

Preface

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The Sea of Okhotsk and the northern North Pacific are one of the most productive ocean in the world. We believe that the richness of the Sea of Okhotsk is partly supported by discharge from Amur River which supplies sufficient dissolved iron to the sea. It is considered that natural environment in the Amur River basin contributes to the production of dissolved iron. The basin is, however, facing drastic changes by natural and anthropogenic causes. It is thus necessary to clarify the role of Amur River on the ocean ecosystem and propose a scheme for the future sustainable development in the Amur River basin.

We are proposing to launch a new project **AMORE**, **AM**ur river and **OK**hotsk sea **RE**search project, aiming at presentation of a guideline of sustainable land-use in the Amur River basin to maintain the present ecosystem in the Sea of Okhotsk and the northern North Pacific. We started this project from 2002 under the official title of “Human activities in northeastern Asia and their impact on the biological productivity in North Pacific ocean” as an incubation study at *Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN)* in cooperation with *The Institute of Low Temperature Science, Hokkaido University* and various specialists both from domestic and international institutions.

We know well that environmental problems are associated with natural phenomena and more importantly with economical, political, sociological, historical and philosophical factors. In this regards, the environmental problems occurring in the Amur River basin should be recognized as international as well as domestic issues in Russia, China and Mongolia. It is essential to organize international research specialists with various disciplines in solving the environmental problems in the Amur River basin. The workshop held at Kyoto gave a good opportunity in discussing the issues mentioned above. This proceeding volume will present the topics given in the Kyoto workshop.

I believe that everyone gets profit by listening to the opinions of others and exchanging ideas each other. I hope the workshop was fruitful in this regards and it gave a good start of the international project **AMORE**. I would like to thank all of the participants, especially those who come from Russia and China.