

## The sun is shining ?

Scientists are sometimes nasty to practitioners in the field of global health. They are proud of their knowledge and preach to the practitioners working in developing countries. The practitioners, indeed, may at times not be aware of the most up-to-date knowledge and may make similar mistakes again and again. However, the practitioners stay close to the suffering people, and they know as well what is not written in the textbooks or in articles out of famous journals. Their knowledge of 'now' should be more appreciated.

I watched a Japanese movie called 'Sunshine Ahead' during my flight from Narita to Paris on 17 July. The Japanese title is 'Teida-Kankan,' which literally means 'the sun is shining and shining.' It is the true story of a couple that was successful in transplanting and spawning coral reefs in the damaged Okinawa sea.

Mr. Kinjo, a practitioner of coral transplantation, achieved success in his work by his creative ideas, after which a Japanese scholar advised him to make a presentation at a Marine Biology Symposium. When Mr. Kinjo made his presentation, however, many other snobbish scholars severely criticized him, using technical terms and new frameworks of knowledge. One of them said to him in public, '...coral transplanting should be positioned as a component of reef conservations and coastal management. What about genetic disturbances and damages to donor colonies?...This isn't something for amateurs.'



Mr. Kinjo was deeply disappointed, but he also learned that his continued efforts would be meaningful if he could be successful in spawning coral reefs. Thereafter, he continued to work hard and finally succeeded in his endeavors. In recognition of his great work in spawning coral reefs, Mr. Kinjo received an award. At the ceremony, he delivered a speech about the past and the future.

'When I was a kid my mother told me "the ocean used to be so much prettier." My late granpa also said "it was so much prettier in my day." And now, I have to explain to my own kids, "It was so much prettier before." But through the work I am doing now, I am hoping to tell my grandchildren one day. "There was a time...where there weren't many corals in the sea."

In the context of the award ceremony, the scholars said they were supporting Mr. Kinjo from the beginning and that they appreciated his work. It is good that they had changed their attitudes at this stage, but I wonder if they were indeed aware of their previous attitude toward the practitioner, Mr. Kinjo. I can't help but wonder if I have done the same as a scholar in the past, and if I can change myself just by watching this movie once. If not, I am afraid the sun may not shine on me. (Masamine Jimba edited by RMA, from Vienna. 24 July, 2010)