

# A Comparative Study on Two Ways of Community Building with Different Commons Ownership Modes: Focusing on the cases of Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri\*

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*This paper compares the cases of Seonheul 1-ri and Gasi-ri, where communities were built based on commons, but commons ownership modes were different. Seonheul 1-ri built a community based on “Dongbaekdongsan” owned by Jeju-do and the central government, while Gasi-ri built a community based on a common pasture owned by a farm association. In comparing these two cases, this paper will discuss how the difference in ownership modes affected the community building and commons management methods. This paper shows that a village’s ownership of the commons may paradoxically interfere with the formation of a stable commons management body in some cases. Whereas the farm cooperative association, of which the members are 270 village residents, has the ownership of the common pasture in the case of Gasi-ri, the central government owns “Dongbaekdongsan” in the case of Seonheul 1-ri. Although both villages successfully built communities, in the case of Gasi-ri, the members of the village council, which is the commons management body, are divided into association members and non-association members. In the case of Seonheul 1-ri, all members of the village are equal in their statuses in the village council since there is no farm cooperative association with the ownership of commons. Therefore, the community of Seonheul 1-ri has a good structure for immigrants to settle into. The non-association members who have actively participated in community building in Gasi-ri are leaving, and thus the population of Gasi-ri is stagnant. On the contrary, the population of Seonheul 1-ri is increasing rapidly as the number of immigrating residents grows. Even when the village manages the commons, conflicts can be amplified in cases where some of the residents, or the association to which some but not all*

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*of the residents belong, owns the commons. Due to the inequality between persons with and without ownership, the managing body of the commons can become unstable. To stably promote community building, the commons should be owned by the village or the villagers rather than by outsiders, an enterprise, or the state. However, even when the village or the villagers have the ownership of the commons, if there is inequality among village residents around the commons it may interfere with community building or the maintenance of the sustainability of the commons. On the contrary, if the commons is expropriated by the government and the right of the village to stably manage the commons is guaranteed although the village does not have first-hand ownership, a community can be built and the sustainability of the commons can be maintained for a long time because the residents are equal. To manage the commons effectively to remain sustainable hereafter, village residents should be continuously filled, and to this end the village council should have an equal and open structure.*

**Keywords:** *community building, commons, Seonheul 1-ri, Gasi-ri, sustainability, management methods, ownership modes*

## Preface

Community building is considered to be a key factor in the balanced development of the country, local autonomy, and sustainable development. Choe Hyun and Kim Seon-pil (2016) and Choe Hyun (2017) presented cases where village autonomy and sustainable development were successfully achieved by community building using the commons. In the foregoing, the researchers presented the potential of community building using the commons to increase residents' participation and lead to the development of both nature and the village. This paper is an attempt to contribute to the theoretical discussion around commons based on these studies.

One of important issues around community building based on commons is how commons ownership modes affect community building and the sustainability of commons (Inoue 2004; Yamashita 2008). To address this controversy, this paper compares the cases of Seonheul 1-ri and Gasi-ri, which identically built communities based on commons, but differed in ownership modes for commons. Seonheul 1-ri built a community based on "Dongbaekdongsan" owned by Jeju-do and the central government while Gasi-ri built a community based on a common pasture owned by the Gasi-ri farm cooperative association (hereinafter, farm association). By comparing

these two cases, this paper will discuss how the difference in ownership modes affected the community building and commons management methods.

Inoue (2004) pointed out that commons management bodies and actual states of management are more important than ownership. However, as can be seen in various cases such as those presented by Yamashita (2008), Yun Sun-jin and Cha Jun-hee (2009), and Choe Hyun et al. (2016a; 2016b), there are many times when ownership exerts a more decisive influence than management bodies or actual states. Even when the managing body manages the commons very stably, many instances where the commons is sold or destroyed can be identified among cases where the commons is not owned by the managing body. In addition, in cases where the commons was an important resource for community building, when the commons has disappeared, not only is community building stopped, but also the village *per se* disappears. Therefore, the dominant argument was that although maintaining a managing body is important for the sustainable management of the commons, the village's acquisition of the ownership of the commons is crucial for sustainable management. However, this paper intends to show that even when the village has the ownership of the commons, it may paradoxically interfere with the formation of a stable commons management body. Since any resident can join the village council, it usually manages the commons on behalf of the residents. However, the commons is not legally owned by the village council, but by the association consisting of some of village residents in many instances. In such cases, inequality may occur among village residents around the management of the commons, which may obstruct the qualitative and quantitative development of the village council that is the commons management body.

To analyze the cases of Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri, previous studies related to commons and community building cases in the Jeju area were examined, and many pieces of literature such as community building casebooks, village magazines, and village homepages were reviewed. In addition, accurate ownership relations and changes were identified with land registers and certified copies of real estate registers. In addition, we visited Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri to conduct field surveys and interviews with related persons.

