

Comment Form 【Program 1】

February 14, 2019

Title of the Program	Societal Transformation under Environmental Change
Program Director	Sugihara Kaoru
<p>Program comments summaries of the EREC:</p> <p>The Committee was pleased with the strong humanistic approach to history and the specifically Asian perspective. The presentation exploring the Asian contribution to the “Great Acceleration” underscored the need to unpack “global” trends and firmly located the historical experience of the Asia Pacific region within the Anthropocene narrative. The longer-term historical perspective also revealed how the development path of Asia differed from that of Europe, in terms of rural-urban interaction, of type of industrialization, and of the speed of the transformation. At the same time, this place-based approach still awaits further theoretical elaboration of the concept of transformation. (There may be an opportunity to contribute to the upcoming World Development Report on Transformation.)</p> <p>The development of a robust theoretical framework would also help facilitate what was regarded as the largest challenge for the program: the still limited internal coherence, with the projects only thinly connected to the historical narrative.</p> <p>It will be useful to locate the historical examples in a time dimension perspective, where the long-term view can help explore the development of capitalism as the context for environmental problems. This will also facilitate the further elucidation of the connections between the historical work and the research on contemporary issues, as well as its relevance to debates about the future. There is good potential for dialogue with Program 3, which is more bottom-up in its approach to the future. The projects in Program 1 will also need to pay more attention to actors beyond the local level and consider how to scale up societal governance from community level to national and international levels.</p> <p>There is considerable scope for the research on the health effects caused by the haze from peatland fires (presented by incoming PL Kozan) to engage with the newly proposed project on health and air pollution due to stubble burning in north India (PL Hayashida).</p>	