

Towards Ensuring Sustainability of Marine Resources in The Kuroshio Region

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I am pleased to convey my heartfelt felicitations on the success of the 9th International Symposium on Kuroshio Science held from November 17 – 20, 2015 in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. I wish to thank the Kochi University (KU) for the kind invitation and likewise express my sincere commendation to the National Sun Yat-sen University for the hard work and commitment as this year's symposium host.

The symposium was indeed impressive as the level and multiplicity of discussions were outstanding. The conference focused on the sustainable management of biological resources in the Kuroshio Region as it highlighted scientific researches on marine plant ecology, coral science, fisheries resources and conservation mechanisms. The exchange of ideas was timely as it provided policy implications to the declining trend of our marine resources due to anthropogenic consequences and natural phenomena effects.

The coastal areas along the Kuroshio Region is known to encompass diverse ecosystems as the Kuroshio current is recognized for its unique physical and biological properties which enhances marine productivity. As the Philippines, Taiwan and Japan are within the flow of this current, it is

therefore appropriate that attention be accorded to these resources to ensure its maintenance and sustainability. The existence of Kuroshio Science Network plays a vital role in realizing this objective. The program of KU on Nurturing Talented People to Establish a Sustainable Society in the Kuroshio Region is one big step to this undertaking. The program aims to develop capacity of young researchers to study the natural and social science of Kuroshio Current area which will contribute to effective and sustainable management of resources. Remarkable results from the works of these young researchers were presented in the symposium.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) on its part is persistently true to its mandate of ensuring the rational and sustainable development, management and conservation of fisheries and aquatic resources in the Philippine waters including the Exclusive Economic Zone and adjacent seas. Through the Coastal Resources Management Program of the bureau, establishment of fish sanctuaries, artificial reefs and marine protected areas in coordination with local government units are being carried out. Strengthening of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Councils and organizing of fisherfolk associations as manpower complement in implementing coastal resource management strategies are practiced. Enactment of fishery laws including gear restrictions to prevent indiscriminate fishing is executed. Provision of alternative livelihood projects to decrease dependence on the marine resources and minimize effects of policies are undertaken. The bureau also supports and welcomes researches with primary intentions of ensuring resource sustainability.

There are still lot of things to be done but if we will work together, nothing is impossible. Therefore, at this point, in behalf of BFAR, I wish to reaffirm our commitment and coherence with the Kuroshio Science Network in its quest for realization of a sustainable Kuroshio Science Society.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!