## Precedent Studies

Academic and theoretical studies on commons can be said to have begun with Ostrom (2010[1990]), who dealt with ownership modes importantly from the beginning, because one of the important motives for her study was to refute Hardin's claim that privatization or nationalization is necessary to manage commons efficiently. Dietz et al. (2002) also pointed out that there are a variety of commons, such as those owned by the central government, those owned by local governments, those owned by individuals, and those jointly owned, while pointing out the necessity to analyze how these various ownership modes affect the management of commons.

In a case study on ownership relations around commons in Japan, Inoue (2004) pointed out that it is important to examine actual states of use and management rather than ownership. Yamashita (2008) agreed on the importance of the actual state of management, while noting the fact that ownership modes have a decisive influence on the actual states of management and use. He argued, for instance, that there is a big difference between membership groups (commons managers and users) with ownership of forests and those without ownership in terms of the stable management of commons, that is, constant conflicts occur between the membership groups with no ownership and forest owners (individual, enterprises, or the government).

Choe Hyun and Kim Seon-pil (2016) pointed out that Gasi-ri was able to succeed in community building because it established a community building strategy not to sell the commons (village common pasture) it owned, but to actively use the commons. On the other hand, Choe Hyun (2017) presented the case of Seonheul 1-ri, which did not have the ownership of any commons but succeeded in community building by establishing an appropriate governance system with the local government and the central government so that village residents jointly used "Dongbaekdongsan" as commons, which is owned by the government. "Dongbaekdongsan" was designated as a Ramsar Wetland in 2011 and the provincial government secured the right of management of it for Seonheul 1-ri through governance. Seonheul 1-ri has secured the village's democratic development and ecological sustainability by managing "Dongbaekdongsan" as commons of the village for ecotourism in agreement with village residents. This was possible basically because the central and local governments allowed the villagers to stably manage "Dongbaekdongsan", which must be protected as a Ramsar Wetland.

Yun Sun-jin (2002) pointed out that claims such as “commons can be efficiently managed with the distribution of private ownership” or “commons can be managed well with compulsory regulations of the state” should be reviewed more carefully. On the contrary, commons that have been privatized and became commodities or those that have been nationalized and went out of autonomous management by regional residents so that they were isolated from residents lose sustainability and are destroyed in many cases. The sustainability of commons was best maintained when it was managed by regional residents who were living by relying on the commons and had a wide knowledge of commons through cooperation. Yun Sun-jin (2002) pointed out that since the sustainability of commons is not guaranteed only by changes in ownership mode such as privatization and nationalization, attention should be paid to both ownership modes and management methods (managing body).

According to Yun Sun-jin and Cha Jun-hee, commons privatized by outsiders come to get out of the mutually agreed-upon networks of mutual enforcement made by local communities to maintain them. Therefore, the commodification of commons increases the probability of damage to them. Various other factors that lead to the weakening and collapse of the community also weaken or dissolve the “mutually agreed-upon mutual enforcement” that maintained commons, making their survival difficult. The researchers showed that the maintenance of commons is difficult when the user-manager community loses control over them in any form (Yun and Cha 2009, p. 144).

In “Primary Research for the Development of Commons of Shamanic Shrines in Jeju,” Kim Seok-yun, Song Jeong-hee and Lee Jae-sub (2017) showed that although villages in Jeju have owned and managed shamanic shrines as commons for long periods of time, they have been rapidly losing ownership since modernization, leading to the loss of the sustainability of the shrines. While undergoing capitalist modernization that commodifies everything, the villages have been losing their ownership of the shamanic shrines, which are commons. In particular, due to the development craze in Jeju, village shamanic shrines, which represent the community spirit of villages, have been abandoned or destroyed, while they were bought and sold by the state, local governments, enterprises, and individuals in many cases. The shamanic shrine management bodies are still villages, and the shrines have been managed the most stably when the villages maintained their ownership. In such cases, shamanic shrines have been actually used for purposes such as the transmission of “danggut (rituals in the shrine).”

Therefore, these researchers suggest taking action so that villages, which are the management bodies, have ownership of the shrines.

As can be seen in the previous studies, how commons ownership modes affect the formation of commons management bodies and how the results affect the sustainability of commons are very important concerns in commons studies. Debates over the concerns are not over yet. This paper intends to address an aspect of this issue.

## Present Situation and Commons Ownership Modes of Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri

*Gasi-ri Village, Pyoseon-myeon, Seogwipo-si*

Gasi-ri has restored the ties between commons and its residents that had been broken in the process of industrialization in a modern way and promoted the development of the village community, thereby using and managing the village commons sustainably (Choe and Kim 2016, p. 269). The village restored the relationship between the community and commons by using a common pasture, which is the village commons, as a wind generation farm. Based on this, Gasi-ri is attracting attention as a representative successful community building project.

Gasi-ri has had a common pasture since around 1933, and about 1,000 residents were living there in 1947. However, the village was burned to ashes and at least half of the residents were slaughtered between 1948 and 1954 due



FIG. 1.—Location of Gasi-ri Village

to the “4.3 incident.” After the situation settled down in 1954, the residents remaining in the village could hardly earn a livelihood, so they made the common pasture that exists now by adding privately owned land to the pasture to revive the village. A farm association to manage the common pasture was organized by more than 250 persons consisting of the residents who played a part at that time and their descendants. The land area owned by the farm association is 7,500,000 m<sup>2</sup>. Village managed a village council hall, a senior citizen hall, a cultural center, a village rest area, and a gate ball field as common facilities (Jeju Special Self-governing Province 2015b). The ownership of the land where the Creation Support Center, Canola Plaza and Pony Experience Park were constructed through a community building project is owned by the farm association, and the superficies and use rights are owned by the Gasi-ri Village Council.

