

International Symposium and Workshop for Geoinformation

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International Symposium on Geoinformation via Internet” and “International Workshop for CCOP Metadata” organized by the Geological Survey of Japan (GSJ), AIST and Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP) were held in Tsukuba, Japan on 18–22 February 2002. About 75 participants from the Geological Surveys of East and Southeast Asia (11 countries) and Europe (3 countries), and three international organizations: UNESCO, UN-ESCAP and CIFEG, have actively joined in the two meetings.

It was a kickoff meeting to construct an Asian geoinformation network system in geoscience organizations for promoting public access to geoinformation via the Internet. A goal is the actualization of the interoperable system enabling the organizations to communicate to each other and disseminate geoinformation to the public.

The symposium included topics: 1) strategies for dissemination of geoinformation, 2) clearinghouse and metadata, 3) Geographical Information System (GIS) application and geological standards, and 4) digital geological mapping and geoinformation management. Some results of research project activities also were reported by poster presentations.



The workshop highlighted on-going activities related to geoinformation via the Internet and development of CCOP regional GIS metadata for geological maps including the introduction of advanced metadata systems in Europe. The workshop finally resolved the establishment of a Working Group under CCOP to facilitate the urgent task of developing the CCOP Regional Metadata. Japan was elected as the Working Group Chairman. Now the GSJ, AIST is expected to be the leader for the metadata system actualization in cooperation with the related organizations.

Research Exchange Meeting with Mr. Koichi Wakata, astronaut and AIST researcher



A research exchange meeting took place inviting Mr. Koichi Wakata, Mission Specialist of Space Shuttle at Techno Growth House on 23rd January, 2002. Mr. Wakata told of his interesting experiences in robot arms which play a major role in the ongoing construction of the international space station. AIST researchers introduced their research on machinery, system and theory from the viewpoint of "space research" and had a lively and unique exchange of views with Mr. Wakata, as an astronaut who is a highly specific user of such equipment.

The Asia Pacific Nanotechnology Forum (APNF) Inaugural Conference

Making its first step, the inaugural conference of Asia Pacific Nanotechnology Forum (APNF; <http://www.apnf.org/>) was held at Tsukuba Central 1 in AIST, the leading sponsor, on 26-28th February 2002. The APNF is a multinational organization established in 2001 as a platform where policy makers, R & D entities related to nanotechnology (both in governmental and private organizations), and entrepreneurs in member nations exchange opinions freely. It also aims at producing synergetic effects through participants' interaction, playing the role of a catalyst. Members are to meet annually at an international conference hosted by APNF.

Speakers came from various countries around the world such as Australia, Korea, China, Taiwan, Singapore, United States, Germany, Spain and United Kingdom. Japanese speakers are from public and private entities like Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industries (METI), National Institute for Materials Science (NIMS), The Institute of Physical and Chemical Research (RIKEN), the University of Tokyo, NEC, Fujitsu as well as AIST.

In the conference, not only United States, EU and Japan but also Asian countries such as China and Korea emphasized their strategies to strongly accelerate developing nanotechnology by concentrating their huge budgets and excellent human resources. Now, nanotechnology looks to shift their stage from precompetitive to competitive or collaborative ones.

During the three days, over 180 people participated in the conference and actively discussed in and out of the venue. Some are impressed with the eminence of speakers, saying that this would be the first time such celebrated scientists in nanotechnology gathered in one place.



AIST concluded the research co-operation agreement with Korea's two major research institutions

Conclusion of the Research Co-operation Agreement with the Korean Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources (KIGAM)

“AIST concluded the research co-operation agreement with the Korean Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources(KIGAM) on 17th December 2001. The inaugural ceremony was held at KIGAM in Daejeon city, Korea. Dr. Young-Hoon Kwak, President of KIGAM and Mr. Hiroshi Miyamoto, Director of International Affairs Department of AIST signed the agreement. The signing was followed by Dr. Kwak's speech welcoming the forward-looking agreement with the New AIST, their important partner of international co-operation, which would realize collaboration in future research activities.

KIGAM, former Geological Survey of Korea was re-established with the aim of contributing to the public and nation through geological surveys carried out both in Korea and abroad, as well as providing the information on geo-



science and mineral and energy resources to the government, industrial circles and public sector. At the New AIST, further progress in research collaboration with KIGAM is expected under this comprehensive co-operation agreement.



The most therapeutic robot “Paro”

The Guinness World Records has accepted the seal robot, Paro, developed by Dr. Takanori Shibata of Intelligent Systems Institute, AIST as the world's most therapeutic robot. It is a white, soft, fluffy, furry, seal-shaped robot with sensors for people's strokes and cuddles that improve the people's quality of existence. Therefore, the cuddly Paro is just the thing to calm you down after a stressful day. He has used the furry seal robot for livening up the lives of children in hospital. Dr. Shibata's research covers "theory and application of mental-commitment robots as a human-friendly interface".

Conclusion of the Research Co-operation Agreement with the Korean Research Council for Industrial Science and Technology (KOCI)

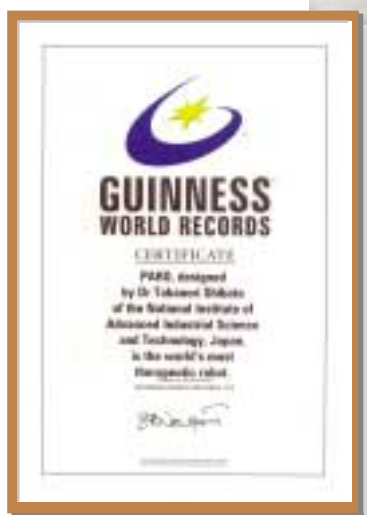
AIST concluded a research co-operation agreement with the Korean Research Council for Industrial Science and Technology (KOCI) on 8th February 2002. Both Dr. Park Kyu Tae, Chairman of the Korean Research Council for Industrial Science and Technology and Dr. Yoshikawa, President of AIST attended the signing ceremony held in Tokyo. They gave their joint opening remarks and declared that the co-operation agreement would serve as a foundation for both institutions, in co-operation and in the spirit of friendly rivalry, to endeavor to fulfil the primary commitments of science and technology for the development of mankind; pursuing their roles as equal partners in the international joint research projects. The speech was followed by the signing of the agreement.

KOCI was established in March 1999 under the direct jurisdiction of the Korean Prime Minister and supervising its seven member institutes including the Korean Institute of Oriental Medicine, Korean Institute of Industrial Technology, Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute, Korean Food Research Institute, Korean Institute of Machinery and Materials, Korean Electrotechnology Research Insti-



tute and the Korean Research Institute of Chemical Technology. KOCI assists its member institutes in making major research policies, evaluates their achievements and co-ordinates the basic research budget allocations among its member institutes.

It is anticipated that through the co-operation agreement with KOCI, the high level research agency of the Korean government will enhance the international research activities promoted by AIST.



Unit URL : http://unit.aist.go.jp/is/index_e.html