

JSPS Quarterly

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science



FEATURE: JSPS's Scientific Outreach

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JSPS's Scientific Outreach

In 2009, a Government Revitalization Unit was set up to review and, where appropriate, make budgetary reductions to government-funded programs and operations. The state of Japan's science and technology and of ways to enhance it were subject to this review. The process spotlighted the need to cultivate public awareness as to the importance of scientific research. Much of the research conducted in Japan is supported by funding from the national treasury, so it requires public support and understanding to be advanced successfully. To that end, research organizations and individual researchers will need even more than before to convey information on their research undertakings and results to the public. In short, greater outreach efforts will be expected of them.

Science Dialogue

This program provides JSPS fellows with opportunities to give lectures on their research work at high schools in the vicinity of their Japanese host institutions. These talented young scientists from around the world volunteer to participate in this program. Their lectures, given in English about their research and home countries, stimulate the students to study science by kindling within them an interest in research, while giving them widened international perspectives.

At the same time, the program gives the JSPS fellows an opportunity to interact with the local community and strengthen their ties with the Japanese people. Afterwards, the fellows say that they enjoyed the chance it gave them to share their research and zest for the work with Japanese students and to act as representatives of their

JSPS's mission is to advance scientific research. Whereas JSPS carries out a wide range of research-support activities, it was several years ago that it recognized the importance of outreach activities to disseminate information on research and its results to society. For this purpose, JSPS has introduced outreach activities targeted to younger generations of Japanese into its program lineup. Center-pieced among them are the "Science Dialogue Program" and the program "Welcome to a University Research Lab—Science That Inspires and Inspirts (HIRAMEKI☆TOKIMEKI SCIENCE)." These programs not only support outreach activities conducted by researchers but also serve to foster from an early age young researchers who will go on to pioneer new scientific frontiers.

countries in introducing the students to their cultures and societies.

Highly appraised by fellows, students and teachers alike, the Science Dialogue Program has from its establishment in FY 2004 received increasingly more requests each year from high schools for lectures. Altogether, 340 lectures have been held through March 2010.

JSPS continuously recruits both fellows and high school faculties who would like to participate in the Science Dialogue Program. For more detailed information on the program, please visit its website at <http://www.jsp.go.jp/english/e-plaza/e-sdialogue/>.

The Science Dialogue lectures conducted during the period from July through September 2010 are introduced on pages 12-13.

Lecturer's Comment

Dr. Md. Shamim Akhter

(Host institution: Research Organization of Information and Systems)
Lecture at Kumamoto Prefectural Daini High School
On 14 September 2010

As a JSPS fellow, I took part in the Science Dialogue Program and presented a one-hour lecture to first- and third-grade students at Kumamoto Prefectural Daini High School. It was

really a great experience and reminded me of my own school days in Bangladesh. I was very happy to visit such a nice high school and felt good to have the opportunity to introduce my country and research to the younger generation of Japanese.

In my lecture, I described my country Bangladesh, its culture, national symbols, attractions, and my home institute American International University Bangladesh. I also explained my

research on “helping agriculture activities using information technologies and remote sensing” among other topics I’m working on. I concluded by introducing my family in Japan.

The class atmosphere was friendly and students were eager to learn. At the very beginning, I told the students that they were free to ask me questions at any time during the lecture—that I’d be happy to pause if they felt confusion or curiosity about anything. I took breaks from time to time and asked the students questions to verify whether they were on the right track.

At the start of my lecture, the students were a bit shy about asking questions, but warmed up quickly as I interacted with them. I had asked my Japanese colleague Mr. Fujiwara to accompany me as a translator. Sometimes when I asked questions in English, the students would struggle to understand and looked perplexed. When Mr. Fujiwara translated them, they would suddenly be all smiles!

The students asked me several questions, especially regarding satellite images, agri-crop models, and genetic algorithms. I was a bit surprised at the level of some of their questions on satellite image processing, resolution, and color combinations. I learned later that they had visited the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) a few weeks prior, where they had done a good job learning about satellite imaging.

In truth, I found it relatively difficult to give a speech in front of people who have little knowledge about my research subject, especially as it involves a lot of scientific terms and technical details. This lecture helped me to improve my presentation skills when communicating with such people. For it, I prepared slides with informative pictures rather than texts, spoke slowly, and focused on a global view of the research rather than on methodological matters. I can now make my presentations simpler yet still informative when the need arises to do so in the future. All in all, my Science Dialogue experience proved fulfilling in a variety of ways.



Teacher’s Comment

Ms. Kyoko Yamamura

Shizuoka Prefectural Iwata Minami High School

With JSPS’s cooperation, our school has been participating in the Science Dialogue Program since FY 2005. During this period, I have been in charge of implementing the program over the past three years. I’ve felt that the typical response of ordinary Japanese to communicating with people of other countries is: Foreigner→English→Can’t understand→Can’t talk→Maintain respectful distance. As I science teacher myself, observing the natural manner in which the Science Dialogue lecturers conducted their sessions, it has become painfully clear to me that smooth scientific exchange is not possible without an ability to speak English. Nevertheless, I find myself shamelessly relying upon audacity when trying to communicate with the lecturers using what I’m sure must be very awkward English. I believe, however, that the students seeing me plugging away with English encourages them to use English without feeling bashful.

From my experience with this program, I believe that there are

three particularly significant merits to students receiving lectures directly from overseas researchers. First, it makes the students aware that scientific research is advanced through international exchange. Next, the students can see that researchers speak and communicate in various dialects of English, not only in the kind of native English they are used to hearing in the classroom. Last, the sense of uneasiness that students feel when not being able to understand everything spoken by the lecturer can spur them to study English more diligently.

Among the impressions voiced by the students after the lectures, most said that they were able to understand them because the lecturers were kind enough to speak slowly and use many diagrams, pictures and samples. After each time a lecture has been given, virtually all of the students felt an urgent need to learn English. Some have even said they wish such courses as math and physics could be taught in English.

Given its many benefits, our school looks forward to continue taking advantage of the Science Dialogue Program in the future as well.