Gasi-ri Village formed the wind generation farm in 2012 with the vision of “Gasi-ri, a village of life where rape blossoms and green energy are in harmony” and attracted a photovoltaic power generation complex. Although Gasi-ri does not own the wind generators or the photovoltaic power plant, the revenue earned as land rent revert to the villagers. The farm association receives land rent amounting to 8-900 million won a year from Jeju Energy Corporation and SK D & D, and the total rent received by the farm association reaches 1 billion won every year (Lee 2018, pp. 25-26). There are 277 Gasi-ri Farm Association members. Only those who are born in Gasi-ri can become association members and those who do not reside in the village cannot be association members.

The common pasture had been managed according to the “Gasi-ri Common Property Management Rules” made by the village in 1978, but since the village council and the farm association separated in 2017, the revenue from the common pasture has been managed in accordance with the farm association’s rules. Of the revenue of the farm association, 300 million won is integrated into the Gasi-ri Village Council’s budget every year and used for the welfare of village residents. The welfare budget items include subsidies for electricity bills, cable broadcasting subscription fees, scholarships, national holiday rice subsidies, and old-age pensions. Among them, subsidies for electricity bills and scholarships paid to families with children ranging from kindergarten to junior high school students are paid to all families who have moved their place of domicile at least one year ago (actual residence for at least six months). Scholarships for high school to college students are paid only to the children of association members. In addition, living expenses of 50,000 won are paid to the elderly aged 80 years



FIG. 2.—The Commons of Gasi-ri Village

or older every month. The farm association became independent of the Gasi-ri Village council in 2017 and the commons of the farm association is owned in the form of collective ownership.<sup>1</sup> However, the revenue earned by the lease of the common pasture covers most of the costs of operation of the village. Other facilities made with community building, such as the Creation Support Center, Canola Plaza, Pony Experience Park, campground, and guesthouse are not bringing any revenue to the village.

In the case of Gasi-ri, most of the farm association's revenue is used to prepare common welfare facilities such as a nursing home and a bathhouse, and the commons are managed relatively openly, such as distributing some of the revenue brought

about by the common pasture to village residents who are not farm association members.

However, those who participated in making the common pasture after the 4.3 incident and their descendants could become farm association members, and now only those who are born in Gasi-ri can be qualified as members. Therefore, residents who have been actively participating in implementing the community building project since 2007 but have moved in from other regions cannot become farm association members for life. Since

<sup>1</sup> "Collective ownership" is a form of ownership of corporate bodies with a strong group nature. Collective ownership is not divided into shares, and the contents of ownership are divided into the authority to manage and dispose of and the authority to use and receive benefits. The former belongs to the corporate body of members and the latter is vested in individual members (Choe, Hyun 2016a, pp. 130-131).



the revenue of the farm association plays an important role in the finance of Gasi-ri, invisible differences exist between farm association members and non-association members. In the process of determining important matters of the village, there are significant differences in the right to speak between association members and non-members. This is not a problem of Gasi-ri alone. The qualifications of farm association members differ from association to association in Jeju-do, and harmony between immigrants and settlers is more difficult in villages with more fastidious conditions for association members (Lee 2018, pp. 77-80). Gasi-ri built Pony Experience Park using the common pasture in 2007 and formed the Creation Support Center for artists and built a culture center for residents in 2009 so that the residents could enjoy cultural features such as village parties, a village band, and club activities. The Jeju Canola Flower Festival that greeted the 36<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018 was held for the first time in 1983 with the name “Great Canola Flower Feast.” Since then, it had been held in different locations such as Seongsan Ilchulbong, Songaksan (mountain), the Yongmeori coastal area, and Gasi-ri common pasture, and has been held only in Gasi-ri since 2012.

Although Gasi-ri has been implementing various community building projects, on reviewing the trend of changes in the population, it can be seen that population fluctuations have not been extreme over the last 15 years. The village population, which was 1,199 in 2003, was 1,182 in 2011 when community building was being activated, but decreased slightly to 1,147 in 2013 when Gasi-ri’s community building was in full swing (Resident-registered population statistics, Jeju Special Self-Governing Province Seogwipo-si homepage).

#### *Seonheul 1-ri Village, Jocheon-eup, Jeju-si*

Seonheul 1-ri restored the relationship between the community and the commons by actively using “Dongbaekdongsan,” which is one of the village commons, and succeeded in a community building project based on the restoration.

