



## Bridging Generations: Sasakawa Fellows Unite at the WMU for a Global Maritime Future



**José Miguel Jaramillo Mendoza**  
(Ecuador, 2024)

Once again, the World Maritime University had the privilege of hosting the Sasakawa Fellows Orientation Gathering for the Class of 2025. The distinguished guests included Mr. Eisuke Kudo, Ms. Reiko Naito, and Ms. Emi Shimada from the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. One of the representative members of the Class of 2024, Jasmine Deneen Bellini, was served as the master of ceremony. She did an excellent job integrating the outgoing and incoming classes throughout the afternoon.

The scholarship recipients of the Class of 2025 are composed of 30 students from 30 different countries.

Ms. Emi Shimada presented a general overview of what the Sasakawa Peace Foundation does and its relationship with The Nippon Foundation. The presentation covered the upcoming events

for the Class of 2025 as Sasakawa Fellows. The students are, with great emotion, waiting for their trip to Japan in May of next year.

Among the most important topics discussed was enhancing the Sasakawa Fellows' network. Many students provided ideas to achieve this.

It was highlighted that the SPF is planning on holding the Sixth Regional Meeting. The chosen region is Latin America. This will be a unique opportunity for the newest Sasakawa Fellows to interact with older generations and strengthen relationships to continue the work of the foundation in the maritime sector of our respective countries.

Also, one student in each specialization from the Class of 2024, presented a quick overview of what the new students will face in the second part of their academic journey.

Ryo Hiwatashi (Japan) from Maritime Education & Training (MET) highlighted the importance of training and its link with all the other specializations. As there are no Maritime Energy Management (MEM) students among the Sasakawa Fellowship Students in the Class of 2024, Chiedozie Enyoka Njoku (Nigeria) from MEM kindly



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delivered the presentation. He talked about how they can become problem solvers because they deal with technical aspects within the industry, such as energy production. Tanapit Petchmunee (Thailand) from Maritime Law & Policy (MLP) explained that the new students will be able to fully understand the process of developing a convention and interact with a vast number of experts on the legal side of the industry. Nadarajan Perumal (Malaysia) from Maritime Safety & Environmental Administration (MSEA) talked about the different classes and how they complement each other to enhance the knowledge acquired and get a greater picture of safety in the industry. Peter Tamarakro Orubebe (Nigeria) from Ocean Sustainability, Governance & Management (OSGM) highlighted the importance of taking an ecosystem-based approach to sustainable ocean governance. He also emphasized the necessity to learn negotiation skills for diplomacy purposes. Da Ly (Cambodia) from Port Management (PM) and Md. Rasel Pradania (Bangladesh) from Shipping Management & Logistics (SML) talked about how their specializations related to each other in various topics such as port operation and the economic aspect of shipping, which finally led to knowing the relationship between business and policy to make the best decision for the industry.

After the presentation, the students were joined by some of the WMU staff in a warm reception at the World Bistro where the President, Dr. Maximo Q. Mejia, Jr. made a toast to the health of Dr. Yohei Sasakawa and the new adventures to

come for the Class of 2025.

Mr. Kudo presented awards for the best pictures during the Japan trip for the students from the Class of 2024. The students received traditional toys and sweets from Japan, each with unique meanings and purposes.

The evening concluded with closing remarks by the representatives from the Class of 2025, Supranee Wattanapongsakul (Thailand) and the Class of 2024, José Miguel Jaramillo Mendoza (myself). Similarly, both students, on behalf of their classmates, thank The Nippon Foundation and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation for the unique experience provided which has changed our lives forever.

Most Sasakawa-sponsored students have the opportunity to share two different Gathering Orientations. The first time I felt very welcome from the students of the Class of 2023 and the staff of WMU and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. The presentation and the dinner were fantastic, but I feel that I did not really understand 100% what a wonderful gift I was given by then. The joy of just being in Malmö was greater than anything. Little I knew this would change very quickly.

My second Gathering Orientation was much different. After being part of the different activities that the SPF offered me, I truly felt like part of the Nippon family. I understand and share Mr. Sasakawa's mission and vision. Thanks to the foundation I became a better person as a whole because I improved my professional and personal skills. However, I did not feel much joy, but rather bitter sadness due to the near goodbye from all those wonderful people. The Gathering Orientations were the beginning and the end of a priceless chapter of my life.

