PROPOSAL FOR A SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE JAPANESE JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TITLED “ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN ASIA 2021” (JJEE-EEA2021)

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Context and focus: how JJEE-EEA2017 and 2019 were published

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, and on Asian participation in international or transnational collaborations. 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 identify 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 in relation to ecological, geographical, social, political, economic, and cultural contexts and 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, four more proposals were received. Furthermore, as a result of a call for participation in international collaborations in Asia, a proposal on energy environmental education was made by the Korea Environmental Education Society. The second issue; JJEE-EEA2019 was published with twelve papers including two editorials in July, 2019.

**Structure of the special issue “JJEE-EEA2021”: Articles and contributors**

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).” In addition to these special issues, several meetings where potential authors meet and discuss goals and contents of potential international research are hosted. This helps us to create and strengthen a network of scholars with different background but shared interests and goals. JJEE-EEA2019 was a place to present the results of research exploring the challenges presented in JJEE-EEA2017, and our endeavor continues in the next special issue, JJEE-EEA 2021. 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]. Our continued efforts to promote and conduct international EE research and compile outcomes of those efforts would both directly and indirectly contribute to the development of EE research in Asia as well as world-wide. (Sakurai and Furihata 2019)

[How to understand “environmental education” and “Asia” in JJEE-EEA2021]

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. We consider this special issue to be an important step towards achieving this goal. (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 this issue, 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 to this special issue 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)

We will continue to consider definition as well as potential of environmental education in the coming special issue of JJEE-EEA2021 including those proposed in JJEE-EEA2017 such as “environmental and sustainability education” by Arjen et al. (2017).

**Publication and access by readers**

JJEE-EEA2021 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/28/4/_contents/-char/en

J-STAGE provides article through its JST Link Center. There are two types of links from J-STAGE: linking from the reference list of an article on J-STAGE (“reference linking” from the [References] page), and linking toward later articles which cite an article on J-STAGE (a [Cited] icon on the Abstract page leads to these “cited-by linking” pages if available). Also, J-STAGE is linked from other online journal sites by means of reference linking/cited-by linking and is full-text linked from database services and search engines.

For more information about J-STAGE, see

**Funding and publishing**

The costs for publishing JJEE-EEA2021 will be covered by the 2019/20FY annual budget of JSFEE, and the issue will be published by the Japanese Society for Environmental Education (JSFEE).
Publication timeline
JJEE-EEA2021 will be published as a JSFEE project in 2019/20FY with the following schedule:

2021
January 5: Manuscript deadline
March 26: Contributors receive results of the peer review
June 18: Contributors re-submit papers based on reviewers’ comments
September 10: Completion of peer review (judgment)
September 17: Contributors check and confirm the first proof
September 24: Contributors check and confirm the second (final) proof
October 1: Completion of proofs; publication

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

Submission instructions
Articles should be no longer than 4,000 words (including references), and the deadline for submission is January 5, 2021.
Please submit an article with abstracts (no more than 300 words) and 5 key words to jjee.eea2021@gmail.com.

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