In the past, village residents had a close relationship with “Dongbaekdongsan” because they obtained water, firewood, and wood from it. However, the relationship gradually broke down due to the memory of the massacre after the 4.3 incident and the supply of tap water and fossil fuel since the 1970s. In particular, after “Dongbaekdongsan” was designated as Jeju Monument No. 10 in 1971 and designated as a Ramsar Wetland in 2011, its use became subject to legal restrictions, and even the village was designated



FIG. 3.—Location of Seonheul-ri Village

as a restricted development area. As the villagers suffered property damage as such, “Dongbaekdongsan” became more distant from the hearts of the residents (Go et al. 2016).

Seonheul 1-ri Village residents began to feel a sense of crisis with the danger of closing of the Seonheul Branch School of Hamdeok Elementary School. The school, which was once active to the extent that it was promoted to Seonheul Elementary School, was reorganized into the Seonheul Branch School of Hamdeok Elementary School in 1995 as the number of students decreased. In 2011, the number of students dropped to 12 and the school was in danger of being closed because not only did the number of jobs decrease as animal husbandry declined, but young people also left the village in search of better educational environments and cultural life (Seonheul 1-ri Village homepage). As Seonheul Branch School faced closing, village residents came to have a sense of crisis that the village might disappear. Community building began from this sense of crisis. The residents began to be interested in community building in 2012. After Seonheul 1-ri was designated as a Ramsar model village and certified as an ecotourism destination by the Ministry of Environment, it began to be known to outsiders. The Seonheul 1-ri residents, who felt a crisis as the population decreased, actively greeted the migrants who were moving in. The village leaders and experts leading community building actively involved the outsiders moving into the village in the community building project. The population of Seonheul 1-ri has been steadily increasing over the last five years. The number of village residents, which was 663 in 2012, increased to 849 as of December 2017 (Resident-registered population statistics, Jeju Special Self-Governing Province



FIG. 4.—Decisions on Important Issues were Made in Roundtable Discussions

Seogwipo-si homepage), and the number of students in Seonheul Branch School, which was 12 in 2011, increased to 56 (Homepage of Hamdeok Elementary School).

The ecotourism strategy introduced for the sustainable management of “Dongbaekdongsan,” which is the commons of the village, played a major role in the community building of Seonheul 1-ri.

Using Gotjawal<sup>2</sup> in a modern way and creating new commons based on it brought about the outcomes of effective use of the commons and sustainability. The case of Seonheul 1-ri supports the argument of Ostrom (2010[1990]) that sustainable commons management by the local community is more effective than management by the state or individuals (Choe 2017, p. 43). “Dongbaekdongsan” is currently being used and managed for the common welfare of the villagers. It becomes not only spaces for the creation of common revenue such as restaurants and specialty stores, but also a base for the preparation of a new commons that will enhance the quality of life of village residents such as places for communication, culture and education (Choe 2017, p. 64). Seonheul 1-ri is a case where “Dongbaekdongsan,” which has been recognized as an important commons by the residents for a long time even though it was not owned by the village, was used as a resource for

<sup>2</sup> Gotjawal is a compound word of “got,” which means forest in Jeju language, and “jawal,” which means trees, gravel, and rocks in Jeju language. It corresponds to “rock bush” in the standard language. Since Gotjawal was considered unusable land in the past because it could not be used farming because of the stones in it, it was mainly used as a pasture or a place to obtain firewood, make charcoal, and collect herbs.

**TABLE 1**  
**GENERAL STATUS OF THE VILLAGE - AS OF FEBRUARY 28 2018**

	Gasi-ri	Seonheul 1-ri
Administrative district	Pyoseon-myeon, Seogwipo-si	Jocheon-eup, Jeju-si
Area (ha)	5,601.8	1,968.8
Number of households	578	396
Population (male/female)	1,281 (701/580)	839 (430/409)

community building through governance in cooperation with the local government to produce successful outcomes. “Dongbaekdongsan,” which had not been managed but had been ostracized, has been used as a resource for ecotourism through governance and managed by the villagers together with the local government to preserve it as a sustainable commons without causing damage to it (Choe 2017, p. 45).

The village common property of Seonheul 1-ri includes 23,140 m<sup>2</sup> of land owned by the Seonheul 1-ri New Village Council, with a multipurpose green facility for events and parties and a cooperative workshop used by women’s associations. Common facilities located on the land include the village council hall, senior citizen centers (at Bon-dong and Nakseon-dong), and a gymnasium. The village has an organization registered under the name of the ecotourism demonstration village promotion council, which consists of five members of the Seonheul 1-ri Development Committee and outside members. The council secretariat buys bracken and honey collected by village residents and sells it to visitors (Jeju Special Self-governing Province 2015a).

## Comparative Analysis of Community Building

Taking note of the aspect called “ownership,” Yamashita Utako discussed cases where a village has a mountain or forest commonly owned by the region, and raised the question “how is the forest being used by whom?” (Yamashita 2014, p. 144). Inoue Makoto (2004) also pointed out that it is important to examine the actual states of use and management of commons with concrete cases rather than examining the aspect of ownership. As pointed out by the two researchers, if commons are taken notice of only in terms of ownership, management may be overlooked. The commons of Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri can be understood only when the aspects of their ownership and management are seen together. Although the commons of the

two villages are different in terms of ownership as one is owned by the village and the other is owned by the state, they are almost the same in terms of management because they are jointly managed by the villagers.

