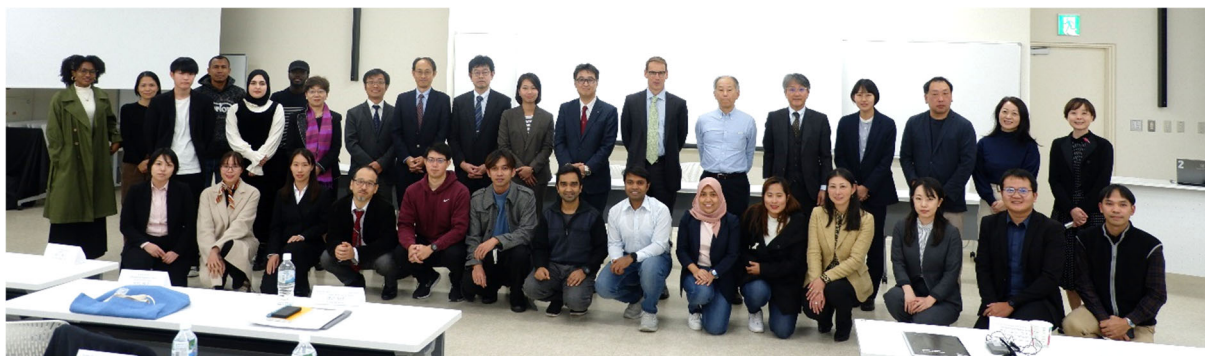


3rd Planetary Health Symposium

Crafting a Symbiotic Relationship between Humans and Earth: A Planetary Health Approach

Event Report



On Saturday, November 9, 2024, a Planetary Health Symposium was held, co-hosted by the IDEC Institute of Hiroshima University and the Environmental Risk Sub-Committee of the Science Council of Japan.

Planetary Health and the Symposium

Planetary health is the achievement of the highest attainable standard of health, well-being and equity worldwide while paying close attention to human politics, economics, and society, recognizing that human health and the health of the planet are not independent but interdependent. However, we are already implementing many initiatives under the Sustainable Development Goals. How does planetary health relate to these existing initiatives, and what role does it play? This symposium invited Dr. Samuel Myers, the Founding Director of the Planetary Health Alliance and the Johns Hopkins Institute for Planetary Health, who is working to create a global planetary health framework, to discuss about the role of planetary health in protecting people's health in a rapidly changing global environment, and how it is currently being addressed as a global framework. Then, in the panel discussion, the three main activities of environmental policy, "nature positive," "carbon neutral," and "circular economy," were discussed about people's well-being and health. The panelists, all active in their respective fields, discussed the relationship between these three major activities and planetary health and how we can build a symbiotic relationship between humans and the Earth through a planetary health approach.

The symposium began with opening remarks from Dr. Junko Tanaka, Executive Vice President of Hiroshima University, and Dr. Keiko Nakamura, Chair of the Environmental Risk Sub-Committee of the Science Council of Japan, which is a co-organizer of the symposium.

The keynote speech was given by Dr Samuel Myers on the theme of "Planetary Health: Safeguarding human health on very rapidly changing planet". We are facing a truly unique historical moment, where most indicators of human development and well-being are improving, while at the same time, the Earth's natural systems are beginning to collapse. These two aspects of human health and the collapse of natural systems cannot remain separate, and planetary health research shows that improvements in health and well-being over the past few decades are being threatened by unstable life support systems. Responding to the current situation we are facing requires a rapid transformation in how we live across all of our systems, and a strong message was sent out about the importance of generating political and social will through the participation of each individual.

In the next educational lecture, Dr Chiho Watanabe, Former Dean and Professor of Interfaculty Initiative in Planetary Health at Nagasaki University, gave a lecture entitled "The perspective of human ecology and planetary health action in Japan" While the understanding of planetary health is common to fields such as human ecology and eco-health, the connection has rarely been discussed to date. The lecture discussed what commonalities and differences there are and the usefulness of the human ecological approach in planetary health. Finally, the current status and challenges of planetary health-related efforts currently being implemented in Japan were introduced. In Japan, planetary health efforts have been gaining momentum since around 2020, but there is still no common agenda or image of human resources at present, and it was mentioned that discussions on this issue are necessary, and that conducting a survey of the actual status of planetary health activities in Japan in the future will be effective in spreading the idea.