In the 2024 Gathering Orientation, I was honored to give the closing remarks as representative of the Class of 2024 and I hope I was able to transmit those feelings and achievements to the Class of 2025. Only time will decide.





# Underwater Noise

## A New Pollutant and a New Business Chance



**Dr. Tomonari Akamatsu**

Professor  
Research Organization for Nano & Life Innovation,  
Waseda University

The ocean is far from silent. It teems with various sources of sound, including whales, dolphins, waves, earthquakes, and vessels. In the winter-time, male humpback whales sing a song to attract females around Okinawa, Hawaii, California and many other warm waters in northern hemisphere. This song pattern is shared among the breeding population of the whale throughout the entire North Pacific Ocean. More interestingly, the pattern slightly changes year by year. This suggest that the humpback whales copied the “hit song of the year”. But we still do not know how they could share the “hit song”. Phonating animals in the ocean is not just cetaceans; fish also use sound to communicate. During their breeding season, silver croakers create a nighttime “chorus” akin to the summer symphony of frogs. The fish chorus is extremely loud and even masks the noise generated by vessels. Crustaceans such as lobster and shrimps produce sounds, too. Snapping shrimp is the major biological sound source in the coastal water that sounds like a heavy precipitation or tempura cooking. They produce high intensity pulse sound to fight with other conspecifics. Sounds are indispensable means for many of aquatic animals.

Light doesn't travel far underwater, with visibility limited to just a few tens of meters at most (Fig.1). However, sound behaves differently, traveling longer distances in water. This is why marine creatures rely on sound for sensing and communication. Same for human, all technologies such as fish echosounders, submarine detectors and underwater remote communication use sounds. Yet, the effectiveness of this sensing is heavily influenced by ambient noise levels due to the masking effect. Just like trying to hold a conversation in a noisy, crowded bar, listening and communication underwater can be challenging in where the ambient noise level is high. The detectable distance of sounds strongly depends on the ambient noise level.

In recent years, the impact of noise on marine creatures has been extensively debated in international bodies such as MPEC/IMO, ISO and various international conferences. Regardless of propulsion system—whether powered by internal combustion engines or electronic propulsion—every type of ship generates underwater noise. Screws creating cavitation are the major sound source. Any mechanical vibration of engine and ship hull can be sound sources. Not only shipping noise, but many of anthropogenic noises have frequency components, which are within the best audible frequency range of aquatic animals (Fig.2). If anthropogenic noise raises the ambient noise levels in the ocean, it can diminish communication distances.

So far, direct evidence of noise-effects on the reproduction and population of aquatic animals is limited. However, reports have documented physiological damage to auditory systems and behavioral changes. Reducing underwater noise radiation from ships is desirable. An advantage of the noise control is that noise levels decrease immediately after the noise source is turned off unlike pollutants such as NO<sub>x</sub> and carbon dioxide, which can be accumulated in the environment.

To mitigate the impact of noise on aquatic animals, reducing source levels by altering propeller shape or engine designs, may not be ecologically effective. Because ecological sensitive areas are limited and rest of the area may not need noise reduction. In addition, change of mechanical design may elevate fuel consumption per unit cruise distance and expose more carbon dioxide because the design is generally optimized to minimize the cruise cost. Instead, a practical solution could involve dynamically controlling vessel propulsion and speed based on location and time in ecologically sensitive areas.

To achieve this, we need distribution maps of vulnerable species and their acceptable exposure levels of noise. Additionally, we should create maps showing both anthropogenic and natural noise, which can be changed season by season or time in a day. By comparing these time-dependent maps,



Fig.1 A humpback whale is about to dive. We can see snowing mountain several kilometers away, but cannot see the body of the whale in the water. Underwater visibility is quite limited. Photo taken off northern Iceland, courtesy by Maria Iversen.

we can calculate ship operations to minimize noise exposure. Gathering this information will require extensive efforts from scientists, engineers, and stakeholders. Yet, offering this service could open up new business opportunities similar to current route calculations aimed at minimizing fuel consumption.

