Comment Form【Core FR1】

February 8, 2018

Title of the Project	**Proposal and Verification of the Validity of Isotope Environmental Traceability Methodology in Environmental Studies**		
Research Term	**FR1**	**Project Leader**	**Tayasu Ichiro**

General advice and comments of the EREC:

The Committee was pleased to see this project, and with it the Core Program, getting underway. The importance of stable isotope research as an area of strength of RIHN was well-appreciated. Environmental traceability provides a good and interesting link between environmental and societal issues. While the specific procedures involved are highly technical, stable isotope methods in this project provide a means to examine the societal trust that is engendered (or damaged) through the assurance (or lack thereof) that follows from traceability. These linkages are not automatic and invite the exploration of broader issues such as the general public's belief (or not) in science, the role of empirical evidence in individual decisions and policy making, etc.

The project is making a valuable effort to reach out into society and work in a participatory way with a range of local stakeholders, both in the citizens' science mode where local community members participate in data collection, and to support local policy with evidence from the research. Collection of social data using a questionnaire is good and necessary, but much will depend on how the questions and the concepts they are based on are developed and how respondents are selected.

There was some expectation that the project would not only provide findings on the societal application of traceability research, but that it would make progress on further developing the stable isotopes methods themselves as well.

Some of the EREC members raised questions about the positioning of this project within the Core Program, which aims to develop methodologies and concepts.