

Report of the Kick-Off Meeting for the Asia-Africa Science Platform Program at Misasa

6-7 October 2005

Institute for Study of the Earth's Interior,
Okayama University, Misasa, Japan

The Asia-Africa Science Platform Program

This program (AASPP) is designed by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) to create high potential research hubs in selected fields within the African region, while fostering the next generation of leading researchers. It does this by establishing sustainable collaborative relations among core universities and research institutes in Japan and some African countries. Under the program, these "core institutions" will collaborate in research fields of special importance or significance to Africa and that is deemed to be of high priority within Japan.

A proposal to AASPP by the Institute for Study of the Earth's Interior, Okayama University at Misasa (ISEI) has been accepted by JSPS under the subject "**Geochemistry of the Lake Nyos gas disaster, Cameroon Volcanic Line-Rift Valley volcanoes and the underlying mantle**" for the period from September 2005 to March 2008, with **Cameroon, Ethiopia and Tanzania** as the counterpart countries. We call our program as AASPP-Misasa.

Kick-off Meeting

Coordinators and sub-coordinators from Cameroon, Ethiopia and Tanzania were invited to ISEI, Okayama University at Misasa for the Kick-Off meeting for this program. The meeting was organized and chaired by M Kusakabe (ISEI, chief coordinator of the program) on 6-7 October 2005 at ISEI. They were from IRGM (Cameroon), Mekelle University (Ethiopia), and University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania). E. Nakamura, T. Moriguti and K. Kobayashi (all from ISEI, Japan) also participated.

Conclusions

Discussion was focused on the specific research subjects to be pursued under AASPP that need to be consistent with the work plans submitted to JSPS. The following research subjects were proposed. They were; 1. Geochemical study of Lakes Nyos and Monoun, Cameroon, 2. Geochemical study of the Cameroon Volcanic Line volcanoes and the underlying mantle, 3. Geochemical study on the mantle-derived xenoliths from Ethiopian Plateau, and 4. Evolution of rift-zone, upper mantle and continental crust in Tanzania. These subjects were accepted by the participants.

The major goals of AASPP are to create high potential research hubs in selected fields within the Asian and African regions, while fostering the next generation of leading researchers, and to establish sustainable collaborative relations between universities and research institutes in Japan and those in Asian and African countries. To achieve the goals the participants agreed with the basic guidelines that follow;

1. The AASPP scholarship should be divided into 3 countries,
2. The AASPP scholarship should be used to foster young and motivated scientists/ students,
3. Persons who are selected during the kick-off meeting can stay in Misasa for 2-2.5 years and should achieve the goals given in the work plan approved by JSPS.

Following the guidelines, potential young scientists including students were nominated by the coordinators of Cameroon, Ethiopia and Tanzania. After discussion on their scientific capability with evaluation of their research proposals, the participants agreed to select the following persons.

Cameroon: A young, motivated researcher working for the Institute of Research for Geology and Mining (IRGM). This person will be responsible for the geochemical study of Lakes Nyos and Monoun, Cameroon.

Ethiopia: A young, motivated researcher working for Mekelle University. He will be responsible for the geochemical study on the mantle-derived xenoliths from Ethiopian Plateau.

Tanzania: A young, motivated researcher working for University of Dar es Salaam. He will be responsible for the geochemical study on evolution of rift-zone, upper mantle and continental crust in Tanzania.

Chief coordinator of the program will officially inform all coordinators of the decision reached by the kick-off meeting participants, and will start taking action to invite the above mentioned persons as soon as possible.

12 October 2005

Minoru Kusakabe

Chief coordinator of AASPP at Misasa