Choe Hyun and Kim Seon-pil indicated that whether or not commons such as common pastures are owned by the community is an important condition for community activation, it is not an absolute factor. These researchers saw that even when regions have similar common pastures, the regions that established strategies to use commons in modern ways and show important differences in the success of community building and the strategies have important effects in the preservation of environments in the regions. They noted that governance and the empowerment of residents (resident

**TABLE 2**  
**PRESENT SITUATION OF OWNERSHIP OF VILLAGE COMMONS OF GASI-RI AND SEONHEUL 1-RI<sup>3</sup>**

	Name	Address	Area	Owner
Gasi-ri, Seogwipo-si	Common pasture	Gasi-ri san 68, etc.	7,500,000 m <sup>2</sup>	Gasi-ri Cooperative Farm Association
	Pony Experience Park	Gasi-ri 3149-33	5,050 m <sup>2</sup>	"
	Canola Plaza	Gasi-ri 3665-85	8,651 m <sup>2</sup>	"
	Creation Support Center	Gasi-ri 2339	1,393 m <sup>2</sup>	"
	Culture Center	Gasi-ri 1876-2	178 m <sup>2</sup>	"
Seonheul 1-ri, Jeju-si	Dongbaekdongsan (Camellia Hill)	Seonheul-ri san 12	590,083 m <sup>2</sup>	State and five other persons <sup>4</sup>
	Dongbaekdongsan Wetland Center	Seonheul-ri 924	3,162 m <sup>2</sup>	Jeju Special Self-Governing Province
	Multipurpose Green Facility / Village Common Workshop		23,140m <sup>2</sup>	Seonheul 1-ri New Village Council

<sup>3</sup> The present ownership situation of the village commons was identified with a land register and forest land register issued from the website of Government 24 (<https://www.gov.kr/>) and certified copies of a real estate register issued from the website of the Court Internet Registry Office (<http://www.iros.go.kr/>).

<sup>4</sup> The state (Korea Forest Service) owns 47/52 of the total area and 5/52 is privately owned land.

capacity building, authorization, and experience of a sense of authority) are important elements in the process of the establishment of community building strategies and that the sustainability of villages and nature would be guaranteed with these elements (Choe and Kim 2016, p. 283).

Here, we will take note of the value of inflows of new populations into the villages. In the case of Seonheul 1-ri, the purpose of community building was to actively attract new residents who would manage the village and commons as the village was in danger of disappearing due to population decrease. On the contrary, for Gasi-ri, community building was promoted with a view to securing the sustainability of the village by improving the life of residents with the efficient utilization of the commons it owned in the situation where the village lost vitality due to the decline of stock farming even though its population was large and the amount of properties was large. The characteristics of these two villages can be identified once again with the present situation of ownership of commons of Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri in [Table-2].

*Forms of Ownership of Commons - Ownership and the Right of Management (use)*

Gasi-ri is a representative community building success case of Jeju-do, and it is attracting the Jeju Canola Festival. The common pasture of Gasi-ri (Gasi-ri mountain 68 and 49 other lots) is owned by the farm association. Although the farm association owns the land of the Pony Experience Park (Gasi-ri san 41) where the Jeju Canola Festival is held, the farm experience and training facility Gasi-ri Canola Plaza (Gasi-ri 3665-85), the Gasi-ri Culture Center (Gasi-ri 1876-2) formed in 2009 through the Gasi-ri new cultural space formation project, and the Gasi-ri Creation Support Center (Gasi-ri 2339) established to provide working spaces to artists and infuse a creative imagination in village residents, the superficies and use rights to the facilities are owned by the Gasi-ri New Village Council.

“Dongbaekdongsan,” which is a main resource for community building in Seonheul 1-ri, is distributed on the southeast of the village and belongs to Seonheul Gotjawal. It was designated “Dongbaekdongsan Cultural Property Protection Area” (Jeju-do Monument No. 10) in 1971 thanks to its high groundwater recharge rates and biodiversity, and as the “Seonheul-ri White Daphne and Asplenium Scolopendrium Community Protection Area” (Jeju-do Monument No. 18) in 1973. It was designated as a “World Natural Heritage Village and an Environmentally Friendly Eco-Village” in 2007, and

as a Ministry of Environment Wetland Protection Area in 2010. In 2011, it was designated as the fourth Ramsar Protected Wetland Area in Jeju-do, and the registered area is 590,083 m<sup>2</sup>. It was designated as a “National Geological Park Attraction” in 2012, as a “Ramsar Demonstration Village” in 2013, and as a “Global Geopark Attraction” in 2014. “Dongbaekdongsan” is owned by the state and the management department is the Korea Forest Service. The land of “Dongbaekdongsan” was originally owned jointly by 42 persons who were residing in Seonheul 1-ri Village, but the state began to buy the land in 2009. Currently, 4/52 of the ownership is held by three outsiders including Mr. Oh, 1/52 is owned by Mr. Kim, who is an outsider, and 47/52 is owned by the state. “Dongbaekdongsan Wetland Center,” which was opened in 2015, is owned by the Jeju Special Self-governing Province but is managed by the village.

