

New Strategies for Sustainable Society. I. The Role of Information, Lifestyle and Environment in Socio-organic System. Sugihara T., Oyabu C., Department of Home Economics, Gifu University, Gifu 501-11, Japan.

We have developed a new theory named "Science of Socio-organic System" by applying general systems theory to our life. In this paper, we use this system to clarify the role of information, lifestyle and environment in the sustainable society. According to the theory, our living world consists of various systems such as individuals, families, regional societies, nations, national associations, and the earth, and they are related organically. Socio-organic system has three features. 1) System metabolizes by receiving materials and energies from larger system(environment) and exhausting waste materials and energies to the environment. 2) System interacts with other systems. 3) System has a higher function called self-organization, which regulates itself and organizes the systems as a whole against a perturbation imposed on the system. These features suggest the following conditions for sustainable society. i) Each system is able to metabolize. ii) The relationship of systems is kept active and healthy. iii) The state of a system and inter-systematic relationship is controlled at a high level.

Following these conditions, the role of environment, information and lifestyle can be depicted as below. Environment is essential for the sustainable society because it enables a system to exist by offering it a place to exhaust wastes; the larger the capacity of environment, the more stable the system. Information helps to control both the metabolism and the interaction between systems, because it serves as data for decision-making which influences not only the metabolism but also the interaction. Lifestyle plays an essential role in decision-making because it manages information. Moreover, the lifestyle of each individual is constructed by information gained from environment. Consequently, one can say that environment, information and lifestyle are interrelated and are the key words for the sustainable society.