Welcome to a University Research Lab—Science That Inspires and Inspirts

Launched in FY 2005, this program is aimed at today's students who will become tomorrow's scientists. Under it, university researchers who are carrying out projects with Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research explain their work and its results in an easily understood manner to groups of mainly secondary school students who visit their labs. By providing an opportunity for the students to learn about the meaning of science and the role it plays in their daily lives, the program seeks to stimulate intellectual curiosity and creativity in them. It also demonstrates to them the value of science within both culture and society—the program's ultimate aim being to promote multigenerationally sustained advancement of scientific endeavor in Japan.

The program's steering committee selects the lecture providers from among openly recruited applicants. The program, itself, is carried out collaboratively between JSPS and the implementing universities. In the 2010 fiscal year, 205 lectures have or will be held at 120 universities and research institutions.

Universities throughout Japan prepare their own uniquely tailored lecture programs, to which interested students in the local area are invited to attend. For more information on this program, see <http://www.jspss.go.jp/hirameki/>.

Lecture Examples

Lecture at Hokkaido University

By Dr. Yoichiro Hoshino (assistant professor in Field Science Center for Northern Biosphere)

On 31 July 2010

Conducted on a farm run by Hokkaido University, 26 junior high school students attended this interactive lecture on the selective breeding of berries. To give the students a sense of the various kinds of berries, they first gathered blueberries, bearberry honeysuckles, raspberries, black currants and other berries. From this exercise, they learned that there are a wide variety of berries and that each tastes differently. They were also able to actually see berries growing on the bush whose names, like "currant," they had only known.

Next, the students performed an experiment to cross-fertilize raspberries and blackberries. The new variety of berries they hybridized were put into pollination bags with the students' names on them and later mailed to their homes.

Last on the agenda, the latest technologies used in the selective breeding of plants were introduced to the students via a video and slide presentation. Afterwards, the students observed in the lab pollen germination to give them an understanding of the fertilization process and, then, performed an experiment in the field to measure the sugar content and pH of fruits.



Lecture at Tokai University

By Dr. Kunio Kutsuwada (professor in School of Marine Science and Technology)

On 3 October 2010



A workshop was conducted aboard the ship *Bousei Maru*, attended by 22 junior high school students and 13 accompanying parents and teachers. Experiments were carried out to answer such questions as why the sea is blue and salty. Using a variety of instruments on board the ship, such mysteries of the sea were explored by analyzing and observing samples taken from the water.

The activity started by showing the students the ship's pilot-house, engine room, and the instruments used in conducting oceanographic experiments. Next, experiments were conducted together with the students. The temperature of the seawater was taken and its salt content measured. Sea currents were studied using a tub, and water pressure was observed by deformation of styrofoam cups and cans lowered to various depths. Then, plankton was collected using a specially designed net and the captured specimens examined under a microscope. Lastly, the data obtained through these measurements and observations were compiled, and the students entered them in the textbooks they had been given.

2010 Recipient Chosen for International Prize for Biology

On 7 October, at a meeting of the Committee on the International Prize for Biology (chaired by Dr. Takashi Sugimura, vice president, the Japan Academy) of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science decided to present the 26th (2010) International Prize for Biology to Dr. Nancy Ann Moran, an American citizen who is a William H. Fleming Professor of Biology, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Yale University, USA.

The field of specialization for the 26th Prize is “Biology of Symbiosis.” Dr. Moran has contributed greatly to the advancement of the biology of symbiosis over recent years through her studies of intimate coevolutionary relationships between insects and the endosymbiotic bacteria that live within them. These studies have yielded by far the largest number of outstanding research results in this field thanks to Dr. Moran’s versatile approach, which draws upon molecular biology, genomics, and experimental and theoretical biology.



Dr. Nancy Ann Moran

Award Ceremony

The award ceremony was held on 6 December at the Japan Academy. As in previous years, Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress attended the ceremony and a party held in honor of the award recipient.

Commemorative Symposium

To commemorate the award to Dr. Moran, the 26th International Prize for Biology Commemorative Symposium on Symbiosis was held on 7-8 December at Tsukuba International Congress Center, Ibaraki.

Dr. Nancy Ann Moran

Nationality: United States of America

Present position: William H. Fleming Professor of Biology, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Yale University, USA

Curriculum Vitae:

2010-present	William H. Fleming Professor, Yale University
2001-2010	Regents’ Professor, University of Arizona
1996-2000	Professor, University of Arizona
1991-1996	Associate Professor, University of Arizona
1986-1991	Assistant Professor, University of Arizona
1984-1986	Postdoctoral Fellow, Northern Arizona University
1984	National Academy of Sciences Fellow, Institute of Entomology, Czechoslovakia

Awards and Distinctions:

2008	University of Arizona Alumni Association Extraordinary Faculty Award
2007	Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science
2006	Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences
2006	Galileo Circle Faculty Fellow, College of Science, University of Arizona
2004	Member of the National Academy of Sciences
2004	Member of the American Academy of Microbiology
2001	University of Arizona Regents’ Professor
1997-2002	John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellow
1988	American Society of Naturalists President’s Award

— General Affairs Division

STS forum's Annual Meeting Held in Kyoto

The seventh Annual Meeting of the Science and Technology in Society (STS) *forum* was held on 3-5 October and was attended by JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono. JSPS planned and implemented a session for young scientists (203-G3 Session).

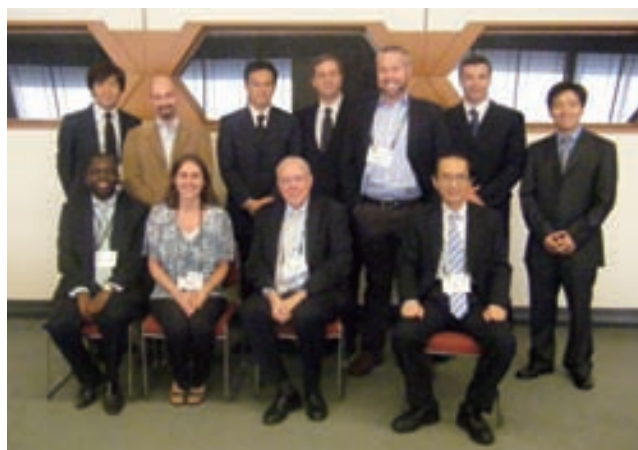
STS *forum*'s Annual Meeting

The STS *forum*'s Annual Meeting is considered to be the science and technology version of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting held in Davos. As in past years, the *forum*'s Annual Meeting was held at the beginning of October in the Kyoto International Conference Center. Seeking to spur progress in science and technology while keeping relevant risks under control by applying shared wisdom and values, the participants, comprising scientists, policymakers, business executives, and opinion leaders from countries around the world, engaged in discussions and exchanges of views on the meeting's theme "Lights and Shadows of Science and Technology."

