

---

**Miscellaneous Article**

---

## **AABE – Sixty Years On**

**Nobuyasu KATAYAMA**

*Tokyo Institute of Biology Education, Japan*

katayama@u-gakugei.ac.jp

(Received for publication: 2 October 2023)

### **PREFACE**

In 2026, the Asian Association for Biology Education (AABE) will reach its sixtieth year. At this occasion, I would like to present an overview of AABE's goals and its achievements.

### **WHAT IS AABE?**

The AABE is an academic organization of biology educators, biology researchers and those interested in biology education mainly in the Asian Region. It was established in 1966 by joining many leading biology teachers, educators and researchers among Asian countries. It is a non-profit organization whose secretariat has continuously been located in Manila, Philippines (The first Secretary was Dr. Dolores F. Hernandez, the second was Dr. Carmen G. Kanapi, the third was Dr. Lucille C. Gregorio, and the fourth = present = is Dr. Jessamyn M. O. Yazon). Its current members are university academic staff, school teachers, education research personnel, administrators and others, including retirees, who are keen to exchange ideas on biology education.

### **WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF AABE?**

According to its Constitutions and Rules (see Websites list), the aims of AABE are as follows:

- (1) To improve the teaching of and promote research in biology, in Asian countries;
- (2) To bring together biology teachers and educa-

tors of Asian countries at meetings held biennially;

- (3) To establish an agency in Asia to serve as a center for the exchange of teaching materials, journals and research papers, specialists and teachers in biological science, and to open channels of communication between this agency and agencies in different countries doing similar work;
- (4) To promote the creation of biological science teaching and research centers in each Asian country.

### **WHAT HAS AABE DONE AND WHAT IS AABE DOING?**

#### ***Biennial Conference***

In 1966, the first conference of the association was held in Manila. After that until 2018, the AABE held its conferences in the even-numbered years biennially at cities mostly in Asian countries (Table 1, at the end of this paper).

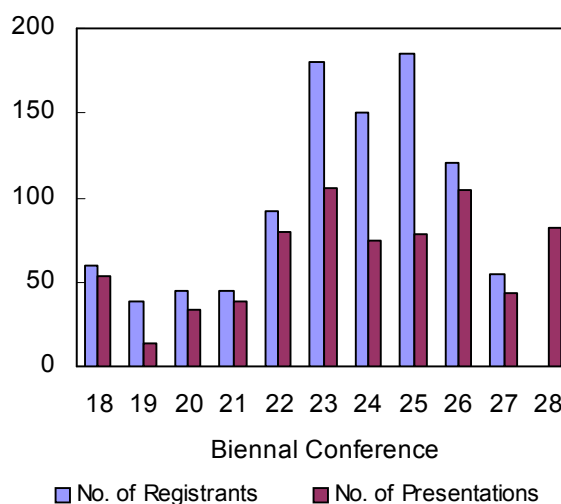
At the first, the conference was named as the "Asian Regional Conference on School Biology." This name was used until the third conference and renamed as the "Asian Regional Conference in Biology Education." From the seventh conference onward, it has been simply called the "Biennial Conference." The 28th Biennial Conference was firstly planned to be held in 2020 at Tianjin, China, however, it was postponed because of the COVID19 pandemic and was held online in April,

2022, managed by Philippines members. The 29th conference will be held onsite at Matsuyama City, Japan, in October, 2024. These conferences are usually structured to enable presentations which relate to one or a few specific themes. At each conference, some keynote lectures and some country reports are given. Also, oral or poster presentations of general research reports are invited.

Figure 1 shows the number of registrants and of presentations in each biennial conference held at or after 2000. As the 28th conference was held online, the number of registrations is uncertain (but the number of online audience was more than 350). The number of registrants decreased from the 18th to the 21st conferences but increased from the 22nd to the 26th conferences. The number of presentations has changed in parallel with the number of registrants.

Some photos of biennial conferences are shown in Figures 2 – 9. A group photo of attendees

of each biennial conference from the 23rd onwards has been included in the conference report in the Asian Journal of Biology Education (see References list).



**Figure 1: The Number of Registrants and of Presentations in Each Biennial Conference Held at or after 2000**



**Figure 2 (left): Some Attendees of the 10th AABE Biennial Conference Returning from the Educational Tour (Chiang Mai, December 1984)**



**Figure 3 (right): Attendees of the 11th AABE Biennial Conference (Quezon City, December 1986)**



**Figure 4: At the 12th AABE Biennial Conference (New Delhi, December 1988)**





*Figure 5: At the 13th AABE Biennial Conference (Seoul, August 1990)*



*Figure 6: Attendees of the 15th AABE Biennial Conference (Tokyo, August 1994)*



*Figure 7 (left): At the 16th AABE Biennial Conference (Chiang Mai, December 1996)*



*Figure 8 (right): At the 19th AABE Biennial Conference (Warrnambool, November 2002)*



*Figure 9: Attendees of the 22nd AABE Biennial Conference (Osaka, November 2008)*

**Publication of the Proceedings of each Conference**

A book of the proceedings of each Biennial Conference (Figure 10) was published until 1998.