### *Types of Management of Commons*

In this section, the types and systems of management of commons will be examined, as well as whether community building by the two villages using the commons is sustainable. Ostrom discussed the “tragedy of commons,” “prisoner’s dilemma,” and the “logic of collective action” and indicated that the free-rider problem exists at the center of each model (Ostrom 2010 [1990]).

TABLE 3  
COMMONS OWNERSHIP MODES AND MANAGEMENT METHOD

	Gasi-ri	Seonheul 1-ri
Ownership mode	- A farm association consisting of village residents as collective ownership of the village common pasture	-The state expropriated “Dongbaekdongsan” -The village has no land ownership
Commons Management method	-The village council manages the newly formed common facilities (Canola Plaza, etc.) and the association manages the common pasture	-The village council manages “Dongbaekdongsan” owned by the state and “Dongbaekdongsan Wetland Center” owned by the local government through governance

In Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri, existing residents may actively promote community building together with new residents, existing residents may estrange immigrants who participate in community building, or new residents may want to enjoy the benefits of community building without participating. Examining how the two villages coped with such problems is meaningful. Under what criteria the villages distributed the revenue obtained through the commons to village residents should also be looked at. How the villages manage the benefits from commons, and how such management methods affect the sustainability of community building of the villages through the commons will be examined. In particular, the community building body, governance system, and the range and stability of residents' participation that have major effects on community building and the sustainability of commons will be mainly examined and the sustainability levels of the community building of the villages will be compared.

### *Community Building Body*

The greatest obstacles to community building in Gasi-ri were the closure of the village residents and the trauma inflicted by public power in the 4.3 incident. However, the village leaders knew well that they would fail in community building if they did not get help of external experts as well as sympathy and participation of the residents. An Bong-su, the village foreman who led Gasi-ri's community building in the early days, actively used the opinions and discernment of external experts to form the main agent of community building centered on the village council. In addition, the village council used large amounts of budgets to strengthen the residents' capabilities and established community building strategies with open discussions involving residents. A community building body in which quite a few villagers participated was formed centering on the village council (Choe and Kim 2016, p. 283).

Before 2011, Seonheul 1-ri, which was seeking community building, organized a development committee to make important decisions composed of the heads of spontaneous organizations such as a youth association and a women's association focusing on the village foreman. In 2011, the development committee began to prepare strategies for community building through ecotourism with the help of the National Wetland Center and ecotourism experts in the Jeju region (Choe 2017, p. 58-59).

In the beginning, Seonheul 1-ri Village leaders placed emphasis on the operation of various programs more than anything else to induce the interest



of residents and encourage their communication and participation. Although meetings were held to relieve the indifference, concern, and misunderstandings of village residents and work together, few residents attended the meetings. Therefore, other methods familiar to the residents were sought and the village leaders visited organizations that had already existed such as the youth association, women's association, senior citizen's association, and even home town associations to communicate with them. In addition, based on the foregoing, a roundtable discussion titled "Uncle and Aunt, what is the pride of our village?" in which any village resident could participate was held to form a bond of sympathy among the residents. In the discussion, 120 residents gathered and had a heated debate. Since then, more than 100 residents have continuously attended roundtable discussions and debated important issues to make decisions (Choe 2017; Go et al. 2016). As such, a community building body was formed centering on the village council.

### *Governance System*

Gasi-ri rediscovered the value of the commons that the village had and actively used the commons in community building projects. The closure and trauma of village residents inflicted by public power after the Jeju 4.3 incident slowed cooperation with the local government and only about 10% of the residents approved of receiving outsiders' or administrative support for the community building project. However, village leaders realized that a process through which the village council would obtain appropriate help and cooperation of the central government and the local government was necessary for effective management of the commons. Therefore, the Gasi-ri Village Council formed a network to cooperate with the government and experts. This network has greatly contributed to the effective management of the village commons and successful implementation of community building (Choe and Kim 2016, pp. 284-288).

Seonheul 1-ri promoted community building using ecotourism with the village residents' communication and active participation, and the advice and cooperation of ecotourism experts and related public officials. As a result, it successfully accomplished two goals that seemed incompatible: the preservation of the surrounding nature including "Dongbaekdongsan" and the welfare of the residents. The ecotourism council, which was the central axis of community building, became an important channel through which Seonheul 1-ri cooperated with the central government, Jeju-do local government, Jeju City Hall, ecotourism business operators, local

environmental activists, and environmental experts (Go et al. 2016). Seonheul 1-ri has established a strategy to ensure that “Dongbaekdongsan,” which is the commons, can be used and managed by governance with the local government, although the village did not own it. From the position of the local government, entrusting the management of “Dongbaekdongsan,” which would require a considerable budget and manpower, to the village has positive effects of saving costs and enabling efficient management. The villagers can earn revenue by stably using “Dongbaekdongsan,” which was not accessible because it was owned by the local government, as a resource. Local environmental activists were able to effectively prevent attempts to damage “Dongbaekdongsan” and safely preserve it in cooperation with the residents. The case of Seonheul 1-ri is a good one where the local government, the village, and local ecological activities can benefit from each other.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Resident Participation and Stability*

The leaders of Gasi-ri Village regarded the strengthening of the capacity of village residents as a major strategy at the beginning of the project and decided the basic direction of community building as “resident-centered growth rather than capital-based development.” To accomplish this goal, the leaders gathered the opinions of the residents and held great debates seven times to democratically induce the participation of villagers. Through this process, the power of local knowledge and participation could be identified (Choe and Kim 2016, p. 277).

