

## **Research Project FR: Mid-term Evaluation Comments Sheet**

\*This evaluation occurs in the second year of Research Project Full Research.

Project Title	Co-Creation of Sustainable Regional Innovation for Reducing Risk of High-impact Environmental Pollution
Abbreviated Title	SRIREP Project
Project Leader	SAKAKIBARA Masayuki
Project Period	5 years Full Research
Affiliated Program	Research Program 3 : Designing Lifeworlds of Sustainability and Wellbeing

### **General advice and comments of the EREC:**

The Committee noted that, in spite of the obstacles to fieldwork due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project has been very active, with fieldwork in Myanmar and in several locations in Indonesia documenting in detail the practices in artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM). It also organized several conferences and well-attended webinars. There seems to be good engagement with communities, local governments and sections of the national governments.

However, the Committee members also found it difficult to understand the project from the report and presentation and were concerned about activities being fragmented. There seems to be a proliferation of activities in the case study sites, including many with stakeholders that are organized around transdisciplinary concepts such as TransDisciplinary Community of Practice and Transdisciplinary Boundary Object. These seem to be taking place in different localities (even within Gorontalo Province in Indonesia) and it is not clear how they relate to the ASGM sites, to the Hg analysis of environmental and human samples, and to each other. The frequent use of abbreviations and jargon make understanding the project even harder. There is a need to strengthen the linkages between the various field activities and to provide coherent and easy-to-understand descriptions so that it becomes clear how the fieldwork helps achieve the project goals and how success in the field is defined. The transdisciplinary vocabulary and activities need to be more firmly rooted in the relevant literatures.

Another aspect that needs strengthening is the vertical integration of the project. A goal of the project is to strengthen environmental governance in Southeast Asia, but how the case study research connects to that level remains vague. It is also doubtful that the activities at the Southeast Asian regional level, such as the conferences, will strengthen governance in the real world.

Thus, while the project is very active, research activities appear dispersed and separate across localities, levels, and disciplines and a concerted effort is needed to increase the coherence and integration of the project.

A minor comment was that most of the publications to date seem to be in conference proceedings and that the project should aim to disseminate its work in reputable international journals.