In 2023, the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 80) of IMO approved revised Guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life, which was originally published in 2014. As mentioned earlier, noise diminishes quickly when the source stops. It isn't like other chemical pollutants, so the methods for managing it should be different. The approach to managing noise near busy shipping lanes should be different from that near isolated islands. Additionally, natural background noise from biological and geological sources can mask shipping noise. We need to consider which species might be affected by underwater noise. In areas with high biodiversity, we should monitor noise and its effects closely. However, in areas that are already heavily used and don't host endangered or key species, existing anthropogenic noise might not seriously impact marine life. Right now, we know very little about underwater noise, even in our own territorial waters. International cooperation and data sharing are essential for finding solutions that balance a sustainable ecosystem with maritime activities.

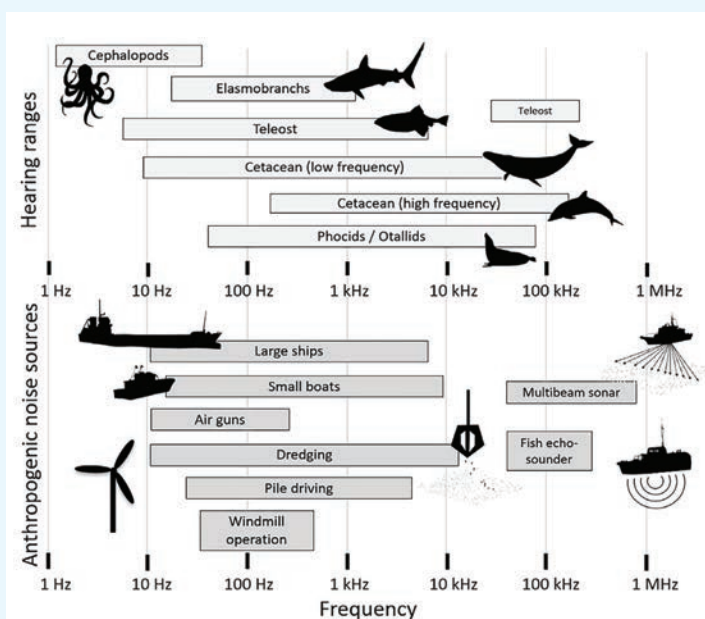


Fig.2 Best audible frequency ranges of aquatic creatures are similar to those of anthropogenic noises. Adapted from a guidance on measurement and evaluation methods for underwater sounds published by Marine Acoustic Society of Japan in 2021.