This seventh STS *forum*'s Annual Meeting was attended by about 1,000 people from 104 countries, regions, and international organizations, who participated in discussions in the meeting's various sessions. The meeting concluded with the issuing of a "statement" on the last day. It can be read on the following website: http://www.stsforum.org/press/PDF/2010/2010Statement_en.pdf

203-G3 Session

The 203-G3 Session, "Perspectives from Young Scientists on Science and Technology in Society," has been held as a component of the STS *forum*'s Annual Meeting since FY 2008. It was originally established based on a proposal by the STS *forum* Council that a session be held to assemble young scientists with high potential to become world leaders in their fields of specialization—one that gives them a platform to discuss future S&T prospects and vistas and compile a proposal based on their conclusions and that works to foster young scientists while building networks among



Prof. Winnacker and Prof. Ono with 203-G3 Session participants

them. JSPS is entrusted by the STS *forum* to plan and carry out this session.

Prof. Ernst-Ludwig Winnacker, secretary general, Human Frontier Science Program Organization, chaired the session, featuring speeches by ten young researchers—hailing from Japan, the Asia-Pacific, North and South America, Europe, and Africa—selected by JSPS and the New York Academy of Sciences.

The 203-G3 Session was convened on 4 October. Attended also by a Nobel laureate, it engendered a spirited discussion among the participants on the following five themes:

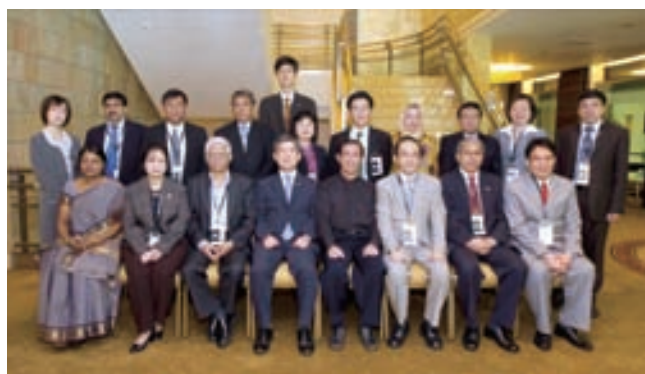
1. Early Independence of Young Scientists
2. International Character of Science and the Mobility of Scientists
3. Differences in Scientific Cultures between the West and Asia, in Particular Japan
4. Dual Career Couples
5. Career Perspectives: Tenure Track and Others

A summary of the discussion results was compiled and presented in the following day's plenary session.

— Research Cooperation Division II

ASIAHORCs Meeting Held Along with Joint Symposium

From 1-3 November, the fourth meeting of the Asian Heads of Research Councils (ASIAHORCs) and second ASIAHORCs joint symposium were held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Both were hosted by the Vice-Chancellors' Council of National Universities in Malaysia. Initially advocated by JSPS, ASIAHORCs works to pro-



mote science and technology within Asia and to develop the region's young researchers. With the participation of heads of leading science-promotion agencies within the Asian region, these annual meetings have been held since 2007. Starting in 2009, ASIAHORCs joint symposiums on themes decided by the members have been held for the primary purpose of solving common regional issues and creating networks among young researchers across the region.

This year's ASIAHORCs joint symposium, held over the first two days, was themed "Natural Disaster Management: Lessons Learnt and Shared Best Practices." It was attended by 65 researchers and specialists on the subject, who were mainly senior and junior researchers selected from the ASIAHORC-member countries. Prof. Norio Okada, director, Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Kyoto University, gave the keynote lecture on the challenge of integrated disaster risk management. Afterwards, parallel sessions were held on five topics: earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, floods, and disaster management. In them, disaster-prevention research being carried out and disaster-management systems being established in

each country were reported and animated discussions advanced.

Held on the third day, the ASIAHORCs meeting was attended by representatives from science-promotion agencies in Japan, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. At it, a vigorous exchange of views was carried out on the theme “International Collaborative Research.” JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono reported on Japan’s latest science policy trends and JSPS’s international programs. A shared vision by the

ASIAHORCs members was devised, a logo selected, and future cooperative activities discussed.

The next ASIAHORCs meeting will be hosted by Indian government’s Department of Science and Technology, and the ASIAHORCs joint symposium, on the theme “Climate Change,” will be implemented by the National Natural Science Foundation of China. Both are scheduled for the fall of 2011.

— Asian Program Division

Eighth Meeting of Heads of Research Councils in Asia

On 15-17 September, the eighth meeting of the Heads of Research Councils in Asia (A-HORCs) was held in Xi’an, China. Convened annually, A-HORCs meetings provide an opportunity for the heads of leading science-promotion agencies in Japan, China and Korea to discuss face-to-face science and technology policy issues in their respective countries. This year’s meeting was attended by Prof. Motoyuki Ono, president, JSPS; Prof. Yiyu Chen, president, National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC); and Prof. Kyuhan Bae, director general, National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF).

In the meeting’s first session, presentations were given on the latest developments in “science planning” in the three countries and a vigorous exchange of views was held on their respective S&T policies and international programs. The second session saw a discussion on the A3 Foresight Program, implemented jointly by JSPS, NSFC and NRF, and on the Northeastern Asian Symposium, whose theme is set in the A-HORCs meetings. “Plasma Physics” was selected for next year’s 13th symposium.

This time, the 12th Northeastern Asian Symposium on the theme “ICT: Next Generation Network and Network Security” was held in



Professors Bae, Chen and Ono

parallel with the A-HORCs meeting. It was attended by 45 researchers from the three countries, who gave presentations on their work. The interaction enjoyed among them is expected to spawn joint research activities in the months and years ahead.

Next year, the 9th A-HORCs meeting and 13th Northeastern Asian Symposium will be hosted by NRF in Korea.

— Asian Program Division

Symposium to Kick Off Japan-Germany Treaty Commemorative Events

On 13-14 September, JSPS and the German JSPS Club held an academic symposium in cooperation with the National Institute of Informatics (NII). Themed “Transport and Mobility—Challenges for the Future,” it kicked off a series of events to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the 1861 Japan-Prussia Treaty of Friendship and Commerce. Venued in the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center in Tokyo, the symposium provided a platform for leading-

edge researchers from the two countries to introduce their work with an eye to strengthening collegial ties and promoting Japanese-German research collaboration.

