natural energy.

Nonprofit organization ACE was presented with the Special Award. The organization supports low-income families and education for their children in India and Ghana, and researches human rights violations, as well as corporate social responsibility.

Mitsuyo Morisawa, Japan head of Principles for Responsible Investment; Takatoshi Kato, adviser of the Japan Center for International Finance; Naonori Kimura, partner and managing director at Industrial Growth Platform Inc.; and Ken Shibusawa, chairman of Commons Asset Management Inc., selected the ESG awards winners.



Brewers produce sake using traditional methods at Obata Sake Brewery.

### Satoyama: Grand Prize winner

#### OBATA SAKE BREWERY

We are honored to have been awarded the Grand Prize in the satoyama category in The Japan Times Satoyama & ESG Awards.

We are extremely grateful that our brewing activities have been highly acknowledged.

A sake brewery can only come to fruition when there is good water and rice in the area, and with such gifts of local produce, it's been possible to continue our business.

In 2014, we transformed an old elementary school that was closed in 2010 into a sake brewery known as Gakkogura (school brewery). With an aim to only use produce from Sado, we intend to brew sake sustainably while taking advantage of Sado's rich environment and using renewable energy.

In recent years, such sustainable efforts have attracted much attention from overseas. We are highly encouraged by



Rumiko Obata, executive vice president of Obata Sake Brewery, holds the Grand Prize trophy in the Satoyama category at Gakkogura brewery, which used to be an elementary school, on Sado Island, Niigata Prefecture. OBATA SAKE BREWERY

this award, and we are determined to continue disseminating the charm of satoyama in Sado.



Fuji Oil Holdings Inc. employees pose with local farmers in Burkina Faso in July 2018. Fuji Oil Group is conducting research on sustainable procurement of soybeans, as well as improving the health of area residents through development of soybean meat substitutes. COURTESY OF FUJI OIL HOLDINGS INC.

### ESG: Grand Prize winner

#### FUJI OIL HOLDINGS INC.

We are delighted to be selected for this honorable grand prize. Fuji Oil Group is a business-to-business food ingredient manufacturer. We promote ESG Management to achieve sustainable growth while contributing to the realization of a sustainable society.

Environment and human rights issues may arise at production sites for crops such as palm oil and cacao, which are our key raw materials. We promote sustainable procurement while respecting stakeholders' expectations, including the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. As an example, we aim to achieve NDPE (no deforestation, no peatland development and no exploitation) described in our Responsible Palm Oil Sourcing Policy. To put this policy into practice, we operate a grievance mechanism that enables our stakeholders to inform us of any issues

FUJI OIL HOLDINGS INC.

#### 二製油

フジ油株式会社  
LDINGS INC.



Fuji Oil Holdings Inc.'s President Hiroshi Shimizu holds the Grand Prize trophy in the ESG category at the company in Osaka. FUJI OIL HOLDINGS INC.

in the supply chain. This allows us to take appropriate corrective action.

Under the leadership of the chief "ESG" officer, a position established in 2019, we will continue to improve our ESG performance to meet our stakeholders' expectations.

the japan times

SATOYAMA & ESG AWARDS 2020