# Class of 2025 WMU Sasa

 <p>Argentina MSEA</p>	<p><b>Mario Damian Tiscornia</b></p> <p>Commissioned Officer, Argentinian Coastguard</p> <p>Education is a style of life; without it, there is no future. The SPF gave me the opportunity to be part of an honorable family. Integrating an international network promoting peace and security in the maritime field is significant. Values and knowledge will be shared at the Argentinian Coastguard.</p>	 <p>Gambia MSEA</p>	<p><b>Nfamara B.M. JARJU</b></p> <p>Assistant Marine Surveyor of Dept of Maritime Safety &amp; Security Gambia Maritime Administration</p> <p>I would begin by expressing my deepest appreciation and gratitude to Sasakawa fellows for granting me this scholarship. I am utterly grateful for this wonderful opportunity and I am fully committed to this great journey.</p>
 <p>Bangladesh MEM</p>	<p><b>Souha TASNUVA</b></p> <p>Assistant General Manager, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation</p> <p>Please take my heartiest gratitude to SPF for giving me the scholarship. I will try my best to uprise the honor of the chance I have obtained. Sasakawa has given me the opportunity for confederating with people of different nationalities. Thank you so much.</p>	 <p>Ghana MLP</p>	<p><b>Bismark Owoahene ACHEAMPONG</b></p> <p>Maritime Administrative Officer of Maritime Services Div Ghana Maritime Authority</p> <p>To be an expert in global maritime affairs by continually improving myself (Kaizen), birthing solutions for the maritime industry, and positioning Ghana as a leading and respectable maritime nation in Africa and at the international maritime organization (IMO).</p>
 <p>Brazil PM</p>	<p><b>Lucas Fernando VAQUERO ROVIRIEGO</b></p> <p>Specialist in Regulation of Water way Transportation, Environmental and Sustainability Management (GMS) National Agency of Waterway Transportation (ANTAQ)</p> <p>I extend my sincere gratitude to the Sasakawa Peace Foundation for this unique opportunity to study at WMU. I am committed to applying the insights gained during this training to contribute to Brazil's port and shipping institutional framework and to strengthen international collaboration, focusing on Brazilian port and terminal development.</p>	 <p>Guyana OSGM</p>	<p><b>Kadesha Shawyana NEDD</b></p> <p>Fisheries Officer of Fisheries Dept, Ministry of Agriculture</p> <p>This significant opportunity presented to me by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation and the Nippon Foundation, has given me the privilege of an invaluable experience pursuing an MSc in Maritime Affairs at the prestigious World Maritime University, Malmo, Sweden. I am a proud representative of Guyana and a product of the Sasakawa family led by Dr. Yohei Sasakawa. The knowledge gained will be executed to sustainably enhance my country's ocean governance systems.</p>
 <p>Cambodia MSEA</p>	<p><b>Vechra SOUNG</b></p> <p>Officer of Port Administration Dept Ministry of Public works and Transport</p> <p>I would like thank to the Sasakawa Fellowship programme which gives me the special chance to further my higher education at WMU in specializing Maritime Safety and Environmental Administration. I strongly believe that I can participant to express my knowledge in maritime field in my country in the future.</p>	 <p>India MSEA</p>	<p><b>Sourabh YADAV</b></p> <p>Commandant (JG), Operations Officer Indian Coast Guard</p> <p>I have been honoured to accept scholarship from Sasakawa Peace Foundation. This opportunity will enhance my knowledge in maritime safety, enabling me to contribute to safer practices in maritime domain. I am committed to apply this education for the well-being of our maritime communities, sincere gratitude for kind support.</p>
 <p>Comoros MSEA</p>	<p><b>Soifoine ABDILLAH</b></p> <p>Head of Marine Polition Dept National Agency of Maritime Affairs (ANAM)</p> <p>My admission to WMU contributes to strengthening the human capacities of the maritime administration in order to meet the challenges it faces. WMU program in maritime affairs will offer me the opportunity to live my passion and work for the maritime administration with a view to contributing to the efforts of the Comorian government to honor its commitments and its status as a coastal State, port State and flag State.</p>	 <p>Indonesia MSEA</p>	<p><b>Ridho BUDIMAN</b></p> <p>Instructor of Academic Dept Banten Merchant Marine Polytechnic</p> <p>It is a great honour for me to receive the Sasakawa Fellowship Programme. I feel grateful to have this opportunity to pursue a Master degree in World Maritime University. Particularly, I believe it can be strong catalyst to strengthening the Role of Human Resource Development Agency in Asia-Pacific.</p>
 <p>Ecuador MLP</p>	<p><b>Byron Eduardo ROBLES ROMERO</b></p> <p>Naval Officer, Ecuadorian Navy</p> <p>As a Sasakawa Fellow, I will use my maritime studies to help shape national and regional policies and promote new solutions to improve maritime safety for future generations. I also commit to being a worthy representative of the Sasakawa Foundation, serving as a link to this great family around the world.</p>	 <p>Japan MLP</p>	<p><b>Yuma SAKAMOTO</b></p> <p>Officer of Education and Training Div Japan Coast Guard</p> <p>I feel deeply honored to be a part of the Sasakawa Fellows and to have the opportunity to study at WMU. I am eager to fully leverage the valuable connections and relationships I establish here and aim to make meaningful contributions in the future.</p>
 <p>El Salvador PM</p>	<p><b>Rene Francis MERINO MARROQUIN</b></p> <p>Operation officer Ministry of National Defense of El Salvador</p> <p>To garher the maximun amount of knowlede to reply it back in my country. To help keep growing the sasakawa network by heleping new members and attending the different metting of sasakawa.</p>	 <p>Kenya MLP</p>	<p><b>Christine Nzambi MULATYA</b></p> <p>Senior State Counsel of Legislative Drafting Dept Office of Attorney-General</p> <p>I will use my skills, networks and linkages formed through my interactions at WMU to enhance international cooperation and facilitate cordination to tackle challenges facing the maritime sector and sustainable ocean governance especially through drafting laws and regulations, both nationally and internationally.</p>
 <p>Fiji MLP</p>	<p><b>Miriama LATIANARA</b></p> <p>Legal Officer Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji</p> <p>To be an active member of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) family and communicate effectively where it is required of me. To implement what I have learnt so that my fellow countrymen/women can also benefit from it. To advocate for SPF every chance I get.</p>	 <p>Liberia MET</p>	<p><b>Terence Tamba QUAWAH</b></p> <p>Regional Commander Liberia Coast Guard, Ministry of National Defense</p> <p>Embarking on graduate studies at the World Maritime University, I express deep gratitude to the Sasakawa Fellowship network for their generous support. As a Regional Commander and Training Officer in the Liberia Coast Guard, I aim to apply these insights to transformative initiatives, strengthening maritime education locally and globally.</p>