To preserve and use the village commons named “Dongbaekdongsan,” Seonheul 1-ri needed the cooperation, checks, harmony, and balance of stakeholders. External experts provided much important advice in the community building process with long-term perspectives. The village council accepted the advice to make efforts to strengthen the capabilities of village residents without being engrossed in short-term achievements, and prepared the goals and processes of community building with the residents’ participation and agreement. In addition, based on their environmental expertise, outside experts suggested methods of ecotourism to local residents

<sup>5</sup> However, even if provincial lands or national lands are in the village, the land cannot be sustainably managed unless the right to manage it is given to the village stably for the long term. This can be identified in cases where village commons were destroyed in the process of large-scale development promoted by local governments (Gangjeong, where a naval base was constructed and Seogwangseo-ri, where the Mythical History Park was constructed).

**TABLE 4**  
**CONTENTS AND CONDITIONS OF THE COMMUNITY BUILDING BEING PROMOTED**

	Gasi-ri	Seonheul 1-ri
Resident participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-resident centered growth</li> <li>-great debates were held (seven times)</li> <li>-democratic participation of village residents</li> <li>-power of local knowledge and participation</li> <li>-initial budgets were used to strengthen residents' capabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-resident meetings were held</li> <li>-decisions on important issues were made in roundtable discussions</li> <li>-residents' satisfaction and pride were inspired</li> <li>-resident-centered ecotourism program</li> </ul>
External expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-community building expert (invited from Seoul and so on)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ecology expert, community building expert, ecotourism expert (local native)</li> </ul>
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-led by the village leader and centered on the village foreman</li> <li>-external experts' opinions and discernment were used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-development committee centered on ecotourism experts and the village foreman</li> </ul>
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the local government was indifferent in the beginning</li> <li>-the local government cooperated after outcomes were yielded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-a governance system (ecotourism council) was organized from the beginning</li> </ul>
Population inflow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-residents may use the commons, but those who are not farm association members may not participate in decisions regarding the commons</li> <li>-closed: immigrants are restricted in joining the association</li> <li>-little increase in the population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-residents participate equally in commons management</li> <li>-open: immigrants who want to participate may do so without restrictions</li> <li>-drastic increase in the population</li> </ul>

that will enable sustainable management of “Dongbaekdongsan,” the commons of the village. The government provided necessary support rather than giving instructions.

### *Implications*

To promote stable community building, the village council or village association should have the ownership of the commons. Sometimes, however, the village's ownership may hinder the maintenance of the sustainability of

community building for commons. Gasi-ri, which has a large-scale pasture that belongs to the farm association, promoted community building using the pasture without state support. In the process, it invited external experts to participate in community building with its budget and got a lot of help. However, after Gasi-ri achieved a certain amount of success, the external experts who actively participated left the village one by one because they could not secure stable statuses that matched their roles. On the contrary, Seonheul 1-ri promoted community building through governance from the very beginning because the commons owned by the village was insignificant and established a community building strategy to pursue ecotourism in cooperation with the government and local experts. The local experts who participated in community building or those who moved into Seonheul 1-ri thereafter secured stable statuses as they contributed as equal residents and came to completely settle in the village.

According to Jeong Yeong-shin (2016), open or large-scale commons may be exposed to the risk of being destroyed by capital or privatization forces due to a lack of management. Closed commons can be virtually privatized as the user groups that have ownership may exclude other users. This tendency appears particularly strongly in the case of land. Following the establishment of modern ownership with the Japanese colonial period and the construction of farm associations, Jeju village common pastures are now becoming the common properties of village farm associations (Choe et al. 2016a, p. 115).

Commons are not free from conflicts. Although farm associations own the land, which are the commons of the villages, and the right to use the land is guaranteed through village councils as in the case of Gasi-ri, immigrants can hardly join the associations. On the contrary, Seonheul 1-ri residents are equal in that respect because none of the villagers have any ownership share anyway. Therefore, conditions for residents to be recognized based on objective and open criteria related to the degree to which they contribute to community building instead of whether they are immigrants or have ownership of the commons have been prepared. This is becoming an attractive condition to attract new residents and seems to be one reason why many people are moving into the village.

