

PROPOSAL FOR A SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE *JAPANESE JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION* TITLED “ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN ASIA 2024” (JEE-EEA2024)

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Context and focus: past JJEE-EEA issues

Environmental education research and practice in Asia have been developed mainly by academic societies or related associations for environmental education in their respective country or region. Although what environmental education should be and what challenges it faces have been discussed within the academic conferences and journals of these various societies, these discussions have been conducted in different languages and mutual exchange as well as collaborative research in the field has been limited, despite the relative closeness of the countries within Asia.

To address these issues, in the summer of 2014, researchers from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan held workshops at the annual conference of the Japanese Society for Environmental Education (JSFEE) in Tokyo (Takano et al. 2015). At this conference, a plan was made to publish a special English-language online issue of the *Japanese Journal of Environmental Education* to explore the theme “environmental education in Asia”. In the summer of 2015, this idea was approved at the JSFEE General Assembly as a concrete business plan, and preparation of the special issue began in the fall of 2015. In July 2017, the special issue was published.

For the first issue; JJEE-EEA2017, we framed the discussion around five core themes: 1) Development, current situation, and challenges of environmental education in formal education; 2) Development, current situation, and challenges of environmental education in non-formal education; 3) Research trends in environmental education, particularly during and since the decade of education for sustainable development; 4) Insights for environmental education in Asia from outside of Asia; 5) Review, comparison, and synthesis of findings to highlight issues of wider relevance. Contributors from Taiwan, Korea, and Japan were invited to explore topics 1, 2, and 3, while also clarifying specific contexts for their countries. For topic 4, leading researchers from outside the region were invited to provide their insights, ideas, and suggestions regarding the future development of environmental education in Asia. For topic 5, some of the editorial committee, which included members of JSFEE, Korea Environmental Education Society, and the Chinese Environmental Education Society (Republic of China), reviewed and compared the discussions on topics 1–4 to highlight the similarities and differences in environmental education among these countries and identified emerging questions and issues requiring further exploration (Furihata and Ninomiya-Lim, 2017).

To further develop the practice and research of environmental education represented in

JJEE-EEA2017, we intended to invite more people to join us in reflecting critically on our environmental education practices in Asia to find ways to further develop global environmental education collaborations (Ninomiya-Lim et al. 2017). Collaboration between researchers from different countries is key in this regard, although the language barrier is a huge obstacle to overcome. To address these issues, JSFEE launched an international environmental education collaborative research project. In April 2017, as a result of a call for research proposals for international collaborations from domestic members, 10 proposals were received, and seven research topics were selected at the Asian Environmental Education Meeting held at Iwate University in September 2017. As the results of a second call for research proposals in the fall of 2017, five more proposals were received. The second issue; JJEE-EEA2019 was published with twelve papers including two editorials in July, 2019.

By encouraging and increasing EE research in Asia, we could uncover new aspects of EE that go beyond one country's framework or perspectives, a robust understanding of EE that could be applied across countries and their cultures and languages. Upon publishing JJEE-EEA2019, we rephrased the goal of this special issue of JJEE-EEA as "to provide a platform for researchers who are not only doing research in his or her country, but are willing to engage in international interactions and contribute to mutual and global understanding (Sakurai and Furihata 2019)." The third issue, JJEE-EEA2021 was published in December 2021 including five articles and one editorial. The whole submission and publication process for EEA2021 took place during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the spread of COVID-19 had a profound impact on the lifestyles of individuals, communities, and businesses worldwide, it also impacted the international collaborative research conducted by the authors of this issue (Sakurai and To 2021). We are grateful to the authors of five papers published in this issue, who worked tirelessly during the pandemic to complete and submit the papers.

Our endeavor continues in the next issue, JJEE-EEA 2024. While we continue to launch and recruit international environmental education collaborative research projects, this time we will also welcome submissions of papers from, not only JSFEE but also members of our partner associations [Korean Society for Environmental Education, Chinese Society for Environmental Education, North American Association for Environmental Education, and Australian Association for Environmental Education].