The panel discussion began with presentations by five panelists. From the "Nature Positive" section, Dr Kanoko Ake, Policy CEO & Founder of Rooting Our Own Tomorrows (ROOTs), gave a presentation titled "For a Planet We Can Leave to Future Generations: Our Responsibility to Biodiversity and Planetary," in which she introduced efforts to transform the nature currently being lost to positive by 2030, and to fully recovery it by 2050. Human activities are deeply involved in the loss of biodiversity, and she emphasized the role of the mass media in the current situation of illegal wildlife trade, which is one of the issues, and how we are involved in this trade without even realizing it, and introduced future social efforts to become net positive. Next, from the "Carbon Neutral" section, Mr. Toshihiko Masui, Director of the Social Systems Division at the National Institute for Environmental Studies, gave a presentation titled "Necessary Efforts and Challenges to Achieve Decarbonized Society." He spoke about how efforts to address climate change issues so far have been insufficient and

how to achieve a net-zero society globally and in Japan. He said that the realization of social transformation will reduce reliance on innovative technologies and increase the feasibility of a decarbonized society to achieve the goal. He concluded by emphasizing that long-term, multifaceted approaches through communication among various disciplines, and especially the realization of social change, are key to achieving a net-zero society. Next, Dr Akimasa Fujiwara of PHIS, of the IDEC Institute at Hiroshima University, spoke about "Healthy Aging City Based on Smart Mobility Platform." In this talk, he spoke about the challenges in realizing a carbon-neutral society that supports healthy aging. By connecting the two issues, which at first glance seem to be in conflict or unrelated to planetary health, it becomes possible to develop them simultaneously and over the long term. Within this framework, he introduced the development of a smart mobility platform (such as a city-wide simulator and a digital twin sandbox) and the development of technology to discover new connections and paths faster and more. Next, from the "Circular Economy" section, Maki Uno, a first-year doctoral student at the Graduate School of Integrated Life Sciences, Hiroshima University, and Dr Yosuke Nagamei, an associate professor at the same graduate school, gave a presentation on "Local Circular Economy in Food." The presentation introduced the idea that while a "recycling society" is an extension of waste disposal measures and assumes that waste will be generated, a "circular economy" is a system that eliminates the possibility of waste from the product design stage and continues to circulate resources. Practical examples were introduced, such as the waste-free initiative on Ikuchijima Island in Hiroshima Prefecture and the food recycling loop initiative in Matsuyama City, Ehime Prefecture, which is a collaboration between different industries. In order to transition these activities to a circular economy, issues such as matching between different industries and building a collaboration system were presented, as well as the need to create a system that allows people to be environmentally conscious without even thinking about it. Finally, Dr Masahiro Hashizume, professor of Global Health Policy Graduate School of Medicine at the University of Tokyo, gave a presentation on "Extreme heat, energy demands and health adaptation." Due to climate change, extreme heat continues every year, and heatstroke caused by heat waves is increasing. In order to prevent this, it is necessary to use air conditioners, but on the other hand, this leads to greenhouse gas emissions, and air conditioner equipment accounts for about 4% of these emissions. Furthermore, the cost of using air conditioners is predicted to increase in the future, creating a cooling dilemma. Policies to address this dilemma and the need for individual intervention on a low budget were introduced.

Following the presentations from these three areas and five issues, Dr Samuel Myers also participated in the panel discussion, and the panelists and participants discussed two points: 1) How do efforts in each area connect to well-being and health, and what should the

temporal scale be? 2) What kind of cooperation and collaboration with other areas is needed within the Planetary Health framework? In particular, in the second question, it was discussed that cooperation and collaboration between fields is essential, but in order to do so, it is necessary to listen to the voices of people living in the community, discuss how past experience can be utilized, discuss how to align temporal and spatial scales, and the need for leadership that can lead efforts across fields. It is the responsibility of academia to create a framework that can predict with high resolution the order of policies and time scales, etc., regarding where to place targets, in what order, and what methods to take. In addition, it is necessary to create a mechanism that can incorporate other areas (carbon neutral and nature positive) at the initial stage of creating a mechanism such as the circular economy. The three areas discussed this time are pathways to achieve planetary health, and it was presented that it is possible to set a common goal of planetary health as a goal for these three. In response to this, Dr Myers commented on the need for everyone to be leaders and that in order to collaborate and cooperate, it is important for people from different fields to share their experiences, challenges, and solutions, as in this symposium, and to reflect them to society. He also commented on the importance of creating a place to think together and the importance of networks. There was also a question from the audience about how to reduce fragmentation in policies, and there was an active Q&A session, including the need for planetary health policymakers to gather and discuss policies, diplomacy, governance, etc. Although we were excited to discuss more about these topics, the time was coming. With a promise of future discussion, the symposium was closed with a closing address from Shinji Kaneko, Executive Vice President (Global Initiatives) at Hiroshima University.

