

EAMA FUTURE AND WG'S

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ABSTRACT

This is to summarize a joint discussion on the future of EAMA in EAMA6. The emphasis was placed on the near future instead of the distant future. Formation of the Working Groups as a means to carry the cooperation for the regions was generally agreed by the attendants of EAMA6 to be the best way toward the establishment of future East Asian Observatory (EAO). Association of Core Observatories (ACO) was proposed to bring resources and foster joint projects for EAMA activities.

Key words : Working Groups (WG), Association of Core Observatories (ACO)

I. INTRODUCTION

The astronomers of East Asia regions met in Seoul National University, October, 2004, for the 6th East Asian Meeting of Astronomy (EAMA6). While participants enjoyed the scientific presentations and exchange of ideas during the 5-day meeting, they all felt more compelling than ever the need of a strong local organization behind them to cope with today's fast-growing astrophysical community and breath-taking developments of astrophysical science. When EAMA1 met in China 1990, the common goal was to find a site for "Pan Asian Observatory" (See Kaifu's excellent article of the past and future of EAMA in this issue). While that goal remains to be the hope of East Asian regions, astronomers in the region gradually realize the importance of an organization to implement the goal. This was how the Core Group (CG) was formed in EAMA5 in Taipei and the Working Groups (WG), the Coordination Working Group (CWG) and the Association of Core Observatories (ACO) were proposed and formed in EAMA6.

In this report I will try to define the role and the goal of these newly formed groups. Much of the contents can be found in Kaifu's article in this issue. It is my hope that my report in some sense could complement his. In section 2, I describe CG, CWG, and ACO. The rest of the WG's are discussed in section 3. Section 4 reports the plan for the EAMA website.

II. CG, CWG and ACO

The Core Group (CG) was one of the outcomes of EAMA5 (2001). The purpose was to set a group to coordinate EAMA activities. Each of the four regions, namely, China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan, sends two

representatives to form the CG, and the group members elects a chair of core group. The CG would keep in touch constantly and meet once a year. For the record, the CG members were Gang Zhao, Ji Yang (China), Norio Kaifu, Shuji Sato (Japan), Young-Ik Minn, Se Hyung Cho (Korea) and Chi Yuan, Wen-Ping Chen (Taiwan). Norio Kaifu was the chair. The CG met in Beijing 2002 and outlined some tasks. The most notable function of the CG was to support the EAMA Young Astronomers Meeting in Yang-Ming Shan, in Taipei (2003). The CG was formally dissolved in EAMA6.

During EAMA6, the concept of Working Groups emerged during the SOC meetings and was adopted by general consensus in one of the organization sessions of EAMA6. The role and task of the various WG are given in the next section. However, one WG with a different nature is described here. This is the Coordination Working Group (CWG). It assumes the same role of the previous CG, taking care of the overall direction and coordination of EAMA activities. Again each of the four regions will have two representatives to form a Steering Committee to run CWG business.

The idea of Association of Core Observatories (ACO) was also proposed during EAMA6. This is because the CWG may not have the resource to promote EAMA activities. Without the backing of the major observatories, many practical problems for the proposed cooperations and projects cannot be solved. For instance, to sponsor a symposium, one needs an observatory or institute to submit the application to the relevant agencies for funding. The major observatory also has the human resource and other kinds of resource to run the symposium. Another example would be telescope time sharing. ACO can help EAMA joint projects get the necessary observing time, if those projects are adopted by CWG and acknowledged by ACO. EAMA6 gave the go-ahead to form ACO. The members of ACO are NAOC, NAOJ, KASI (Korea Astronomy and

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Space-Science Institute, formerly known as KAO), and ASIAA. Gang Zhao (Deputy Director of NAOC), Norio Kaifu (Director general of NAOJ), Se Hyung Cho (Director of KASI), and Sun kwok (Director of ASIAA) will form the board of ACO. ACO board will meet once a year.

III. WORKING GROUPS (WG)

Seven working groups are established during the EAMA6 meeting, beside of CWG. Most of them were in existence prior to EAMA6. I will give a brief description for each here.

