

**Summary of Panel Discussion:  
“Toward Future Research on Biodiversity of Asian Region”**

1. On the afternoon of July 20, 2009, a panel discussion was held on the theme “Toward Future Research on Biodiversity of Asian Region.” The session was chaired by Dr. Tohru Nakashizuka (Tohoku University, Japan) and Dr. Shin-ichi Yamamoto (Nagoya University, Japan). An overview of the session is as follows.
2. Seven young researchers, who were selected from each of the member countries, gave their views and opinions.

Dr. Xia-Dong Yu (Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), China) proposed establishing comprehensive observation sites to investigate more diverse ecosystems and regions within Asia.

Dr. Sudarmono (Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Indonesia) described the current framework for biodiversity conservation in Indonesia and how molecular genetic research is being conducted and its results reflected in conservation activities.

Dr. Reiichiro Ishii (Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC), Japan) articulated ways of building win-win relationships between research communities of differing disciplines and countries. He emphasized the importance of communication and information sharing with colleagues in other countries and disciplines.

Dr. Ohseok Kwon (Kyungpook National University, Korea) pointed out the importance of developing a confederation of related national societies in the region and of holding regular workshops to allow the frequent exchange of their research outputs among them.

Dr. Mohammed Rizman Idid (University of Malaya, Malaysia) emphasized the necessity of establishing biodiversity demonstration sites for monitoring the impact of human influences including conservation activities and climate change.

Dr. Christian Joseph Cumagun (University of the Philippines Los Banos, the Philippines) introduced the current state of biodiversity in the Philippines. He stressed the urgent need to assess biodiversity and strengthen conservation efforts, whilst recognizing the problems presented by limited funding resources, opportunity of education and training, and scientific infrastructure.

Dr. Sumaitt Putchakarn (Burapha University, Thailand) pointed out the importance of having a long-term perspective in developing programs and frameworks for advancing biodiversity research.

After the presentations by these young researchers, three senior researchers – Dr. Barry Brook (University of Adelaide, Australia), Dr. Dedy Darnaedi (LIPI, Indonesia), and Dr. Eun-Shik Kim (Kookmin University, Korea) – offered comments and the discussion was open for the floor.

3. During the discussion, the young researchers and other participants expressed their views and opinions on the issues related to future research on biodiversity within the region. The results of the discussion are summarized as follows.

#### **(1) Developing programs for fostering young researchers**

- It is important for young researchers to acquire new skills and advanced scientific knowledge. For that purpose, international symposia, workshops and summer camps supported by countries of the region would provide a good opportunity for young researchers.
- Training received under international scholarships and internships is expected to give young researchers expanded views and wider knowledge gained through cooperation with people from different countries and disciplines. Collaborative research projects that include components for training and educating graduate students and young researchers can also be effective for this purpose.

#### **(2) Identifying challenges for improving the research environment**

- Within the Asian region, basic information on biodiversity is still lacking. Efforts to observe, monitor and inventory biodiversity elements are still limited.
- Financial support is inadequate and limited. Most of the current grant programs are too short in duration and too limited in funding to adequately support long-term comprehensive biodiversity research projects.
- Gaps exist in knowledge, available data, infrastructure, resources, and manpower among the countries of the region.

#### **(3) Establishing a cooperative framework for building a research network**

- Communication and information sharing will be instrumental to developing a regional research network. In addition to holding international meetings, the use of websites, a standardized regional database and other information technologies will be effective for achieving this purpose.
- Standardized methodologies for observing, monitoring and assessing biodiversity will be very important for advancing biodiversity research within the region. International cooperation should be focused on establishing such standardized methodologies and

training young researchers in how to use them.

- A regional standardized database would be also useful in advancing both biodiversity research and conservation within the region. Regional collaborative efforts for standardizing methodologies and sharing information should be coupled with such global initiatives as GEO-BON (Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network).
- There is an urgent need to establish a confederation of related national societies as a platform for promoting regional collaboration and facilitating research information sharing by holding regular workshops.
- Establishing shared future visions, goals and strategies will be essential to building a cooperative framework and a long-standing, effective research network within the region.

## Appendix

### List of Moderators, Panelists and Commentators

#### Moderators:

- Dr. Tohru Nakashizuka, Professor, Graduate School of Life Sciences, Tohoku University, Japan
- Dr. Shin-Ichi Yamamoto, University Advisor of Nagoya University and Professor of Graduate School of Bioagricultural Sciences, Nagoya University, Japan

#### Panelists:

- Dr. Xiao-Dong Yu, Associate Professor, Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), China
- Dr. Sudarmono, Researcher, Center for Plant Conservation, Bogor Botanic Garden, Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Indonesia
- Dr. Reiichiro Ishii, Research Scientist, Research Institute for Global Change, Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC), Japan
- Dr. Ohseok Kwon, Assistant Professor, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Kyungpook National University, Korea
- Dr. Mohammed Rizman Idid, Lecturer, Institute of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science, University of Malaya, Malaysia
- Dr. Christian Joseph R. Cumagun, Professor, Crop Protection Cluster, College of Agriculture, University of the Philippines Los Banos, the Philippines
- Dr. Sumaitt Putchakarn, Research Scientist and Head of Marine Biodiversity Research Unit, Institute of Marine Science, Burapha University, Thailand

#### Commentators:

- Dr. Barry Brook, Sir Hubert Wilkins Professor of Climate Change and Director of Climate Science of the Environmental Institute, School of Earth & Environmental Sciences, University of Adelaide, Australia
- Dr. Dedy Darnaedi, Senior Researcher, Research Center for Biology, Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Indonesia
- Dr. Eun-Shik Kim, Professor, Department of Forest Resources, Kookmin University, Korea