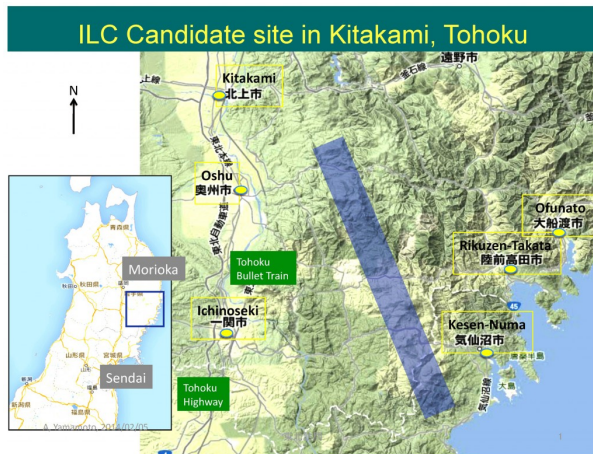


AROUND THE WORLD

## The road to Kitakami

Barbara Warmbein | 20 February 2014



ILC candidate site in Kitakami. The accelerator is shown with a blue line.

Our mission was clear: we were the tasters, the vanguard. In early February, the two European LC communicators travelled to Japan for three days to a. find our way around the Japanese transport system, b. be filmed doing so, c. find entry points of improvement potential for foreigners about to make the same experience, and d. start a communication model for the future multi-national laboratory. Our itinerary: land at Haneda International Airport, take Monorail and local train to Tokyo train station for a Shinkansen high-speed train to Ichinoseki, some 450 kilometres further north. In and around Ichinoseki we were to visit various sites and sights – sites for the ILC if it was built there, and sights of the area to explore the leisure potential of Kitakami. Please see our [“Kitakami glossary”](#) for explanations of terms.

Here is how it all played out.

Our Japanese colleague Rika Takahashi asked us to fly to Haneda airport as it is supposed to become more of an international hub for the Tokyo Olympics in 2020 and might thus be a main entry port for ILC scientists in the future. (There is an airport closer to the Kitakami site, in Sendai and Hanamaki, which are serviced by flights from Osaka, so that’s another viable option next to Tokyo’s Narita airport) Detail for geeks: you get to ride downtown on the Tokyo Monorail!

One minor Tokyo public transport system culture shock later, we were zooming northwards on the Tohoku Shinkansen bullet train. Another treat for train geeks: the Hayabusa E5 Shinkansen runs on this line, and as of March the new E7 will take up operation. Look it all up [here](#). But that’s enough about passenger trains – let’s move on to bunch trains.

The ILC, if built in the Kitakami region, would stretch from a part of Oshu called Esashi (one end of the linac) to a part of Ichinoseki called Morone (the other end of the linac), crossing under the rolling hills of Kitakami for beams to collide near the town of Ohara, under a mountain called Hayamayama. For the 1-TeV 50-kilometre option it would almost stretch out to the coast, to a town called Kesenuma – one of the towns that was severely hit by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami. So the kind people from the prefecture office drove us around to places in the area where the international ILC lab could be established, showing us points for access tunnels, campuses, even the granite core probes that were taken to examine the [exact geological situation of the area](#) and are being evaluated now.



European LC communicators in Tokyo, trying to find their way in the Japan Rail (JR) system. Image: ILC/ Barbara Warmbein.

We also met with local officials and discussed how ILC scientists and the ILC could be attracted to the area, heard about their plans to open the region up to a massive new science project, visited local sights and admired the support for the ILC that can be spotted at many different places. The taxi driver who took us to our hotel, for example, said the ILC was “talk of the town”; [shops had banners and pins, roads had signs](#). It was almost touching and certainly very exciting to see so much enthusiasm and support. As always, discussions led to more questions and things that would need to be investigated and done and conclusions are hard to draw, but we can conclude this: that the trip was an eye-opener for this area of Japan, that regional support should meet global support, and that foreigners – even plagued by jetlag – can easily find their way up to Kitakami.

バーバラ・ワームベイン (Barbara Warmbein)



*Panorama of the Kikami mountains. Image: Oshu City*

[COMMUNICATION](#) | [ICHINOSEKI](#) | [JAPAN](#) | [KITAKAMI SITE](#) | [OSHU](#) | [SENDAI](#)

Copyright © 2021 ILC International Development Team  
Printed from <http://newsline.linearcollider.org>