The symposium opened with remarks from JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono, German JSPS Club chair Prof. Dr. Heinrich Menkhau, Mr. Peter Rondorf, Minister, German Embassy in Tokyo, and Mr. Takahumi Goda, director-general, Science and Technology Policy Bureau, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. They were followed by sessions on the topics “Transportation” and “Knowledge-Sharing for Solving Worldwide Social Problems.” Some 150 people participated in these sessions, in which alumni club members, who had performed joint research under JSPS programs, other German researchers, and Japanese researchers reported on the current state of cutting-edge research in the topic fields. Expanding the parameters of their discourse to future prospects and vistas in the subject fields, they drafted a proposal on Japanese-German collaboration in those directions.

The event concluded with remarks by NII director general Dr. Masao Sakauchi, followed by an observation visit for the German researchers of the Institute’s facilities.

— Research Cooperation Division II/Overseas Fellowship Division



Workshop Held on S&T Cooperation between Japan and Germany

The Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research of the German State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) sponsored a workshop on “S&T Cooperation between Japan and NRW.” Held on 22 September at Museum Koenig in Bonn, the workshop was cosponsored by Consulate General of Japan in Düsseldorf and JSPS.

The workshop started off with remarks from Mr. Helmut Dockter, Deputy Minister of Innovation, Science and Research of NRW, Mr. Kiyoshi Koinuma, Consul General of Japan in Düsseldorf, and Prof. Dr. Keiichi Kodaira, director, JSPS Bonn Office. Then, Dr. Walter Mönig, director for European affairs, Federal Ministry of Education and Research, and Mr. Katsuhisa Sagisaka, director, International Science and Technology Affairs Division, Science and Technology Policy Bureau, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), offered reciprocal descriptions of S&T policies in the EU and Japan.

Various EU programs aimed at Japan were introduced and ex-

amples of them elaborated. Also introduced were EU programs to which Japanese researchers are eligible to apply via agreement-based collaborations between MEXT, JSPS and the Japan Science and Technology Agency and their counterpart German and other European agencies. A concluding session titled “Project Pitches” gave six researchers the opportunity to make a 5-minute presentation of their projects. Among them, Prof. Dr. Akira Matsumura, University of Tsukuba (deputy director, Tsukuba University Hospital) introduced his research project on boron neutron capture as a next-generation cancer therapy.

The workshop was held as a pre-event for celebrating the 150th anniversary of Japanese-German exchange in 2011. The JSPS Bonn Office has on slate a number of other commemorative events to be held in Germany over the next year.

— JSPS Bonn Office

JSPS Abend Held in Germany

Every year, JSPS’s Bonn Office holds the JSPS Abend, to which it invites the heads of its counterpart institutions and universities along with representatives of other affiliated organizations in Germany. At these events, a report is given on both JSPS’s and its Bonn Office’s activities and a message of appreciation is extended to the German counterparts who helped to carry them out. Moreover, the holding of these Abend also serves to expand the Office’s circle of exchange and collaboration. Held at La Redoute in Bonn on 8 September, this year’s event assembled some 80 participants, including JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono and International Program Department deputy director Ms. Helga Tabuchi.

Prof. Ono began the event with opening remarks. Emphasizing that the role of science is all the more vital in times of economic downturn such as these, he expressed expectation in the continued flourishing of scientific exchange between Germany and Japan, particularly as the two countries mark next year their 150th year of diplomacy and friendship. He was followed by messages from Mr. Helmut Dockter, Deputy Minister of Innovation, Science and Research in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), in which Bonn is situated, Mr. Kenji Okada, Minister, Embassy of Japan in Germany, Prof. Dr. Dieter Lenzen, vice-president for international relations, German Rectors’ Conference (HRK), and Dr. Enno Aufderheide, secretary general, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH).

To add a special touch to the event, JSPS Bonn Office director Prof. Dr. Keiichi Kodaira and his wife Uta invited the harpist Daniel Noll to perform a solo as a prelude to its opening ceremony. Now 16, two years ago Daniel won a first prize in *Jugend musiziert-Bundeswettbewerb* (young German musical competition). The participants were captivated by his splendid recital.



Prof. Ono delivering remarks

After a midway break, an academic lecture was delivered on “Business and Society” by Dr. Kanji Tanimoto, professor of Hitotsubashi University and visiting professor at Freie Universität Berlin. He was followed by remarks from Dr. Christian Bode, secretary general, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and German JSPS Club chair Prof. Dr. Heinrich Menkhaus. Prof. Dr. Kodaira offered closing remarks, in which he reiterated JSPS’s appreciation to the participants for their support and cooperation.

A congenial atmosphere prevailed throughout the event, in which executives of the many attending institutions took good advantage of this rare opportunity to meet and talk face to face with JSPS representatives about German-Japanese scientific and academic exchange, while deepening mutual understanding and cooperative ties.

— JSPS Bonn Office

Colloquium on Epigenetics Held in Stockholm

On 6-7 September, the JSPS Stockholm Office sponsored a colloquium on the subject of “epigenetics,” venue at the Karolinska Institute (KI) in Stockholm. It was planned by Prof. Shoji Tajima,

Osaka University, and Prof. Rolf Ohlsson, KI, and held with the cooperation of the Japanese Society for Epigenetics.

In 2003, the decoding of the human genome was completed,

leaving in play a process to elucidate its genetic information. As part of that process, epigenetics has attracted much interest as a phenomenon of gene behavior caused by retention of non-DNA changes in an organism's genes. As epigenetics has pertinence to



various biological phenomena, including embryogeny, cell differentiation, somatic cell cloning, aging, cancer, and congenital abnormalities, research on it is being pursued across a wide range of fields. In Japan, the aforementioned Japanese Society for Epigenetics has been established to advance such cross-disciplinary investigations. On the other hand, countries of Northern Europe were among the first to initiate related research programs on a national level.

