

Expert Meeting on Technical Matters regarding the Outer Continental Shelf
(March 8th and 9th, 2006)

The Ocean Policy Research Foundation (OPRF) is implementing a project, “Support for delineation of the Outer Continental Shelf” that is financially supported by the Nippon Foundation from the proceeds of motorboat racing. As one of the project activities, the OPRF will co-host the Expert Meeting on Technical Matters regarding the Outer Continental Shelf (ETCS 2006) in cooperation with Japan Coast Guard.

According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) that entered into force in 1994, the continental shelf is the sea-bed and subsoil of the submarine area where a coastal State may exercise sovereign rights of exploring and exploiting natural resources. A coastal State may extend the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles throughout natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin. A coastal State shall submit the geological and morphological data of its maritime area as well as the relevant neighboring area to the Commission on the Limits of Continental Shelf (CLCS) established in accordance with UNCLOS, and may establish the outer limits of the continental shelf on the basis of the recommendations made by CLCS.

While the texts of UNCLOS briefly stipulate the conditions of the natural prolongation of the land territory of a coastal State, the morphological and geological features of sea floor are actually very complex. It is therefore not easy for a coastal State to demonstrate the natural prolongation to CLCS. We however recognize the deadline for submission to CLCS is coming up for many coastal States, that is, May 2009.

At this opportunity, our Foundation decided to co-host the ETCS 2006 in cooperation with Japan Coast Guard so as that various experts from Asian Pacific countries, European and American countries and an international organization discuss the continental shelf issues, and Asian Pacific countries may get some help for their preparation submitting to CLCS.

Details of the Meeting

1. The title of the Meeting

Expert Meeting on Technical Matters regarding the Outer Continental Shelf

2. Dates

March 8th and 9th, 2006

* Second day (March 9th) will be closed to the public.

3. Place

Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department, Japan Coast Guard (JHOD)

5-3-1 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, 104-0045 Japan

* You can find the information how to get the JHOD building at the following website.

<http://www1.kaiho.mlit.go.jp/jhd-E.html>

4. Organizers of the Meeting

Japan Coast Guard, Ocean Policy Research Foundation

5. Supporters of the Meeting

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (tbc), The Nippon Foundation

6. Language of the Meeting

English (No simultaneous interpretation between English and Japanese will be provided.)

7. Registration fee

No fee will be charged.

8. Experts to participate in the Meeting

- Experts from Asian Pacific countries (Fiji Islands, Indonesia, Maldives, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Secretariat of SOPAC (South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission))
- Experts from European and American countries (Australia, United Kingdom and United States)
- Expert from an international organization (UNEP/GRID-Arendal)

9. Tentative programme

First Day (March 8th)

0945-1015 Opening Ceremony

 Welcome remarks

1015-1650 Lectures on the desktop study for extending the outer limits of the continental shelf

- 1015-1130 Outline of the desktop study for extending the continental shelf
Dr. Lindsay Parson (National Oceanography Center, University of
Southampton, UK)
- 1130-1230 Example of the desktop study assistance by UNEP/Grid-Arendal
for developing countries Experts from UNEP/Grid-Arendal (tbc)
- 1230-1345 Lunch
- 1345-1500 The desktop study by the United States
Professor Larry Mayer (Center for Coastal and Ocean Mapping,
University of New Hampshire, USA)
- 1520-1650 The Desktop study by Australia
Dr. Mark Alcock (Geoscience Australia)

Second Day (March 9th)

Desktop study by using GMT software (closed session)

10. Registration and Inquiry

You can find the information on the registration of the Meeting at the following website of JHOD.

<http://www1.kaiho.mlit.go.jp/jhd-E.html>

(At this page, you can find “Expert Meeting on Technical Matters regarding the Outer Continental Shelf” in the “NEWS” items.)

11. Other Relevant International Symposium

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the United Nations University will co-host “International Symposium on Scientific and Technical Aspects on the Establishment of the Outer Limits of the Continental Shelf beyond 200 Nautical Miles” on March 6th and 7th at the United Nations University, Tokyo. You can find the detailed information at the following website.

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/bulletin/index.html>