

The Futurability Initiatives: Mission Statement

We focus our efforts on conjoining the existing RIHN Domain Programmes (Circulation, Diversity, Resources, Ecohistory, and Ecosophy) through a set of cross-cutting initiatives towards the transdisciplinary field of Environmental Humanics of the Earth System. The Futurability Initiatives emerge from our conviction of the need for design-oriented science. Whereas cognitive science has conventionally been employed to describe 'what is', design science asks 'what ought to be' the character of interactions between of humanity and nature.

The Initiatives are therefore dedicated to consilience, "a jumping together of knowledge ... across disciplines to create a common groundwork for explanation" (E.O. Wilson 1998) and intended to enhance design-oriented, problem-solving approaches to contemporary environmental problems. Each Initiative focuses on a major field of thought roughly analogous to the ancient Greek realms described by Gaia, Oikos and Ethos.

Foci

Futurability	Earth System	Design-oriented science
Consilience	Transdisciplinarity	

Recent events

Community fora

- May, 2010: Awaji, Hyogo
Forum in Awaji-Island: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
- August, 2010: Kyoto
A Proposal for the Coming Age of the Global Petroleum Boom
- September, 2010: Saijyo, Ehime
Groundwater Science for a Futurability
- December, 2010: Kanazawa
International Conference on Forest-related Traditional Knowledge and Culture in Asia: Satoyama and Diversity
- March, 2011: Kyoto
Another Biodiversity: Genetic Diversity in Food and Agriculture
- May, 2011: Aya, Miyazaki
International TERUHA Forest Summit: Bio-cultural Diversity and Ecosystem Services for Development
- June, 2011: Kyoto
Building Socio-ecological Resilience in a Changing World
- September, 2011: Kyoto
East Asian Forum of Anthropology and Ethnology: Sustainable Use of Ecosystem Services and Traditional Knowledge in Asia

Academic conferences and symposia

- June, 2010: Montreal, Canada
International Conference on Biological and Cultural Diversity for Development
- July, 2010: Tokyo
Symposium on Benefits from Satoyama, Satochi, and Satoumi and Governance for their Sustainable Use and Management: Exploring Commons for the Future
- October, 2010: COP10 Satellite Meeting: Nagoya
A Joint Programme of Work on Biological and Cultural Diversity
- November, 2010: Kyoto
Groundwater as a Key for Adaptation to Changing Climate and Societies
- May, 2011: Makuhari, Chiba
Exhibition at Japan Geoscience Union Meeting
- August, 2011: Stockholm, Sweden
Impact of Urban Services on Human Security
- September, 2011: Kyoto
A side event of "International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability"

Society-academia coordination events

- November, 2011: Bangkok, Thailand
Formation of Consortium on Environmental Humanics of the Earth System

Organization (Core Research Hub, Center for Coordination, Promotion and Communication)

Professors	Associate Professors
Yo-Ichiro SATO	Itsuki C. HANDOH
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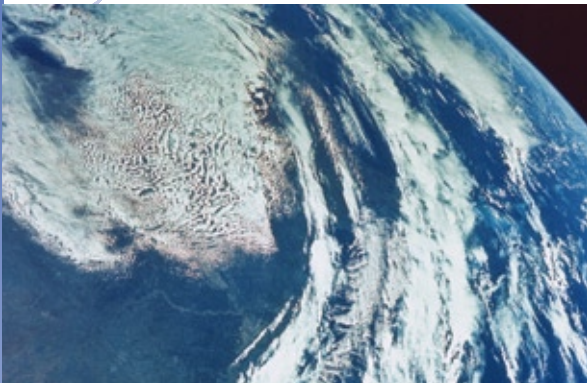
GAI
 OIKOS
 ETHOS

GAIA Initiative

**Anthropospheric design
within dynamic Earth environments**

As human societies design their futures they require best understandings of the Earth's natural dynamism, and the significance of human action within it. The Gaia Initiative therefore performs investigations of the physiospheric bases of humanity at multiple spatiotemporal scales. The Initiative emphasizes description of physical standards related to boundaries and thresholds so as to allow analysis of, and best eco-technological adaptations to, dynamic Earth environments.

Our planet Earth viewed from space: the atmosphere, hydrosphere, and geosphere are the physiospheric bases of life and humanity.



A city / local anthroposphere (Ankara, Turkey) is in harmony with the geological features of the earth (Photo: Kohei Matsunaga).

Foci

- Physiosphere
- Environmental dynamics
- Boundaries
- Natural catastrophe

風水土

OIKOS Initiative

**Linking commons and community for
long-term maintenance of ecosystem services**

The Oikos Initiative investigates the practices and knowledge systems through which cultures and communities humanize biospheric environments. It emphasizes the human ecologies and economies—from modern techno-centric to traditional—associated with environmental commons. The Oikos Initiative therefore brings special attention to the values associated with resource use, and the importance of linking range of eco-technologies and social equity.



Paddy fishing after a monsoonal flood event, Assam, India. Local communities benefit from floods that provide good opportunities of paddy development and fishing (Photo: Yasuyuki Kosaka).

A controlled burning at the foot of Mt. Yufu, Oita, Japan. It has long been believed that burning in early spring helps maintain ecosystem services in the grassland (Photo: Takakazu Yumoto).



Foci

- Biosphere
- Environmental economics
- Ecosystems service
- Commons

山野河海

ETHOS Initiative

**Enhancing human capability
and capacity for coexistence**

The Ethos Initiative examines the noöspheric values and dynamics affecting human ecological knowledge, especially in relation to the key areas of food production and human health. The Initiative describes the relationship between environmental knowledge, including that embedded as cultural value and sense of self, on quality of individual and community life.



Field clinical services at a local village, Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR. Medical doctors from the National Institute of Public Health provide medical advice and treatment free-of-charge to the villagers (Photo: Kazuhiko Moji).



People at an Alazeya watershed, Yakutia, Russia, make dry-salted salmon. The fresh salmon caviar is served in the lunch break on the day (Photo: Junko Fujiwara).

Foci

- Noösphere
- Life style
- Food and production
- Health and medicine

生存知