At this colloquium, lectures by leading researchers in related fields were delivered along with presentations by front-running young Japanese researchers, creating a dynamic that, coupled with an intensifying interest in epigenetics, attracted a more-than-expected 110 participants, with some of the younger European researchers coming from outside of the Scandinavian region. A poster session was also featured, which gave the participating young researchers an opportunity to introduce their work and exchange views with seniors and peers.

— JSPS Stockholm Office

Annual Meeting of Alumni Club and Seminar Held in Finland

On 3 September, the JSPS Alumni Club in Finland held its annual meeting and a seminar on “bathing culture,” venued on the Krapu estate in the culturally rich Finnish municipality of Tuusula.

At the annual meeting, an overview was provided of the Club's FY2010 activities, new members were recognized, and a discussion was held toward planning the Club's next fiscal year's activities. In the following seminar, Mr. Shinji Kanki, a Japanese artist who resides in Helsinki, gave a lecture on Japan's bathhouse (*senjo*) culture and its influence on art and music. JSPS alumnus, Dr. Tapani Jussila gave another lecture on Japan's spa (*onsen*) culture from a Finnish perspective, in which he compared it with Finland's sauna culture. After them, Mr. Mika Mäkelä talked about his experiences as an exchange student at Hokkaido University, showing many pictures of his host lab and colleagues in Japan.

As part of the seminar, an excursion was made to Halosenniemi museum, which, now open to the public, was once the home and studio of the renowned Finnish painter Pekka Halonen (1865-1933). While there, Dr. Hanna Johansson delivered a lecture in which she interpreted Halonen's paintings and landscapes together with works of Japanese artists. As many of the participants were well versed in

the arts, the lecture evoked a lively discussion. The seminar concluded with an exercise in “skinship”: a trip to the sauna gave the Japanese and Finnish participants an opportunity to enrich their friendship ties.



Mr. Kanki giving his lecture

— JSPS Stockholm Office

Call for JARC-Net Registration

JSPS operates the Japan-Asia Research Community Network (JARC-Net) as a researcher information database. Its purpose is to support the maintenance and expansion of working networks between researchers in Japan and other countries of the Asian region, which have been cultivated over long years through JSPS programs, including fellowships, researcher exchanges, joint projects and seminars.

Registered members of the database are able to access other members' profiles, including their names, affiliations, positions, research fields, and education/work histories. They can then use this information to look for new research partners or to broaden support for their activi-

ties by mobilizing past colleagues, such as university or JSPS program alumni, from Asian countries. Members are also provided an information mail service on JSPS's exchange and cooperation programs within the Asian community. JARC-Net is open to all those who are interested in research cooperation and network building in Asia.

To register onto JARC-Net or peruse the site, please visit the following webpage:

<http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-strategy/jarcnet.html>

— Asian Program Division

Symposium on Youth Culture in Modern Japan Held in Canada

On 15-16 October, a symposium, titled “Borderlessness and Youth Culture in Modern Japan,” was held at the McCord Museum of Canadian History in Montreal. It was cosponsored by McGill University, Concordia University, University of Montreal, and JSPS. The symposium was endorsed by the Consulate General of Japan at Montreal as one of the events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of its establishment.

The first day featured a lecture series on the symposium theme, which was open to interested members of the public. The second day’s session, also open to the public, took the form of panel discussions among the lecturers.

During the symposium, lectures were given on Japanese youth culture, accentuated by its *manga* and *anime*, and how that culture is being received by young people around the world. With lines of demarcation thinning among the world’s youth cultures, the lectures, aimed at North American researchers and citizens, attempted to enhance and spread knowledge related to the expanding borderlessness of youth culture, while the symposium provided a platform for discussion among researchers on subjects related to Japanese culture.

The event opened with remarks by Dr. Seishi Takeda, director of



the JSPS San Francisco Office, and Dr. David Ownby, director of the Center for East Asian Studies, University of Montreal. Then, four sessions were held on the following themes: Youth in Contemporary Japan, Perspectives on the Youth Subculture of Japan, Film Studies, and Japanese Youth in the Borderless World. Each of the sessions featured unique presentations made all the more interesting by the liberal use of visual materials. Captivated, the attending members of the public were seen bending an ear and taking notes.

On the second day, discussions were held in which all the previous day’s lecturers exchanged views on the contents of their research presentations. In the intervals between the discussions, members of the public asked the panel questions, suffusing the hall with an animated atmosphere. The discussants probed each other with questions that delved into the details of their research, covering such topics as the relationship between capitalism and Japanese culture and literature and trends in Japan studies in North America. These exchanges of views were so energetic as to run up against the time limits.

— JSPS San Francisco Office



Gathering of JSPS Japanese Fellows Held in New York

On 29 October, the JSPS San Francisco Office held its 15th Gathering of JSPS Japanese Fellows residing in the US. The confab was attended by a total of 30 people, who included young Japanese researchers on JSPS Research Fellowships for Young Scientists and Postdoctoral Fellowships for Research Abroad. Joining the gathering were other Japanese researchers residing in the US and the director of community relations at the Japanese Educational Institute of New York. Attending also were staffs from JSPS Tokyo headquarters and San Francisco Office.

San Francisco Office director Dr. Seishi Takeda opened the meeting, followed by a briefing from a member of JSPS’s Research Fellowship Division on Research Fellowships for Young Scientists and Postdoctoral Fellowships for Research Abroad. Afterwards, the fellows introduced themselves and gave presentations on their research.

During the meeting, the attending researchers from diverse fields enjoyed comparing notes on their various research activities and sharing stories and information on their lives in the US. All in all, the event more than achieved its objectives.

Adding to this success was the opportunity the meeting gave the



young researchers to deepen exchanges with each other while organically building interpersonal networks. As the JSPS Office considers providing such periodical opportunities to be very meaningful, we will continue to do so in the future.

— JSPS San Francisco Office

JSPS-NRCT Seminar Highlights Global COE Research

During the period from 26-30 August, the Thailand Research Expo 2010 was carried out by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT). As one of its components, a JSPS-NRCT seminar on “Advanced Science and Education in Japan” was held in Bangkok on 29 August. It packed the Convention Centre to capacity with about 100 participants. Opening remarks were offered by Dr. Wataru Takeuchi, director, JSPS Bangkok Office, and a welcoming speech given by Ms. Choosri Keedumrongkool, director, Office of International Affairs, NRCT. They were followed by invited talks from three project leaders under JSPS’s Global COE Program: Prof. Yozo Fujino, University of Tokyo; Prof. Kenji Hirayama, Nagasaki University; and Prof. Yoshiyuki Sankai, University of Tsukuba.

