First meeting of the SIMSEA Japan Committee under SCOR Japan
10.00am to Noon on October 15 at the Science Council of Japan in Tokyo, Japan

In attendance: Yamagata T; Uematsu M; MacDonald A; Isobe A, Iwataki M; Endo A; Kawabe M; Komatsu T; Terashima H; Nishida S, Furukawa K; Miyazaki N; Miyazawa Y; Yagi N; Abe K(observer);

Absentees: Furuya K; Kaku S; Makino M; Nito M; Saito H; Yanagi T; Azimi N; Wakita K;

Secretariat for minutes taking: Endo A.

1. Opening
Prof. Emeritus Yamagata opened the first meeting of the SIMSEA Japan Committee and expressed his thanks to the all participants. He explained today’s agenda listed on the distributed documents, shortly introduced the history and activities of SIMSEA, and the challenges to be addressed in the Asian marginal seas under the SIMSEA framework.
Then all participants introduced themselves briefly in regard to their expertise related to SIMSEA objectives.

2. Appointment of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretariat
Prof. Emeritus Yamagata was selected as Chair of the committee, Prof. Uematsu accepted Vice-Chair. Drs. Wakita and Endo were appointed as secretariat for managing the meeting with unanimous applause.

3. About the SIMSEA Japan Committee
(1) Initiation of SIMSEA
Prof. Emeritus Yamagata introduced the development of the international SIMSEA program. The concept of SIMSEA was discussed first in November 2012 in Soeul during the ICSU Regional Committee for Asia and the Pacific (RCAP) meeting by Dr. Lourdes J. Cruz, president of the National Research Council of the Philippines, Prof. Nordin Hasan, ICSU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) executive director, Prof. Emeritus Toshio Yamagata, director of Application Lab (APL), JAMSTEC, and Dr. Hong-Kum Lee, director of Korea Polar Research Institute and ICSU RCAP chair, to tackle with the marine issues related to Future Earth program in and around the Asian marginal seas. During the follow-on prescoping meeting held at APL,
JAMSTEC in Feb. 2013, all participants agreed to the necessity of the collaboration within Asian countries for conservation of ocean health and human security in marginal seas under the pressure of various anthropogenic forcings including climate change and jurisdiction issues. Based on this agreement, ICSU ROAP, with support of Dr. Annadel Cabanban of the University of the Philippines, submitted a proposal to ICSU headquarters in Paris to establish a new program of ICSU RCAP in accord to evolving Future Earth program. With a strong support of ICSU president Yuan Tseh Lee, the proposal was accepted with a total planning budget of 200K US dollars up to July 2016. The SIMSEA international office was located at Marine Science Institute of the University of the Philippines on July 1, 2014.

(2) Research program and research funding

Prof. Uematsu introduced to committee members the Japan SIMSEA research program structure consisting of five teams such as: 1) headquarters led by Prof. Uematsu; 2) ocean dynamics team led by Dr. Miyazawa from APL of JAMSTEC; 3) marine ecology team led by Prof. Nishida from AORI, the University of Tokyo; 4) social science team led by Prof. Yagi from the University of Tokyo; 5) capacity building team led by Prof. Komatsu from the University of Tokyo. This structure is based on the proposal to Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) under the framework of Future Earth Japan. However, SIMSEA Japan research proposal was not selected by JST despite its importance and active grass-rooted initiatives, partly because of some misunderstanding.

(3) Potential for future collaborations with other projects

Participants introduced their own activities which may have potentials to work with SIMSEA framework. Those are as follows:
Prof. Emeritus Yamagata - Future Earth, PEMSEA, Japan Society for Ocean Policy, Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF);
Prof. Uematsu – Asian CORE (COMSEA), IOC/WESTPAC;
President Mr.Terashima - Global Ocean Forum, PEMSEA, Islands and Oceans Net (IO Net) as International Cooperative Network which Ocean Policy Research Institute (OPRI) of SPF is in charge of the secretariat, ICM network activities of OPRI/SPF;
Associate Prof. Endo – RIHN Nexus project, Regional Center for Future Earth in Asia;
Prof. Komatsu – Plan for IOC Regional Training and Research Center in Japan, and Special Project by Ministry of Environment of Japan S13-Development of Coastal Management Method to Realize the Sustainable Coastal Sea-, which is led by Prof. Emeritus Yanagi of International
EMECS Center;

Prof. Isobe - Research on microplastics in the ocean funded by Ministry of Environment of Japan;

Prof. Nishida - Asian CORE Program (COMSEA: 2011–2015) and Core-to-Core program (submitted) funded by JSPS based on strong collaboration with Southeast Asian countries consisting more than 300 researchers;

Executive Director Ms. Abe – NPO Ecology Café (http://www.ecology-cafe.net/) activities including education programmes for marine conservation;

Prof. Kawabe - Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) funded by Ministry of Environment of Japan, Strategic Innovation Promotion Program (SIP) working with JAMSTEC IN Okinawa Trough for sustainable deep-sea development;

Prof. MacDonald - Activities in Micronesia in collaboration with St. Sophia University, UNU and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

(4) Establishing the SIMSEA Japan office

Prof. Uematsu seeks the possibility to establish a new office for SIMSEA Japan activities at the Center for International Collaboration of AORI, the University of Tokyo. Once established, APL/JAMSTEC will support the activities. Prof. Emeritus Yamagata suggested that opening HP and building an email list would be important to activate SIMSEA Japan team cooperative activities.

The officer from the Science Council of Japan gave instructions about the limit on the number of member (25 people) and frequency of Committee meetings (no limit, but it is preferable to hold the meeting three time per year at most). However, the SIMSEA Japan Committee, even if it is officially endorsed by the Science Council of Japan (SCJ) now, is a subcommittee of SCOR Japan committee and members’ travel expenses are not covered by SCJ.

4. Closing

Prof. Emeritus Yamagata summarized today’s discussion and he declared that the SIMSEA should be a one-stop shop to share informations of all related marine activities in and around the Asian marginal seas, and a core network among not only researchers but also all stakeholders to disseminate the SIMSEA activities to the world.