

The Effectiveness of the organizations promoting woody biomass energy use in Japan

–Case study of four rural areas–

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1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

To promote renewable energy use, we need many developments such as success of renewable energy business, raise of citizens' awareness, formation of appropriate policies. Market facilitation organizations (MFOs) attract attentions entities which support the growth of renewable energy markets by working with companies, local citizens, and administrations mainly in EU or developing countries. And we can see the similar process of expanding woody biomass energy use, especially woody pellets in some Japanese rural areas. In those areas, organizations which are neither administrations nor companies, just third parties have promoted woody pellets use by working with companies, local people, and administrations.

This research focus on advanced areas where such promoting organizations exist in Japan and analyze what functions they have to show how they have contributed to the expansion of pellets use and the effectiveness of them. Moreover, this research suggests what functions Japanese woody biomass promoting organizations should have by comparing with two types of MFOs, Ohisama-Shinpo-Energy private company, the first MFO in Japan, and O.Ö. Energiesparverband, an Enegy Agency in Europe. These two points are objectives of this research.

2. METHOD

This research focused on four organizations which were ①21century Maniwajuku, NPO, in Maniwa city, Okayama prefecture, ②Iwate Woody Biomass Collegium in Iwate prefecture, ③Sylvan Biomass Collegium, NPO, in Syobara city, Hiroshima prefecture, ④Yamagata Woody Pellets Use Collegium in Yamagata prefecture. A survey was conducted through literary documents and interviewing about how pellets use have been expanded in four areas were conducted towards the representatives of those organizations and administrative officers in four areas from September to October in 2008.

By using barriers to the promotion of renewable energy were used as framework, functions of those four organizations were extracted, and effectiveness of four organizations were examined.. In addition, comparative analysis was conducted between four organizations and Ohisama-Shinpo-Energy, O.Ö. Energiesparverband.

3. CONCLUSION

From the result of the analysis, the effectiveness of four organizations to promote woody pellets use in rural areas was demonstrated, though they were different from MFOs in following two points; not to voluntary produce financial source for their activities and not to be operated by the third party. Moreover, from the comparison with two types of MFOs, Ohisama-Shinpo-Energy and O.Ö. Energiesparverband, suggestions to woody biomass promoting organizations in Japan are thinking a means which induce citizen participations and building networks among them for sharing information or knowhow about woody biomass. Woody biomass energy not only has the effectiveness for global warming but also affects the regional development in a positive way. Regional development will not be accomplished without citizens' understanding and participations. Additionally, four organizations have a function accumulating information and knowledge about woody biomass in each area, but they don't have strong connections among them. Pellets production has started in many areas, so problems different from one area to another will occur. Like MFOs, by making networks for accumulating and sharing information or knowhow, each organization will be able to achieve further promotion of the woody biomass use in rural areas.