In his talk, entitled “Sustainable urban regeneration,” Prof. Fujino referred to Bangkok, with its population of some 10 million, in describing the need for a scientific approach that overarches multiple fields in addressing the diverse problems affecting cities amidst rapidly expanding urbanization on a global scale.

Speaking on the topic “Integrated global strategy for the control



of tropical and emerging infectious diseases,” Prof. Hirayama emphasized the need for basic research and field studies in working toward the eradication of infectious diseases, and described how the parameters of such investigations are expanding into the proliferation of mosquitos caused by development and expansion of their areas of infestation caused by changes in the natural environment.

In his treatment of the theme “Cybernetics—fusion of human, machine and information systems,” Prof. Sankai described cybernetics as a field that widely bridges medical, natural and social sciences, and introduced via video several examples of how skeletal robots can assist disabled people in moving their limbs.

With Bangkok’s aging population, spreading contagion of mosquito-borne dengue fever, and soon to expand public transportation system, the themes addressed were of both immediate and very high interest to seminar’s general audience, reaffirming the vital importance of these areas of science and technology.

— JSPS Bangkok Office



International Conference on Biology Held in Kenya

The “2010 Kenya’s International Conference on Biodiversity, Land Use and Climate Change: Towards a National Conservation Framework” was held in Nairobi on 15-17 September. It was sponsored by 18 organizations including the JSPS Nairobi Research Station, African Conservation Centre (ACC), Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), United Nations Environment Programme, and Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources of Kenya. The conference was attended by some 500 participants.

Unlike industrialized nations, Kenya depends more on renewable energy from sunlight than on fossil fuels. It is used to support farming, ranching, fisheries, forestry, wildlife, tourism and domestic utilities. Biodiversity gives innumerable benefits to Kenyans. This wealth of Kenya’s biological diversity was reviewed in the conference, which also looked at challenges of growing population, expanding land use, and changing climate. Discussed also was how to improve the people’s livelihood and sustain the country’s economic growth through more effective conservation policies and practices. These discussions highlighted a need for training to hone new technical skills and collaboration between government agencies and, by extension, a new public-private partnership to include conservation bodies, landowners and businesses. The conference also marked Kenya’s participation in the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity.

Mr. Julius Kipng’etich, director of KWS, and Mr. Ali D. Mohamed,



permanent secretary of Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources, attended the conference’s opening ceremony, where Dr. David Western, chairman of ACC, offered welcome remarks. Preceding the conference, public lectures were delivered in the Louis Leakey Auditorium, Nairobi National Museum on 13 and 14 September. Mr. Toshio Meguro, University of Tokyo, was invited there as a lecturer and gave a presentation entitled “Between the Past Discord and the Future Collaboration,” focusing on the relationship between wildlife and the local people around Amboseli National Park, located at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

— JSPS Nairobi Research Station

Akashi National College of Technology (Hyogo)

Date: 2 July

Dr. Marcus Wunsch (Austria)
Host institution: Kyoto University
Title: "Partial Differential Equations in Physics and Finance"



Ishikawa Prefectural Nanao High School

Date: 8 July

Dr. Ashraf G. Bhuiyan (Bangladesh)
Host institution: Fukui University
Title: "Solar Energy and Solar Cells"



Dr. Ying Li (China)
Host institution: Kanazawa University
Title: "Pollution of PAHs and Analogs in the Pan-Japan Sea"



Dr. Silvia Pujals (Spain)
Host institution: Kyoto University
Title: "Biomedical Applications of Peptides and Proteins"



Junior High and Senior High School at Komaba, University of Tsukuba (Tokyo)

Date: 18 September

Dr. Yiping Zhao (China)
Host institution: Waseda University
Title: "Pollution and Strategy—From Cradle to Grave to Cradle"



Miyazaki Prefectural Miyazaki Kita High School



Date: 21 July

Dr. Ayman S. F. Abdel-Aleem (Egypt)
Host institution: University of Miyazaki
Title: "New Aspects of Parasitic Infections: The Potential Effects of Parasitic Infections on Hepatic Functions"

Nagano Prefecture Suwa Seiryō High School

Date: 17 September

Dr. Sabri B. Tank (Turkey)
Host institution: Tokyo Institute of Technology
Title: "Earthquake and Volcano"



Kumamoto Prefectural Daini High School

Date: 14 September

Dr. Md. S. Akhter (Bangladesh)
Host institution: Research Organization of Information and Systems
Title: "Helping Agriculture Activities Using Information"



Dr. Dakrong Pissuwan (Thailand)
Host institution: Kyushu University
Title: "Tiny Gold in Biological/Biomedical Applications"



Shizuoka Prefectural Iwata Minami High School

Date: 29 September

Dr. Sarah A. E. Goretta (France)
Host institution: Osaka University
Title: "Once Upon a Time, a French Researcher"



Dr. Praveen K. Vakayil (India)
Host institution: The University of Tokyo
Title: "A Journey from Molecules to Materials"



Tochigi Prefectural Utsunomiya Girls' High School

Date: 17 September

Dr. Michael A. Bodendorfer (Switzerland)
Host institution: Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency
Title: "Ad Astra"



Dr. Oskar D. Modin (Sweden)
Host institution: The University of Tokyo
Title: "Treatment of Used Water"



Dr. Wei Wang (China)
Host institution: Ibaraki University
Title: "So You Think You Want to Work in the Magic World?"

Dr. Muhammad A. Zahoor (Pakistan)
Host institution: RIKEN
Title: "Research Activities, Pakistan: A Country Profile and Student Motivation"



Saitama Prefectural Warabi High School

Date: 14 July

Dr. Yiping Zhao (China)

Host institution: Waseda University
Title: "Pollution and Strategy—
From Cradle to Grave to Cradle"



Yamanashi Prefectural Kofu Higashi High School

Date: 29 July

Dr. Bantu Prasanta K. Patro
(India)

Host institution: The University of
Tokyo
Title: "Plate Tectonics"



Shiga Prefectural Hikone Higashi High School

Date: 16 July

Dr. Sathiparan Navaratnarajah
(Sri Lanka)

Host institution: The University of
Tokyo
Title: "How to Build Strong Bridges
and Why They Are Strong"



Yamanashi Prefectural Yoshida High School

Date: 9 September

Dr. Md. D. Miah (Bangladesh)

Host institution: Shinshu University
Title: "Forests to Mitigate Climate
Change: A Bangladesh Perspective"



Recent Visitors to JSPS (August-October 2010)

NSTDA President

On 23 August, a delegation led by Dr. Thaweesak Koanantakool paid a courtesy visit to JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono. Having been appointed president of Thailand's National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) in July, Dr. Koanantakool came to Japan to introduce NSTDA's program to various institutions.

