

## Preface

### Future Perspectives on the Cross-border Network for Research and Education in Kuroshio Science

**Hiroshi Wakiguchi, M.D., Ph.D.**

President of Kochi University



It is my great pleasure to send a brief message of congratulations on the publication of Vol. 12 No. 1 of *Kuroshio Science*.

As we pursue research and education at Kochi University, we disseminate our cutting-edge research results around the world, always reflecting our commitment to our principle of ‘human coexistence with the environment’. We humans do not rule the earth. As a matter of fact we, along with the myriad of other living organisms, are nurtured by it. Alone among the species, we have developed remarkable features such as systematized language, culture and science which have enabled us to exploit our surroundings and greatly enhanced our chance of survival. But our achievements have also made us increasingly arrogant and selfish: behind our success always lurks an insatiable desire for domination which has led us to sacrifice the earth, other living beings, and even ourselves.

Throughout history, powerful nations have enslaved weaker nations. Countries that developed in the wake of the industrial revolution thrived at the expense of others, and more recently developed nations have also taken advantage of those less developed. Greater insight and understanding of this cycle might have restrained us: it might have limited the pollution of air and sea, it might have slowed deforestation, and it might have reduced the threat of global warming to so many countries around the world. But perhaps it is not too late. I trust that together we can find better solutions, and make the 21<sup>st</sup> century an age in which, at last, the more and less developed nations can share a global vision of development based on reciprocity.

The Kuroshio Current originates in the Philippines and runs northeastwards past Taiwan, Okinawa (the Ryukyus), and the east coast of Japan, acting as a uniting factor for these

countries. In the Jomon Period, the Current is believed to have carried people to Japan from Southeast Asian countries such as the Philippines. To this day, in districts here and there all over Japan, people of Southeast Asian descent are to be found. The Kuroshio Current has brought great blessings, and Kochi has enjoyed these blessings perhaps more than anywhere else.

Kuroshio-related studies have been promoted by Kochi University since the establishment of the Graduate School of Kuroshio Science in 2004. In 2016, our Faculty of Agriculture was restructured as the Faculty of Agriculture and Marine Sciences, and the Department of Marine Resource Science was also created. Moreover, in the near future, the collaboration between the Kuroshio Integrated Science Program and the Department of Marine Resource Science will allow seamless continuity from undergraduate to graduate levels. This will make Kochi University's advanced and practical marine research and education unique in Japan. Additionally, we can already foresee the benefits of unprecedented and enhanced collaboration with partners in the Philippines, Indonesia and Taiwan.

As the Japanese saying goes, ‘Ten years makes one age’. If so, we can proudly celebrate the 11th International Kuroshio Science Symposium as marking the beginning of the second age.

We may rest assured that our collaborative work on the Kuroshio Current will improve the safe, organic utilization of the world's oceans, the maintenance of environmental resources, and sustainability among maritime countries. I firmly believe that the day will come when the main theme of this symposium will truly be realized, namely a Cross-border Network for Research and Education in Kuroshio Science.

According to another-Japanese saying, ‘Perseverance engenders success’. I sincerely hope that this symposium will be held for another twenty, thirty, fifty and many more years to come, continuously disseminating the fruits of collaborative results from the institutes and universities of our respective countries in Southeast Asia, Taiwan and Japan to the rest of the world, and playing a leading role in international marine science education and research. May the Kuroshio Current long remain the bridge that links us all.