VLBI: The purpose of this WG is to bring all major radio telescopes in East Asia to form a sizable network, "The East Asia VLBI Consortium". Such a consortium has existed between Japan and Korea. It is now to include China. There is a standing committee, of which Dr. Makoto Inonue is the chair. Members include Se Hyung Cho of KASI, Zi-Qiang Shen of Shanghai Observatory, and Ji Yang of Purple Mountain Observatory.

2-m Class Telescopes: The effort is led by Dr. Michitoshi Yoshida of Okayama Astrophysical Observatory (OAO), who invites applications from the regions to share their new instruments on the 188cm telescope. In the meantime, he proposed to exchange observation times with other 2-m class telescopes in East Asia. Dr. Yoshida, who has already initiated the task, will chair the WG.

EAO: This WG is aimed at implementing our ultimate goal to establish an East Asia Observatory. Dr. Norio Kaifu will coordinate the WG.

ALMA: Japan has formally joined ALMA, with a contribution equal to those of North America and ESO. Taiwan is in the process of joining ALMA through Japan. China also expresses interest in joining Japan. Thus, East Asia will likely participate in ALMA as one group, like its counterparts in North America and Europe. In order to strengthen the cooperation, ALMA WG is formed to coordinate the joint efforts. Dr. Masato Ishiguro of NAO will chair the WG.

IR Telescope: Dr. Shuji Sato of Nagoya University and Dr. Yongqiang Yao of NAOC have worked together to promote the construction of an IR telescope of medium size (2-3 meters) in the western parts of China. A site survey in Tibet for such a purpose was carried out by Dr. Yao, who will also coordinate the WG.

East Asian Journal for Astrophysics: Dr. Hyung Mok Lee will put together a WG to look into the feasibility of such an endeavor. He has already begun the process prior to EAMA6. The scope will be beyond just the East Asia. Countries like India and Australia have expressed interest in joining the effort. Dr. Lee who chairs the WG has proposed a meeting among all parties in Spring, 2005.

East Asian Young Astronomers Meeting (EAYAM): This will be a followup of the successful

meeting in Taiwan 2003 and to make it a regular meeting among the young people in the region. Dr. Jeremy Lim Of ASIAA will chair the WG, with the help from Kinoshita Daisuke of National Central University in Taiwan.

IV. EAMA WEBSITE

EAMA has no official website. An informal one was set up temporarily after EAMA5, to display the talks contributed by the EAMA5 participants. Most of the articles are in power-point format, but only a fraction of the EAMA5 presentations were actually submitted. SOC of EAMA6 recognized the importance of the EAMA website. A formal motion was raised and adopted in one of the organization session. It is agreed that EAMA website should be established and the website should be handed to the institute which will host the next EAMA. The transition should take place right after the closing of the previous EAMA. Since there was no official EAMA website at this moment, the next host of EAMA, NAOJ, will assume the responsibility to set up the website. However, as ASIAA still maintain the EAMA5 presentations, it was agreed that ASIAA will make copies of the EAMA5 power-point files and distribute them to the members of the CWG. It was suggested 20 copies per region, or 10 copies per member. The members will see to it that copies be distributed to relevant institutes or persons within their respective regions.

V. CONCLUSION

As you can see, this report hardly addresses the scope and format of the distant future of EAMA. It simply re-iterates the desire of East Asian countries to have an organization, tentatively called EAO, parallel to that of ESO. However, for the near future, EAMA6 has laid out an extensive plan: (1) with Coordination Working Group, armed with Association of Core Observatories, to coordinate and implement EAMA activities, (2) with individual Working Groups to carry out various cooperations and joint projects, and (3) with the establishment of the EAMA website to post activities and to serve as a forum for members, on a day-to-day basis. NAOJ has graciously agreed to host EAMA7 in 2007. We look forward to witnessing the great progress in the development of astrophysical science in our regions as we did in EAMA6.

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REFERENCES

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