Protecting the rapidly changing health of our planet is directly connected to protecting our own health. We must face the global challenges that are unfolding before us and, as individuals living on this Earth, continue to consider how we can safeguard our health in conjunction with addressing these issues. To do so, it is essential not to focus solely on individual goals within each field or domain but rather to establish a shared objective—namely, crafting a symbiotic relationship between humans and earth that can protect the health and well-being of future generations. Although time constraints during this symposium limited the depth of discussion, it became a shared understanding that building such a symbiotic society requires the further sharing of knowledge and cross-disciplinary dialogue. Moreover, the importance of creating platforms and frameworks that enable these exchanges was widely acknowledged.

A total of 130 people participated in this symposium, both in person and online, and

there were many questions that we were unable to address within the allotted time. We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who participated, and we look forward to continuing our discussions with you in the future. We look forward to your continued support.

Saori Kashima

On behalf of the executive board member of the symposium

Director and Associate Professor of Center for the Planetary Health & Innovation Science (PHIS),
The IDEC Institute, Hiroshima University

3rd Planetary Health Symposium

Crafting a Symbiotic Relationship between Humans and Earth: A Planetary Health Approach

(Co-hosted by the Environmental Risk Sub-committee of the Science Council of Japan)

Overview: Planetary health is the achievement of the highest attainable standard of health, well-being and equity worldwide while paying close attention to human politics, economics, and society, recognizing that human health and the health of the planet are not independent but interdependent. However, we are already implementing many initiatives under the Sustainable Development Goals. How does planetary health relate to these existing initiatives and what role does it play? Then, we have invited Dr Samuel S. Myers, founder of the Planetary Health Alliance, who is working to create a global planetary health framework, to discuss with the panelists the role of planetary health on the three themes of "nature positive," "carbon neutral," and "circular economy."

Date: November 9 (Sat), 2024 13:00-16:20

Venue: Hybrid (online and in-person)

[Ryoun Lectures Building](#) (1-2-1 Kasumi, Minami-ku, Hiroshima City, Hiroshima)

Please come by public transportation ([access](#))

Language: Japanese and English simultaneous interpretation

Organizer: The IDEC Institute, Hiroshima University, and Environmental Risk Committee of The Science Council of Japan

Co-organizer: Planetary Health Alliance Japan HUB

program

Opening Remarks

Junko Tanaka, Executive Director and Vice President of Hiroshima University (Kasumi Area, Faculty Personnel and Public Relations)

Remarks from The Science Council of Japan

Keiko Nakamura, Chair of the Environmental Risk Sub-committee of The Science Council of Japan / Professor, Department of Global Health Entrepreneurship, Institute of Science Tokyo

Explanatory Introduction

Saori Kashima, Director of PHIS/Associate Professor, Center for the Planetary Health and Innovation Science (PHIS), The IDEC Institute, Hiroshima University

Part1:

Keynote Speech

"Planetary Health: Protecting people's health on a rapidly changing planet"

Samuel Myers

Founding Director of Planetary Health Alliance, Professor of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Director of Johns Hopkins Institute for Planetary Health

(Moderator: Chiho Watanabe)

Educational Lectures

"The Perspective of Human Ecology and the Practice of Planetary Health in Japan"

Chiho WATANABE

Former Dean, Professor, Interfaculty Initiative in Planetary Health, Nagasaki University

(Moderator: Keiko Nakamura)

Break

Part 2:

Panel Discussion

Moderator

Yoshihiro SAMBONGI, Professor, Graduate School of Integrated Sciences for Life, Hiroshima University

Saori KASHIMA, Director of PHIS/Associate Professor, Center for the Planetary Health and Innovation Science (PHIS), The IDEC Institute, Hiroshima University

Panelists

1. Kanoko AKE, Policy CEO & Founder, Rooting Our Own Tomorrows / Japan Committee for International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN-J) / Researcher, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

"For a planet that can be passed on to future generations: Responsibility for biodiversity and planetary health"

2. Toshihiko MASUI, Director, Social Systems Division, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan

"Initiatives and challenges towards realizing a decarbonized society"

3. Akimasa FUJIWARA, Professor, Center for the Planetary Health and Innovation Science (PHIS), The IDEC Institute / Vice Director, Graduate School of Advanced Science and

Engineering, Hiroshima University

"Healthy Ageing City Based on Smart Mobility Platform"

4. Maki UNO (PhD candidate) & Yousuke CHOMEI, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Integrated Sciences for Life Hiroshima University

"Local Food Circulation"

5. Masahiro HASHIZUME, Professor of Department of Global Health Policy Graduate School of Medicine, The University of Tokyo

"Heat waves and air conditioning use: increasing energy demand and health adaptation challenges"