A table of contents of each proceedings has been reprinted in the 10th volume of Asian Journal of Biology Education (see References list).



**Figure 10: Front covers of the Proceedings of AABE Biennial Conferences (From 1st to 17th)**

### ***Publication of an Academic Online Journal***

In 2002, the publication of an online journal (Asian Journal of Biology Education or abbreviated as AJBE) was started instead of publishing printed Proceedings. At first, the journal was published on a website in the server of Deakin University, Australia. Professor Robert Wallis and Dr. Laurie Laurenson at the university established the site of the AJBE publication. In 2011, the website was moved to the present URL\*. So far, 14 volumes of the journal have been published. The abstracts of papers presented at each conference together with a conference report were included in the journal (see References list). There are six categories of articles in AJBE, namely, reviews, research papers/research notes, practical reports/practical notes, biological resources, country reports, and other articles. Table 2 shows the number of articles of each category in each volume of AJBE. At the beginning, only research papers and some other articles were refereed, but

from the volume four onward all manuscripts except those of country report have been refereed. (Some country reports published on AJBE were refereed on request). So, the number of published articles in volume four and subsequent volumes is smaller than that in previous ones. In 2022, the journal has registered at J-stage, one of the information of research paper retrieval online sites.

\* <http://www.aabe.sakura.ne.jp/Journal.htm>

### ***Publication of a Newsletter***

Until 2000, the AABE had published 10 newsletters. However, as the Internet became popular, it was decided there was no need for a newsletter. Thus, at present, all news and announcements are published on the AABE website or sent to each member by email.

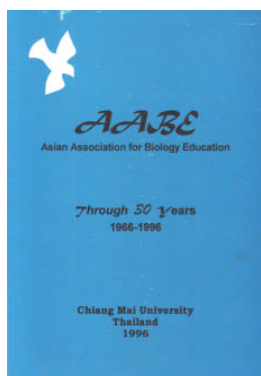
### ***Other***

The AABE published a booklet (Figure 11) at an opportunity of its 30th anniversary to survey its past activities.

***Table 2: The Number of Articles Published on Each Volume of AJBE:***

Volume	Number of Articles	Research Papers/ Research Notes	Practical Reports/ Practical Notes	Biological Resources	Country Reports	Others
1	9	8				1*
2	10	8	1*			1**
3	10	3	1*	6		
4	5	2	2		1	
5	4	2	1		1	
6	2	2				
7	3	2	1 <sup>N</sup>			
8	1	1				
9	1	1				
10	2		1		1	
11	4	1 <sup>N</sup>		1	2*	
12	3			3		
13	4		2 + 1 <sup>N</sup>	1		
14	3		1 <sup>N</sup>		1 + 1*	

<sup>N</sup>: Research Note or Practical Note; \*: Un-refereed article; \*\*: Invited article



**Figure 11: The commemorative booklet for AABE 30th Anniversary published in 1996**

## PERSPECTIVE ON ACTIVITIES OF THE AABE

For the last several decades, biological research has made remarkable progress. This makes us review the study contents of biology and biology curriculum frequently. The biennial conference of the AABE is a good opportunity for us to exchange information, ideas, teaching materials, etc. I keenly hope the activity of AABE will be continued and enhanced more in this millennium.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very much grateful to Professor Robert Wallis at Federation University, Australia, for his useful suggestions and critical comments to complete this manuscript.

## REFERENCES

Anon. (2004) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 19th Biennial Conference of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **2**: 6-93.  
 Anon. (2007) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 20th Biennial Conference of the AABE.

## WEBSITES

Asian Association for Biology Education: <http://www.aabe-asia.org/> / <http://www.aabe.sakura.ne.jp/>

*Asian Journal of Biology Education* **3**: 5-92.  
 Anon. (2010) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 21st Biennial Conference of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **4**: 3-54.  
 Anon. (2010) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 22nd Biennial Conference of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **4**: 5-94.  
 Anon. (2011) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 18th Biennial Conference of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **5**: 3-57.  
 Anon. (2012) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 23rd Biennial Conference of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **6**: 6-77.  
 Anon. (2013) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 24th Biennial Conference of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **7**: 1-63.  
 Anon. (2015) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 25th Biennial Conference of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **8**: 7-53.  
 Anon. (2016) Abstracts of the papers presented at the 26th Biennial Conference of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **9**: 11-77.  
 Anon. (2018) Contents of the Proceedings of past biennial conferences of the AABE. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **10**: 17-39.  
 Anon. (2019) Report of the 27th Biennial Conference of the AABE and abstracts of the papers presented at the conference. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **11**: 25-45.  
 Anon. (2022) Conference report of the 28th Biennial Conference of the AABE and abstracts of the papers presented at the conference. *Asian Journal of Biology Education* **14**: 21-61.

