

II International Conference
The Global Education Program – Sustainability Science, Technology
and Policy, Asia (SUSTEP Asia)
March 20 (Wed) – 23 (Sat) 2013,
VNU–University of Science, Hanoi, Vietnam

The increasing demand for food, water energy, land and mobility are causing huge impact on the environment and the Asian region is not immune to this trend. Higher education and R&D are the only tools for the creation, dissemination and application of knowledge that will eventually lead us into a sustainable Asia. While societies have different challenges to overcome, the implementation of an effective framework for knowledge dissemination is the first step in this journey. In this regard The University of Tsukuba launched the Sustainability Science, Technology and Policy (SUSTEP) Initiative that will introduce an integral and innovative education system to promote human resource development in Asia. The First International Conference organized by SUSTEP in June 2012 set the foundations to promote collaborative education and research networking between Asian Universities. In the Second Meeting we discussed about the implementation of the international exchange projects: students dispatch and credit transfer agreements, the establishment of MOU among partner universities as well as potential joint research projects among partner universities

The 2nd International Conference was co-organized by Vietnam National University, University of Science-Hanoi and the University of Tsukuba. In total 8 Universities joined this International event:

Japan

- University of Tsukuba, Ibaraki

Vietnam

- University of Science, Vietnam National University of Hanoi (VNU-HUS), Hanoi
- Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HCMUT) , Ho Chi Minh City

China

- China University of Geosciences (CUG), Beijing
- Fudan University, Shanghai

Indonesia

- Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Jogjakarta

- Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), Bogor
- Taiwan
- National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU), Taipei

March 20: Welcome Ceremony

The Conference started with the Welcome Ceremony. Prof. Nguyen Van Noi, Vice President of VNU-University of Science, Hanoi (VNU-HUS), gave the welcome address followed by greetings from Prof. Michiyoshi Ae, Vice President of University of Tsukuba, Prof. Vu Dinh Thanh, President of Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HCMUT) and Prof. Misa Masuda, Chair of Master Program, Graduate School of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Tsukuba.



(Left) Welcome address by Prof. Nguyen Van Noi, Vice President of VNU-HUS

(Right) Greetings by Prof. Vu Dinh Thanh, President of HCMUT



(Left) Greetings by Prof. Michiyoshi Ae, Vice President of University of Tsukuba

(Right) President of HCMUT and Vice Presidents of VNU-HUS and University of Tsukuba

March 21: International Seminar

During the International Seminar SUSTEP Faculty gave lectures on topics related to their field of research. This seminar was very important in order to explore the possibilities of implementing joint research projects where each university could lead a Flagship Project. We had very interesting research topics related to environmental planning, technological innovations, flood management and control, ecosystem protection, etc. Each presentation was followed by discussion and comments from the audience.



(Left) Official Poster of 2nd SUSTEP International Conference

(Right) Presentation by Dr. Le Duc Minh, VNU-HUS, *"Impacts of climate change on Vietnam's biodiversity: A preliminary assessment and proposed adaptation strategies"*

March 21: Authorities Meetings

Our Vice President had very important and fruitful meetings with the Vietnamese authorities. The topics of the meetings included the international cooperation in terms of establishment of MOU, and implementation of student and faculty mobility (overseas dispatch): studies, internship and teaching activities as well as the promotion of scholarships for the best students.



(Left) Business meeting between VNU-HUS and University of Tsukuba

(Right) Business meeting between HCMUT and University of Tsukuba



(Left) Business meeting between VIED and University of Tsukuba

(Right) Business meeting between DOCE and University of Tsukuba

March 22: AM/PM Session: Business Meeting on “International Exchange Program Implementation”

Each University explained the progress achieved so far on promoting the internationalization of their institutions/programs (student/faculty overseas dispatch schemes, English courses/programs offered, credit exchange/accreditation schemes, state of MOU, etc). They also provided detailed information of their current Graduate Courses in terms of number of credits required, hours per credit, list of courses (both compulsory and elective), courses provided in English, Thesis requirements, institutional/legal barriers to promote internationalization of the programs.



(Left) Question by Prof. Cecep Kusmana, IPB

(Right) Preliminary Discussion

March 22: International Workshop

Current students and former Graduates from University of Tsukuba talked about their research activities as well as their experience as international students. In addition Dr. Vo Le Phu from HCMUT gave as summary of his experience as an invited researcher at the University of Tsukuba in the period November 2012-January 2013.



(Left) Presentation by Prof. Vo Le Phu, HCMUT, *"My Experience as an invited Professor at the University of Tsukuba"*

(Right) Presentation by Ms. Nguyen Thi Thuy Phuong, Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry (HUAF), *"Studying Abroad Two Years One Way – A look back"*



(Left) Presentation by Ms. Dang Nguyet Anh, JDS Fellow, *"JDS- a pathway to Success"*

(Right) Presentation by Ms. Ann Minami Ikuta, University of Tsukuba, *"Exchange Program in Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia"*



(Left) Presentation by Ms. Dinh Thu Hang, VIED Fellow, *"Study in International Environment at University of Tsukuba"*

(Right) Current and former JDS fellow and Alumni

March 23: Business Meeting (Wrap up Session: Promoting Mobility of University Students and Faculty).

In this session the discussion was centered on:

- Situation regarding the MOU among partner Universities: analysis of barriers and conditions of each partner
- The English courses already available or to be launched in the near future by partner universities
- Administrative issues: entrance examinations, academic calendars, types of degree
- Evaluation: number of compulsory/elective credits (hours/credit), evaluation grades, pre-requisites to obtain the degree

After the discussion we clarified the following points

1. The Establishment of MOU among universities that don't have agreements yet is the key to implement students mobility. We found out that there are still some problems even after establishing the MOU between Universities:
 - a. HCMUT expects it would be better to establish MOU with the University of Technology and not with VNU-HCM.
 - b. IPB and UGM needs additional documents: MOA between Deans and Complete Plan related to Double Degree Program (as for minute matters such as credit transfer)

2. Implementation of Student and faculty mobility (overseas dispatch): studies, internship and teaching activities is the first and most important step to establish the SUSTEP program. In this specific aspect we found out some challenges:
 - a. Some Universities haven't established yet English Courses in their Graduate Programs
 - b. Other universities have already established English courses but the number of registered students is very low
3. Implementation of Credit transfer and accreditation, courses validation, and grades standardization
 - a. As a first step we may need to start with a system where each university provides compulsory courses and the elective courses (up to a maximum of credits) can be taken in partner universities. After completing the credits the student will submit his/her thesis at the home university
 - b. In this case we need to establish a credit exchange and accreditation system followed by standardization of evaluation grades

We decided to establish a “Pool of English Courses”. Under this system each university offers the compulsory courses while the “elective courses” up to maximum of credits (depending on university regulations) can be taken and accredited by SUSTEP members

Finally we decided to hold the 3rd SUSTEP International Conference in Shanghai under the organization of Fudan University.



(Left) Wrap up discussion and final agreement

(Right) 2nd SUSTEP Meeting Participants