While at JSPS, he described the Agency's activities and expressed interest in JSPS's Asia-oriented program initiatives. Prof. Ono said that he looked forward to ever-more vigorous scientific exchange between Thailand and Japan.

— Asian Program Division



ERC President

On 24 August, a delegation comprising Prof. Helga Nowotny, president, European Research Council (ERC), Dr. Jack Metthey, director (ad interim) of the ERC Executive Agency, Dr. Nicolas Voilley, ERC research program officer, and Dr. Barbara Rhode, head of the Science and Technology Section, Delegation of the European Union to Japan paid a courtesy visit to JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono. They first introduced their organizations and programs to each other and engaged in a free discussion.

The European delegation expressed keen

interest in JSPS's initiatives to provide young researchers with expanded international research opportunities, such as through JSPS's "Young Researcher Overseas Visits Program for Vitalizing Brain Circulation." As a measure to promote research exchange between Japan and Europe, it was agreed to enhance mutual information exchange. As one way of doing so, it was suggested that JSPS and ERC link websites, thereby providing easy access to each other's program information.

— Research Cooperation Division I



Eminent Scientist Prof. Dr. Richard R. Ernst

On 7 October, Prof. Dr. Richard R. Ernst (1991 Nobel laureate in chemistry), who was invited to Japan under the JSPS Award for Eminent Scientists program, paid a visit to JSPS. During this trip to Japan, Prof. Ernst gave five lectures to Japanese researchers and students. In his discussion with JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono, Prof. Ernst extolled the quality and creativity of Japanese researchers, but stressed the need for enhancing education to improve the ability of students to

communicate in foreign languages.

Prof. Ernst is scheduled to participate as a lecturer in the JSPS-sponsored HOPE Meeting to be held in March 2011. Receiving a description of the HOPE concept from Prof. Ono, Prof. Ernst expressed interest in holding an active exchange of views with the young researchers who will attend the meeting from the Asia-Pacific region.

— Overseas Fellowship Division



Hailing from Cameroon, Dr. Hervé Martial Poumalé Poumalé has been conducting research with his host researcher, Dr. Yoshihito Shiono, in the Department of Bioresource Engineering, Yamagata University under a JSPS postdoctoral fellowship since November 2008. Dr. P. Poumalé knew little about Japan before embarking upon his fellowship. However, his rich international experiences not only helped him to adjust to the new environment quickly, but also to produce fruitful research outcomes within the limited time of his fellowship.

What are you currently researching under the JSPS fellowship?

I am working on natural products chemistry, which includes isolation, characterization, chemical transformation, and biological testing of isolated compounds. Presently, I am concentrating on fungi from Cameroonian medicinal plants.

How did you become interested in your research field?

When I was young, I visited a facility that grows and processes medicinal plants. Members of the staff showed me around the facility. I was impressed with how medicinal plants can help to cure people's illnesses. I thought that there was a great potential in medicinal plants for maintaining people's health and allowing them to live healthy lives. So, I wanted to investigate medicinal plants and discover new medicines. The fact that chemistry is much more popular as a field of study in Cameroon than subjects like physics and mathematics might also have influenced my decision to choose it as my field of research.

How did you get to know your Japanese host researcher?

I met Dr. Shiono in Germany while I was a doctoral student in 2006. He was a postdoc at the same university and we discussed a lot of research questions. Since then, I became interested in working with him.

What is your impression of your host institution?

I was very glad to have an opportunity to do research at Yamagata University. First of all, when I came to this research laboratory, everything was well prepared and everybody was ready to accept me. In addition, my host researcher has given me his full support and the members of his lab have been very kind. Thanks to the environment they have created for me, I never have felt any culture shock at all.

Why did you choose Japan to pursue your research?

There were a number of reasons that led me to choose Japan as my destination. Needless to say, my host researcher had a big influence on my decision. Since meeting him in Germany, I kept in touch and became interested in working under his supervision. In addition, I was planning to expand my research field after having studied compounds from medicinal plants in Cameroon and compounds from bacteria in Germany. In the field of compounds from fungi, Japan has an advantage over other countries. Therefore, it was very reasonable for me to choose Japan as the country to pursue my research.

What do you think about the research environment in Japan?

My impression of Japan's research environment is that it is well organized. I am also impressed by how hard people work. I usually work from 9 a.m. to 6 or 7 p.m. and sometimes to 10 or 11 p.m. Generally speaking, however, my colleagues in my lab work longer hours than I do. I've also found that there is a difference in the way postdocs do their research. In Japan, everybody makes the compounds they need by themselves with equipment in the lab. This was interesting to me as it differed from my previous experiences.

Before coming to Japan, what kind of image did you have of the country? Has your perception changed after coming here?

I knew little about Japan, so my image of the country was very limited. I saw *kung fu* as an image of Japan. Once I arrived in Japan, I found this country to be very interesting. I was especially impressed how kind and polite the people are. It felt like everybody was always ready to be helpful to others. I was also astonished to see how the Japanese are very eager to maintain their culture by preserving hundreds of years old temples and building museums. Though I haven't yet been to Kyoto or Nara, old capitals of Japan, I am looking forward to taking my family to them when they come to join me in September.

What are your research achievements under the JSPS fellowship so far?

One of my biggest achievements was having succeeded in being accepted for a paper publication in a major journal. In my research field, it usually takes from two to four months to run an experiment. When they yield interesting results I become very happy. When my paper was published I was overjoyed, feeling that my efforts had paid off.



Dr. Hervé Martial Poumalé Poumalé

Ph.D. (Organic Chemistry), University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon, 2007

Master Science with Thesis (Organic Chemistry), University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon, 2002

M.Sc. (Chemistry), University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon, 2001

B.Sc. (General Chemistry), University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon, 1998

What do you do outside your research work?

