

Basic Policies on Research Activities of the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature

Board of Advisors, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature

Approved on December 20, 2010

These basic policies stipulate the basic philosophy of the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (hereinafter RIHN) and the fundamental regulations on research activities and other undertakings conducted by RIHN.

I. Basic Philosophy of RIHN

RIHN attempts to elucidate (by using cognition-oriented science approaches) “human-nature interactions,” which are at the heart of the global environmental issues, and to realize a truly affluent human society through the search for futurability (by using design-oriented science approaches). Toward this end, RIHN shall organize its research projects under five different Research Domain Programs, including the three root metaphors, “Circulation,” “Diversity,” and “Resources,” and the two frame metaphors, “Ecohistory” and “Ecosophy” that examine the former metaphors in terms of time and space. The essential requirement for these attempts to succeed is the establishment of “global environmental studies,” or what we will call Environmental Humanics of the Earth System, featuring an entirely new, comprehensive perspective that transcends the conventional framework of academic disciplines. As an inter-university research institute, RIHN shall attempt to fulfill this mission by promoting integrated research projects through cooperation with universities and other research institutes, both in Japan and abroad, dealing with global environmental issues.

II. RIHN’s Research Activities

In order to realize its Basic Philosophy, RIHN shall conduct its research projects, engage in various activities for the synthesis and communication of the outcome of such projects, and organize different research activities.

1. Research projects

- 1) Research projects are launched after being refined in terms of their research designs through thorough discussions among researchers from diverse academic backgrounds and approved in terms of feasibility and compatibility with RIHN’s Basic Philosophy. During their adoption and implementation periods, a Project Evaluation Committee composed of external experts from both Japan and overseas (hereinafter PEC) shall

conduct impartial evaluation according to each research project's stage of progress, thereby ensuring transparency of the research project adoption process and enhancing the quality of research design. PEC shall decide on the definitive evaluation procedures separately.

- 2) In order to facilitate the management of the research project system, the Research Domain Programs and the Futurability Initiatives shall be established as per the attached document.
- 3) Research projects shall be classified as "Initiative-based Projects" that are launched under the RIHN Futurability Initiatives, and "Domain-based Projects," which are set up by broadly inviting project proposals from a community of researchers.
- 4) Research projects form the basis of research activities conducted by RIHN. As such, rules for the concrete process of their implementation shall be established separately.

2. Projects organized by the National Institutes for the Humanities

As a member organization of the National Institutes for the Humanities (hereinafter NIHU), RIHN shall contribute to the creation of new academic disciplines concerning the humanities and proactively participate in projects organized by NIHU to promote academic research in general. Any outcome of such projects shall be considered equivalent to the research outcome of RIHN.

3. Externally-funded research activities

RIHN may conduct research activities that are externally funded, in addition to those funded with subsidies for operating expenses from the Government of Japan, provided that, any proposed research content must be designed so as to contribute to the realization of the Basic Philosophy of RIHN and the outcome of such research activities might be utilized within the broad range of research activities of RIHN.

Rules for implementation of externally-funded research activities shall be established separately.

4. Support/promotion of research activities

RIHN shall conduct the following activities for overall support and promotion of the aforementioned research projects and other research activities:

- 1) Formulation of mid- and long-term research strategies and future planning of RIHN through promotion of collaboration with research institutes both in Japan and overseas, investigation and gathering information on worldwide trends of global environmental studies;

- 2) Support for research projects through analysis of information on global environmental studies, networking research and information databases, creation of archives, management of experiment facilities, development of new experiment techniques, and etc.
- 3) Integration of any research outcome and discovery of new research seeds based on the fundamental framework of the Futurability Initiatives aiming creation of a truly affluent human society with a futurable vision.

III. Communicating the Outcome of RIHN Research Projects

1. Publishing/communicating the research outcomes

The outcome of any and all research activities by RIHN, both individual and joint, shall be made public.

2. Delivering the outcomes to society

RIHN shall effectively communicate the outcome of its research to researchers and the general public both in Japan and overseas through symposia, publications, and other means. The aim of communicating the research outcome is to make any facts elucidated through research widely known to the public in general and to facilitate interactive communications with the public. RIHN shall also pursue programs with an eye toward realization of a futurable society that is designed through the Futurability Initiatives.

“The Policies on Implementation of Research Projects—Basic Principles of Research Project Implementation—” (approved by the RIHN Board of Advisors on November 19th, 2007) shall be abolished.

End

The attached documents

The Research Domain Programs

Circulation	Projects in this domain trace human impact on the global cycles of nutrients and water that create and define the biosphere. As these cycles are characterized by great complexity and dynamism, research projects in this domain typically entail several data surveys designed to indicate cause-effect linkages across spatial scales.
Diversity	Projects in this domain address global environmental problems arising from or associated with the loss of diversity, whether biological (including genetic diversity and availability of niches or habitats), or cultural (including diversity of languages, social structures, religions and world-views).
Resources	Projects in this domain investigate the features of the planet that humankind finds to be of immediate utility: plants, animals, and materials that humankind uses to satisfy its material and cultural needs, and whose use in turn forms the cultural landscapes of a time and place.
Ecohistory	Projects in this domain take a historical approach to circulation, diversity, or resource questions. There is particular emphasis on using new technologies to examine ecological dynamics involved in past civilizational rise and decline, and so to advance empirical and theoretical understanding of human-environmental dynamics throughout human history.
Ecosophy (Global Area Studies)	Projects in this domain examine the manner in which contemporary environmental problems both contribute to and result from global phenomena and processes. Description is focused on the specific social and environmental contexts in which environmental problems are found, their linkages to social and material phenomena in other places, and the conceptual models used to describe such interconnection.

The Futurability Initiatives

<p>Fu-sui-do (GAIA) Air, water and land</p>	<p>This initiative performs theoretical and empirical investigations of the physiospheric bases for humanity in regional and global scales and in past, present and future, aiming at establishing a flexible anthroposphere in dynamic earth environments.</p>
<p>San-ya-ka-kai (OIKOS) Mountains, fields, rivers and oceans</p>	<p>This initiative describes the practices by which cultures and communities humanize biosphere, thereby linking commons and community for long-term maintenance of ecosystem services.</p>
<p>Sei-zon-chi (ETHOS) Life, existence and intelligence</p>	<p>This initiative quests for ‘better’ life-style of human beings that desires a wealth of food and health under a variety of cultures and environments, in order to enhance human capability and capacity for coexistence between humanity and nature.</p>