About RIHN


Photo: KIMIJIMA Satomi

The Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN) was established in April 2001 by the Government of Japan to promote integrated research in the field of global environmental studies.
RIHN solicits, develops, hosts, and funds fixed-term research projects on pressing areas of interaction between humanity and nature.
RIHN promotes coordinated, problem-centered, context-specific, and multi-dimensional science.
RIHN projects usually last five years plus two-three years of preparation; they are always interdisciplinary including researchers from the natural and social sciences and the humanities, and they strive to offer solutions to the environmental problems under study.

RIHN maintains extensive national and international research networks and serves as the Regional Center for Future Earth in Asia.

■ Laboratory

Our laboratories specialize in stable-isotope analysis and a wide range of equipment is available for use by RIHN projects and outside users.

Social Outreach


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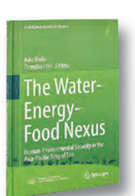
■ Events

1. **RIHN International Symposium**
   Each year RIHN holds an international symposium with leading academic figures from around the world.
2. **RIHN Public Seminars**
   Public seminars are held throughout the year at RIHN or in the city center.
3. **RIHN Open House**
   RIHN opens its doors to the public once a year with a special curriculum for children.

■ Publications

In addition to many individual publications for general and specialist audiences, RIHN has partnered with Springer Nature Publishers to establish the Global Environmental Studies book series. Titles in the series reflect the full breadth of RIHN scholarship.



■ YouTube

We have a YouTube Channel for sharing RIHN research findings and events.

YouTube

International Collaboration

Memoranda of Understanding and Research Cooperation Agreements (As of April 1st, 2020)

▼AUSTRIA
- International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis

▼BHUTAN
- College of Natural Resources, Royal University of Bhutan

▼BURKINA FASO
- l'Association des Jeunes pour la Protection de l'Environnement et d'Elevage

▼CAMEROON
- Association Tam-Tam Mobile
- mutcare

▼CHINA
- East China Normal University
- Eco-environmental Protection Institute, Shanghai Academy of Agricultural Sciences
- Hainan Provincial Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Peking University

▼GERMANY
- Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies

▼INDONESIA
- Indonesian Institute of Sciences
- Institut Teknologi Bandung
- Research Center for Biology, Indonesian Institute of Sciences
- The State University of Gorontalo
- Universitas Riau
- University of Lampung

▼LAOS
- Lao Tropical and Public Health Institute, Ministry of Health

▼NETHERLANDS
- Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development, Utrecht University

▼OMAN
- Sultan Qaboos University

▼PHILIPPINES
- University of the Philippines Diliman

▼SWEDEN
- The Sven Hedin Foundation

▼THAILAND
- Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University
- Rice Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

▼UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
- University of California, Berkeley

▼ZAMBIA
- University of Zambia

Access

RIHN original mascot character "Chikyu-ken" ▶

By City Subway
From Kyoto Station, take the Karasuma Line to Kokusaikaikan Station (the last station), and transfer to Kyoto Bus.

By Eizan Railway
From Demachiyanagi Station in Kyoto City, take the Kurama Line. Get off at Kyoto-Seikadai-mae Station. RIHN is a 10-minute walk from the station.

By Kyoto Bus
From Kokusaikaikan Station, take bus No.40, 50 or 52 to Chikyuken-mae. RIHN is at the base of the hill on your left.

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Research Institute for Humanity and Nature

2020-2021


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Program 1 Program Director : SUGIHARA Kaoru

Societal Transformation under Environmental Change

This program aims at providing realistic perspectives and options to facilitate the transformation towards a society that can flexibly respond to environmental changes caused by human activities such as global warming and air pollution, as well as to natural disasters. In addition to coordinating the following three projects, the program conducts research on Asia's long-term paths of social and economic development in relation to environmental change.

Project Leader : KOZAN Osamu — 2017 ~ 2021

Toward the Regeneration of Tropical Peatland Societies: Building International Research Network on Paludiculture and Sustainable Peatland Management

Tropical peatlands are in crisis. The peatlands drained for industrial purposes often suffer from great fires that threaten local people's life and emit enormous amounts of CO2. The haze also causes health hazards over a wide area. This project aims to create solutions to this problem, mainly in Indonesia. The project takes transdisciplinary approaches, in which researchers explore the effective ways of rewetting, reforestation and paludiculture on peatlands in collaboration with local communities and other stakeholders, paying special attention to the transformability of environmentally vulnerable societies.

Project Leader : YOSHIDA Takehito — 2018 ~ 2022

Research and Social Implementation of Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction as Climate Change Adaptation in Shrinking Societies

The rate of natural disaster occurrence has been increasing, partly due to contemporary climate change, and adaptation to natural disaster risks is increasingly important to the sustainability of human societies. At the same time, many societies are experiencing shrinking populations. Eco-DRR takes advantage of the multi-functionality of ecosystems and biodiversity, including their capacity to mitigate natural disasters while providing multiple ecosystem services, and population decline provides ample opportunity for implementing Eco-DRR. Our project will develop practical solutions for implementation of Eco-DRR.