Publication and access by readers

JJEE-EEA2024 will be published in electronic format via J-STAGE, an online academic publication system administered by the Japanese government. The special issue will be provided free of charge to readers around the world, promoting communication and increasing opportunities for the articles to be cited by researchers worldwide. Below is an example of papers published in JJEE-EEA:

https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/jsoee/31/2/_contents/-char/en

For more information about J-STAGE, see

<https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/static/pages/JstageOverview/-char/en>

Funding and publishing

The costs for publishing JJEE-EEA2024 will be covered by the 2024FY annual budget of JSFEE, and the issue will be published by the Japanese Society for Environmental Education (JSFEE).

Publication timeline

JJEE-EEA2024 will be published as a JSFEE project in 2024FY with the following schedule:

Schedule for publishing Research articles and Review papers

2023

December 31: Deadline for submitting Research articles and Review articles

2024

February 14: Contributors receive results of the peer review

March 15: Contributors re-submit papers based on reviewers' comments

April 15: Completion of peer review (judgment)

May 10: Contributors revise and submit the final version of the paper / Publisher creates PDF file of the paper after making sure the paper follows the guidelines

June 1: Contributors check and confirm the first proof / Editorial committee approve the paper

June 14: Contributors check and confirm the second (final) proof

June 20: Completion of proofs; publication

*All the submitted manuscripts will be reviewed by at least two reviewers, which will include one or two Editorial Committee.

Schedule for publishing short papers including Research report, Commentary, Book review, and Material papers

2024

January 31: Deadline for submitting Research report, Commentary, Book review, and Material papers

March 14: Contributors receive results of the peer review

April 15: Contributors re-submit papers based on reviewers' comments

May 15: Completion of peer review (judgment)

June 7: Contributors revise and submit the final version of the paper / Publisher creates PDF file of the paper after making sure the paper follows the guidelines

June 14: Contributors check and confirm the first proof / Editorial committee approve the paper

June 21: Contributors check and confirm the second (final) proof

June 30: Completion of proofs; publication

*All the submitted manuscripts will be reviewed by one reviewer, which will include Editorial Committee.

Submission instructions

Articles should be no longer than 4,000 words (including references), and the deadline for submission is December 31, 2023 for Research article and Review, and January 31, 2024 for Research report, Commentary, Book review, and Material.

Please submit an article with abstracts (no more than 300 words) and 5 key words to int_com@jsfee.jp

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How we understand “environmental education” and “Asia” in JJEE-EEA

Regarding the definition of “Asia”, we will continue to use the definition outlined in JJEE-EEA2017 as follows:

There is no consensus on where the boundaries of Asia should be drawn. Asia can be divided into sub-regions such as Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, East (or North) Asia, and West Asia (which is itself sometimes considered part of the Middle East and separate from Asia). The region of Asia is vast and diverse in terms of its geography, ecology, anthropology, society, and economy, among other things. In addition, the word “Asia” does not just refer to the region, as its people and culture(s) have moved beyond geographical borders. Our goal is to link discussions and findings in different countries within this sub-region, and in Asia more broadly, to explore issues of regional and global relevance. (Furihata and Ninomiya-Lim, 2017)

Regarding the definition of “environmental education”, we will also continue to use the

definition outlined in JJEE-EEA2017 as follows:

The definition of environmental education is an ongoing topic of discussion. In Japan, the terms *Kogai Kyoiku* (pollution education) and *Shizenhogo Kyoiku* (nature conservation education) were already in use and educative practices in this area were spreading before the term “environmental education” (translated as *Kankyo Kyoiku* in Japanese) became the standard, following the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 and the Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education in Tbilisi in 1977. More recently, terms such as “education for sustainable development (ESD)” or “sustainability education” have gained in popularity. In JJEE-EEA, we consider educational practices conducted under these alternative headings (*Kogai Kyoiku*, *Shizenhogo Kyoiku*, and ESD) to be part of the Japanese history of environmental education. This is in line with the argument made by Ando (2015), whereby the “history of environmental education” can be understood as “a process of ‘environmentalizing’ education”. Moreover, we understand that some environmental education practices are not even called “education”, especially when they are adopted outside formal educational settings. Thus, we have requested that the contributors of JJEE-EEA to retain a flexible understanding of environmental education, without limiting its scope unless there is a specific reason for doing so. (Furihata and Ninomiya-Lim, 2017)

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Appendix