**Table 1: A List of Biennial Conferences of the Asian Association for Biology Education**

	Date	City (Country)	Director and Convener	Conference Theme(s)	No. of Registrants [No. of Countries]
1	Dec. 1966	Manila (Philippines)	Liceria B. Soriano Dolores F. Hernandez	School Biology in Asia: A New Orientation	100 [14]
2	August 1968	Tokyo (Japan)	Yoshito Shinoto Kazuhiko Nakayama	Enrichment of School Biology: Content and Techniques	107 [15]
3	Dec. 1970	Manila (Philippines)	Hilary Cruz Dolores F. Hernandez	The Utilization of Investigative Research Projects in School Biology Teaching: Reflect the Peculiarities of the Region	45 [13]
4	Dec. 1972	Jerusalem (Israel)	Alexandra Poljakoff-Mayber R. Bitman	1. Evaluation in Science Education 2. The Uses of Educational Technology in Science Education	101 [15]
5	June 1974	Singapore	Wee Heng Tin John Yip	Biology Education for Rural and Urban Areas in Asia	116 [9]
6	July-Aug. 1976	Bangkok (Thailand)	Twee Hormchong Sanga Sappasri	Preparation of Teachers for Biology Teaching	101 [13]
7	Dec. 1978	Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia)	Cheong Siew Yoong S. Kanagasabai	Multidisciplinary Biology Education Relevant to Community Development	157 [12]
8	Oct.-Nov. 1980	Osaka & Gifu (Japan)	Kozo Imahori Yutaka Koshida	Biology Education for the Next Decade - Linking Biology to Social Studies - Using Living Organisms for Field Study and Laboratory Work	80 [21]
9	Dec. 1982	Melbourne (Australia)	David M. Stakes Robert L. Wallis	The Role of Biology Education in Enhancing the Quality of Life	39 [6]
10	Dec. 1984	Chiang Mai (Thailand)	Panee Chiowanich Morakot Sukchotiratana	Biology Education and Technology	50 [5]
11	Dec. 1986	Quezon City (Philippines)	Dolores F. Hernandez Vincenta F. Reyes	Research and Evaluation in Biology Education and Its Implication for the Teachers	120 [12]
12	Dec. 1988	New Delhi (India)	R. K. Mohta B. G. Pitre	Explosion of Biological Knowledge and the Challenges for Secondary Education and Teacher Preparation	21 [5]
13	August 1990	Seoul (Korea)	Yong Jai Chung Yung Chil Hah	Environmental Education in the Curriculum of Biological Education	Ca.65 [7]
14	Dec. 1992	Melbourne (Australia)	Robert L. Wallis Peter Brown	Environmental management in Asia	53 [7]
15	August 1994	Tokyo (Japan)	Yutaka Koshida Hideo Kitano	Biology Education for Non-biology Majors	107 [7]
16	Dec. 1996	Chiang Mai (Thailand)	Morakot Sukchotiratana	Excellence in Biology Education: Research, Practice and Experience	ca.120 [10]
17	Dec. 1998	Pasai City (Philippines)	Carmen G. Kanapi Salvasion P. Angtuaco	Biology Education in the Third Millennium: Focus on Information Technology and Environmental Education	ca.150 [6]
18	August 2000	Hong Kong	Park L. Tang	Biology Education in the New Millennium	ca 60 [9]
19	Nov. 2002	Warnambool (Australia)	Robert L. Wallis	Ecological Sustainable Development in Education	38 [6]
20	Dec. 2004	Chiang Mai (Thailand)	Morakot Sukchotiratana	Roles of Modern Technologies in Biology Education	ca.45[4]
21	Oct. 2006	Gongju (Korea)	Kyoung Ho Kim Kew Cheol Shim	Biology Education through Field Excursion: Bird Watching Recent Trends in Biology Education	ca.45[4]
22	Oct. 2008	Osaka (Japan)	Nobuyasu Katayama Koichi Morimoto	The Role of Biology Education in Society Today Biology Education for Realizing the Preciousness of Life Biology Education in "The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development"	92 [8]
23	Oct. 2010	Singapore	C H Diong Mijung Kim	Biology Education for Social and Sustainable Development	180 [17]
24	Dec. 2012	Quezon City (Philippines)	Rosie S. Madulid Jessamyn M. O. Yazon	The Century of Biology: Towards Transformative Education	ca.150 [10]
25	Oct. 2014	Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia)	Esther G. S. A. Daniel Carolina Lopez	Biology Education and Research in a Changing Planet	185[10]

26	Sept. 2016	Goa (India)	Narendra D. Deshmukh Sahas J. Godse	Trends in Biology Education & Research: Practices & Challenges	120[4]
27	Nov.-Dec. 2018	Bangkok (Thailand)	Churdchai Cheowtirakul Tatsaporn Todhanakasem	Biology Education for Future Asia	55[8]
28	April 2022	Online (Philippines)	(A joint conference with BIOTA-Philippines)	Biology Research and Education: Recalibrating under the New Normal	Unclear*
29	October 2024	Matsuyama (Japan)	Kiyoyuki Ohshika Heiwa Moko	Perspectives for Global Well-being: Biology Education in the Integrated Learning	

\* The number of online audience was more than 350.