Project Leader : HAYASHIDA Sachiko — 2020 ~ 2024

An Interdisciplinary Study toward Clean Air, Public Health and Sustainable Agriculture: The Case of Crop Residue Burning in North India

This study addresses air pollution caused by large-scale post-harvest burning of rice-straw in October and November in the states of Punjab and Haryana in North-West India. The burning causes severe air pollution in the surrounding areas, most notably in the Delhi-National Capital Region. Some evidence suggests that crop-residue burning negatively affects air quality over the entire Indo-Gangetic Plain (IGP), demonstrating the potential negative impact of changing agricultural practices on regional air quality, affecting public health and well-being of hundreds of millions of people.

Program 2 Acting Program Director : MALLEE, Hein

Fair Use and Management of Diverse Resources

Taking tradeoffs into account, this program provides multifaceted options to stakeholders involved in production, distribution, and consumption of resources, in order to realize fair use, optimal management, and wise governance of diverse resources including energy, water and ecological resources.

Project Leader : KANEMOTO Keiichiro — 2019 ~ 2023

Mapping the Environmental Impact Footprint of Cities, Companies, and Households

Economic growth in China and other developing countries is associated with severe global environmental problems, such as climate change and loss of biodiversity. Studies have shown that consumption in developed countries drives environmental emissions in developing countries. Unlike most studies, which focus on environmental emissions and international trade, this is the first study to clarify the effect of global supply chains on environmental impacts. In addition to countries and regions, we will estimate the environmental footprint of cities, companies and households.

RIHN Research Project Field Sites

Program 3 Program Director : SAIJO Tatsuyoshi

Designing Lifeworlds of Sustainability and Wellbeing

This program proposes research aimed at illuminating reciprocal linkages between diverse rural and urban lifeworlds and contributing to the solution of sustainability problems by working with various societal partners. Special emphasis is placed on envisioning sustainable futures that improve wellbeing and gauging their feasibility.

Project Leader : MCGREEVY, Steven R. — 2016 ~ 2020

Lifeworlds of Sustainable Food Consumption and Production: Agrifood Systems in Transition

The FEAST project takes an action research approach to explore the realities and potential for sustainable agrifood transition at sites in Japan, Thailand, Bhutan, and China. We analyze patterns of food consumption, food-related social practices and their socio-cultural meanings, and the potential of consumer-based agency to change deeply-held cultural notions and institutions. The "lifeworld" concept captures the meaning behind the shared everyday lived experience of food consumption and production, and allows us to more deeply investigate and understand the "inner dimensions" that can catalyze socio-cultural change.

Project Leader : YAMAUCHI Taro — 2017 ~ 2021

The Sanitation Value Chain: Designing Sanitation Systems as Eco-Community-Value System

The project proposes a new concept, the Sanitation Value Chain, which has the following dimensions: 1) Places the values of people and community in the center of discussion, and prepares the sanitation system to correspond to this value chain; 2) Recognizes a sanitation system as an integrated system with social and technical units. The project designs several pilot studies demonstrating the significance of societal, academic, and professional involvement in the co-creation of this value chain.

Project Leader : SAKAKIBARA Masayuki — 2019 ~ 2023

Co-creation of Sustainable Regional Innovation for Reducing Risk of High-impact Environmental Pollution

In order to reduce Hg pollution from artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) in ASEAN countries, this project investigates a way to co-create sustainable societies using a transdisciplinary approach. It does this through regional innovations in ASGM areas, interregional networks generating Hg-free societies, and strengthening environmental governance. Using theory and practice, the project develops transformative boundary objects and transdisciplinary communities of practice.

Core Program Program Director : TANIGUCHI Makoto

Core Program

Based on the mission of RIHN, and in order to realize the strategies and policies formulated by the Council for Research Strategy, the Core Program undertakes research projects on an ongoing basis. During Phase III, the Core Program will develop concepts and methodologies to solve global environmental problems in collaboration with various groups in society.

Project Leader : KONDO Yasuhisa — 2018 ~ 2020

Information Asymmetry Reduction in Open Team Science for Socio-environmental Cases

This Core Project explores theories and methods for actionable team-based research to address socio-environmental issues even if socio-psychological asymmetry in knowledge, value, or socioeconomic status between actors. This methodology, currently called Open Team Science, is developed by interlinking open science and transdisciplinary theories, and concurrently tested through case studies including community-based actions to waterweed overgrowth in the Lake Biwa catchment, Japan, and built heritage conservation in Oman.

Project Leader : ONISHI Yuko — 2020 ~ 2022

Methods and Tactics to Foster Knowledge Co-creation: A Practical Framework for Implementing Transdisciplinary Research

This project aims to identify a practical framework for TD research. The practical framework consists of methods and tactics for fostering knowledge co-creation, identified from the current TD practices implemented throughout the world, as well as from knowledge and perspectives of experienced TD researchers and stakeholders. In order to make sure that the proposed framework is useful, the project uses the above results for capacity building and will revise our framework as necessary.