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# RIHN

## 1st. INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

### - Water and Better Human Life in the Future -

**Nov., 7-8, 2006**  
**Kyoto International Conference Hall**  
**Kyoto-city, Japan**

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## Welcome to the RIHN 1st International Symposium

The aim of the symposium is to make the unique framework of the RIHN's research activities and their outcomes better known to the international scientific community.

RIHN, established in Kyoto in 2001 as a research Institute for global environmental problems, will hold its first international symposium entitled "Water and Better-Human Life in the Future". The basic concept of RIHN is to understand environmental problems as a dynamic interactive system involving not only nature but also human factors. The symposium will consist of two sessions: 1) water imbalances and 2) human-water interaction and nature around water. The symposium will not be open to the public, but the organizing committee welcomes active scientists who are interested in these topics as described below.

### Session 1 : Water Imbalances

Wet regions such as Monsoon Asia suffer with the problem of "too much water" with associated natural disasters including flooding and typhoons. On the other hand, this abundance of water fosters and contributes to the sustainability of societies in the wet regions.

Conversely, the regions which were birthplaces of the four great civilizations of the world are currently arid regions with the problem of "too little water". It is clear that the most important issue related to the sustainability of societies in these dry regions is the degree to which water can be secured. Variations of water distribution over time and space due to climate change and human activities are also related to the rise and fall of civilizations. "Virtual water" is another example of the cause of water imbalances due to increases in human activities on the earth. The movements of virtual water often occur through export and import of foods and materials from "too little water" areas to "too much water" regions. Recent water cycle imbalances due to human activities are transboundary in nature and thus of global significance. In this session, we will address the sustainable society from the point of view of water imbalances. We suggest that the conversion of water management change from a dependence only on economic markets to one based on human security and adaptation depending on the region's needs and culture.

### Session 2 : Human-Water Interaction

Humans have been controlling water resources by means of modern technology, such as the construction of dams and huge irrigation systems. However, such approaches often cause new problems in remote areas. For instance, irrigation in the upper stream of a river has often caused insufficient water supply in its lower reaches. Furthermore, irrigation has frequently caused saline soil problems in arid areas throughout history. In this session, we will attempt to grasp the problematic phenomena around water use and its management as a dynamic interactive system involving both humans and nature. In this manner we should be able to develop strategies for a better life with water.

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