I like to play soccer. Usually, I play soccer with friends twice a week. I also like to watch soccer games on TV. This year, I especially enjoyed watching the World Cup matches. Even though the result was not a happy one for my home country, I was very excited to watch the game between Cameroon and Japan. Other than soccer, I enjoy shopping. My favorite cities are Tokyo and Yokohama, where I often go to shop, sightsee, and visit friends from Cameroon. My other hobbies include browsing the Internet, having conversations with friends, and sometimes playing chess in my leisure time.

How was your experience in the Science Dialogue Program at a Japanese high school?

I went to a high school in Niigata prefecture. It was a good opportunity for me to introduce my research to young Japanese. I think I was well prepared for the lecture. I used many pictures to explain step by step my research with simple English so that the students could easily understand. I enjoyed my interactions and discussions with them. As it was a very good experience for me, I would like to recommend that other fellows take part in this program.

What do you plan to do after your fellowship ends?

I haven't decided yet. However, I would like to secure a faculty position in Cameroon. I know the competition is very severe, so I might apply for another postdoc position to gain more research experience and strengthen my

résumé. In any case, I want to obtain a faculty position at a university sooner or later, hopefully in Cameroon. I will keep in touch and maintain a good relationship with my host researcher. In the future, I would like to send my students to study under his supervision in advancing their research careers. I also would like to establish multi-national research projects, namely among Cameroon, Germany and Japan, with institutions where I have worked.

Do you have any advice for young researchers who may be thinking about doing research in Japan?

Well, leaving your home country to con-

duct research in Japan is very challenging, but it can also be very rewarding. Being well prepared and working hard will enable you to get the best results out of this challenge. The other thing you had better bring with you is a positive attitude. You will see many things that are very different from those in your country. They include customs, culture and ways people think or behave. If you are positive about everything, you can enjoy these differences and make your adjustment to this new cultural environment easily. As a current JSPS fellow, I would like for future fellows to be highly qualified and deserving to receive this competitive fellowship.

Dr. P. Poumalé is well along the path of pursuing his childhood dream to become a top researcher in medicinal plants. As in Japan, faculty positions appear difficult to secure in Cameroon. After interviewing Dr. P. Poumalé and experiencing his positive attitude, we cannot help but think he will prevail amidst the competition.

Though researchers from Cameroon are presently underrepresented in Japan, we look forward to Dr. P. Poumalé's visit causing a chain reaction and the day when many young researches from his own laboratory in Cameroon will come to Japan, expanding scientific exchange between the two countries.

Introducing Japan: Tsuruoka

By Dr. Hervé Martial Poumalé Poumalé

With a population of around 140 thousand people, Tsuruoka is one of the major cities of the Shonai region of Yamagata Prefecture. Lying along the coast of the Sea of Japan, it is also the gateway for trekking in the sacred mountains of Dewa (the old name for the prefecture). This range of three mountains (Dewasanzan) has a 1,400-year history of attracting mountain ascetics, called *yamabushi*, who engaged in rigorous practices including standing under waterfalls, walking over fire, and even mummifying themselves while still alive. On their pilgrimages, the first of the mountains Haguro (414 meters) represents birth, from which Gassan (1,984 meters), the world of the dead, is ascended before making the ladder-clad descent to rebirth in the deep and holy recesses of Mt. Yudono (1,500 meters), a place so sacred that visitors have over the centuries been prohibited from talking about what they see and hear in it after going home. Though each of the three mountains has its own gods, all can be worshipped at the Gosaiden Shrine on the peak of Mt. Haguro, accessed via a 2,446-step stone stairway through a fragrant old forest of towering cedar trees.

Back to Tsuruoka, the Shonai area's rich natural endowment of seashores, mountains and plains, makes this old castle town an especially wonderful place to visit. Its unique cultural traditions and properties, including historical buildings and castle remnants date back to the Edo Period (1603-1867). Within the city, Tsuruoka Park occupies the former site of the castle, in which the Sakai family, rulers of the Shonai fief, lived for about 250 years from the early 17th century. The castle moats and stone walls remain amidst groves of old cedars within the park. The park is also the prefecture's most beautiful place for

viewing cherry blossoms, which adorn some 800 trees in the spring. In it, a visit may also be made to the Taihokan Museum, dedicated to historical personages of the Shonai region.



Taihokan Museum

Another of the city's unique features is the Tsuruoka Catholic Cathedral, which was built in 1903 with assets donated by the French missionary, Father Dalibert. This 23.7 meter high cathedral is renowned for its exquisite Meiji-Romanesque architectural style, its beautiful stained glass windows, and its rare black statue of the Virgin Mary. Yet another place of interest is the Chido Museum, in which historical structures have been transferred and rebuilt and over 5,000 cultural artifacts are exhibited. The premises are designed in such a way as to allow the visitor to experience the traditional lifestyle of people in the Shonai region.

During the year, many colorful events are held in the city, including a flower festival on 15 July, a fire-burning ritual that culminates a

week-long *yamabushi* pilgrimage through the sacred mountains on 31 August, and a purification torch-light festival on new year's eve, all held atop Mt. Haguro. While in Tsuruoka to participate in its exciting events, enjoy its cultural traditions, or to go walking in its sacred mountains, be sure not to miss the chance to partake of its tasty local cuisine, such as *moso* bamboo-shoot soup, Shonai melons, grown on sand dunes, and its indigenous *dadacha* beans.



Tsuruoka Catholic Cathedral





Cover photo:

Country house and igloos

Built for a Shinto winter festival in Akita Prefecture, these igloos are also used by children to play house.

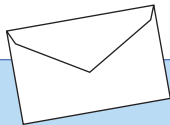
About JSPS

The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) operates as an independent administrative institution to perform the following main functions: fund scientific research, foster researchers, promote international scientific exchange, and advance university reform.



Crowing Rooster, Emblem of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

From days of old in Japan, it has been the belief that the vigorous cry of the rooster in the gray of the morning augurs the coming of a new and bright day. As the crowing rooster can therefore be thought of as a harbinger of the kind of new knowledge that promises a brilliant future for humankind, it was chosen as the emblem of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. This emblem was designed in 1938 by Professor Sanzo Wada of Tokyo Fine Arts School to depict the rooster that symbolizes the breaking dawn in a verse composed by Emperor Showa.



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