Thus, the case of Seonheul 1-ri shows the fact that even when the commons of a village has been expropriated by the state so that the village cannot have first-hand ownership, if the right to stably manage the commons is guaranteed, the sustainability of community building and the commons can be maintained for long periods of time. This means that structures

**TABLE 5**  
**ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF COMMUNITY BUILDING BY GASI-RI AND SEONHEUL 1-RI**

	Gasi-ri	Seonheul 1-ri
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Since the commons are owned by the village association in the form of collective ownership, individuals have no share and it can be operated stably</li> <li>-Stable operation of community building with earnings from leasing of wind energy and solar energy facilities</li> <li>-Attracted Jeju Canola Festival to contribute to village activation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Since none of the villagers have ownership, internal agreement is important</li> <li>-Organized a committee using the state-owned commons and cooperates with civic groups</li> <li>-The village manages the commons with stability and autonomy</li> <li>-Easy to accommodate the population moving into the village</li> </ul>
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Closure of association membership</li> <li>-Difficult to accommodate the incoming population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The village has no ownership</li> <li>-Since the commons of the village is insufficient, a shift to a new type of community building is difficult</li> </ul>

without ownership can act rather positively. This environment around the commons of Seonheul 1-ri as such enabled the formation of equal relationships among all village residents and enabled them to have open attitudes toward the inflow of new populations.

In the situation where the population in rural areas continues to decrease, the core of sustainable community building is inducing young people to move into, settle and become members of villages. Both villages are evaluated to have succeeded in community building. However, the degrees to which the two villages formed environments where those who moved in can settle are different. Although the community building of both Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri is regarded to be successful, the success of today does not guarantee future sustainability. Even though Gasi-ri is currently winning great success, if those who have moved into the village from outside are treated as second-class citizens and cannot mix well with existing residents despite actively participating in community building, long-term sustainability will become doubtful. In this respect, Gasi-ri requires a more open structure, and conversely, Seonheul 1-ri can be regarded to have a more sustainable form of community building. When the sustainability of a village is not maintained, the sustainability of the commons can hardly be guaranteed.

Therefore, equality in the commons management can be seen as a core element in ensuring the stable management and sustainability of the commons. Of course, the equality and management stability of the managing body are not automatically guaranteed even when the ownership is held by the local government or the state. Since local governments and the state have the nature of corporate bodies, their policies may change according to the position of the heads. Therefore, giving stability to the management authority of the village council in the governance process is an essential condition for sustainable community building using the commons. In the case of Seonheul 1-ri, the state cannot sell or develop “Dongbaekdongsan” because it has been designated as a Ramsar Wetland Protection Area. Therefore, the village is highly likely to stably secure the right to manage “Dongbaekdongsan” only if it does so sustainably.

## Conclusion

The land owned by the Gasi-ri Farm Association is the commons of the village and greatly contributes to community building. However, the closedness of the association prevents outsiders from coming into the village to actively participate in community building for long periods of time. In the community building of Seonheul 1-ri, the strategy to use the government-owned land called “Dongbaekdongsan” as one of the village commons for ecotourism played an important role. In the case of Seonheul 1-ri, it was necessary to secure the authority to continuously manage “Dongbaekdongsan” as the commons of the village through governance with the local government. Based on the foregoing, the village council was able to restore the relationship between the community and the commons, which was broken, in a modern way with ecotourism. Seonheul 1-ri residents are transforming “Dongbaekdongsan,” which is owned by the local government and had been abandoned and not managed, into a sustainable commons by using it as an ecotourism resource through governance and managing and preserving it together. The village not only earned income through ecotourism, but also secured communication and trust among residents and felt keenly the necessity to preserve the natural environment. As the relationship between the commons and the community changed, the village changed economically and culturally into a good place to live. Accordingly, the population of the village has increased as young people move in, and students are gathering in Seonheul Brach School, which was in danger of

closing. The example of Seonheul 1-ri is applicable to many more villages than the community building of Gasi-ri that uses the commons owned by the village (Choe 2017, p. 45). Considering South Korean farm villages where the number of empty houses is increasing, the immigration of young outsiders can be said to be a positive element that greatly enhances the sustainability of community building.

The true goal of community building is not the recovery of the economic value of the village, or financial support from the central government and the local government. The basic goal of community building is to secure the sustainability of the village community and surrounding environment, as with Gasi-ri and Seonheul 1-ri. To that end, preparing ways to enable the residents to get out of poverty without damaging the natural environment is important. Through the foregoing, the residents become able to stop seeing nature as a commodity and regard it as a companion to live together with. If the village disappears, the nature around it cannot but be exploited in various ways, such as being used as a waste disposal site. The surrounding ecosystems can be preserved only when there are communities and people who live by relying on them. Therefore, to maintain nature and secure sustainability, an appropriate number of residents should live in a village. As long as mankind exists, not only overpopulation but also underpopulation in a certain area is highly likely to actually undermine the sustainability of nature. Yun Sun-jin noted that village residents' awareness and participation are most important for the meaningful preservation of village commons (Yun and Cha 2009, p. 159). The most significant element in community building using the commons is sustainability. To secure sustainability, a body that will manage village commons and promote community building with a long-term perspective is necessary. To manage the commons that have been effectively managed to date so that they are sustainable hereafter too, villages should be continuously filled with residents, and to this end, the village council should have an equal and open structure.

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