# Sasakawa Fellowship Students

 <p>Mexico MSEA</p>	<p><b>Manuel Jesus OSORIO COLIN</b></p> <p>Officer/Naval Mechanical Engineer Mexican Navy</p> <p>The current maritime challenges in the world should be addressed with knowledge, commitment and will. I am proud to be part of the Sasakawa and WMU families, boosting my opportunities to contribute to the goals of the sustainable maritime industry through a wide variety of comprehensive tools gained at WMU.</p>	 <p>Sri Lanka OSGM</p>	<p><b>Madhura Thilina Kumara DELPACHITRA</b></p> <p>District Marine Environment Officer of Technical Div Marine Environment Protection Authority</p> <p>As District Marine Environment Officer in Marine Environment Protection Authority, Sri Lanka, I implemented environmental conservational works, pollution prevention measures, inspected and permitted ship waste reception under MARPOL regulations, and supervised oil spill contingency plans for industries and bunkering operations, focusing on reducing pollution from both land and sea-based sources.</p>
 <p>Namibia MEM</p>	<p><b>Lazarus Shiimwaningi EMVULA</b></p> <p>Maritime Senior Administrator of Maritime Affairs Directorate Ministry of Works and Transport</p> <p>To actively participate in the Sasakawa network by engaging in mentorship of new fellows, knowledge sharing and collaboration with fellow graduates and maritime professionals in Namibia and other nations. This will be to bridge the gap in communication and foster collaborative working relations.</p>	 <p>Tanzania OSGM</p>	<p><b>Ramadhani Juma SHAUSI</b></p> <p>Senior Environmental Officer National Environment Management Council</p> <p>I will continue to be faithfully member of Sasakawa Fellows who will champion on the benefits gained from Sasakawa sponsorship. I will advocate for better cooperation and advice more members to join Sasakawa team of experts where we can discuss common issues on marine affairs worldwide and find solutions.</p>
 <p>Nigeria MLP</p>	<p><b>Lydia Salla KADIRI</b></p> <p>Staff Officer III of Directorate of legal Services Nigerian Navy</p> <p>This fellowship opportunity comes with immense value, and I am excited to contribute to the meaningful work of the Foundation on a global scale. I am deeply committed to making the most of this fellowship and promoting the Foundation's mission. Thank you once again for this incredible opportunity.</p>	 <p>Thailand OSGM</p>	<p><b>Supranee WATTANAPONGSAKUL</b></p> <p>Transportation Technical Officer of Marine Office, Samut Songkhram Branch Marine Department Office</p> <p>I intend to apply the maritime and ocean-related studies knowledge provided by the WMU to develop my organization, take advantage of the extensive Sasakawa Fellows network after graduation, and adhere to develop maritime capacity in line with the UN SDGs for our sustainable world where no one is left behind.</p>
 <p>Papua New Guinea MSEA</p>	<p><b>Justus WAYNE</b></p> <p>Aids to Navigation Technical Officer of Navigation Safety Services National Maritime Safety Authority</p> <p>The Nippon Foundation's sponsorship is a powerful investment in individuals, inspiring progress and creating a ripple effect of positive change. Empowered beneficiaries share knowledge, foster innovation, and uplift communities. I am honored to represent this legacy, serving as a beacon of hope and driving transformative change in my country.</p>	 <p>Timor-Leste MEM</p>	<p><b>Emanuel DA SILVA MAIA</b></p> <p>Technical Officer of Maritime Safety and Security Dept National Directorate Maritime Transport</p> <p>Currently decarbonization is global hot issue as well as part of SDGs to reduce emission from ship, therefore it's a requirement for each recipient port to have a minimum facility standard and adequate human resource to handle this specific inspection onboard it is motivated me to upgrade more my knowledge at WMU.</p>
 <p>Philippines SML</p>	<p><b>Rosel Ariane CRUZ</b></p> <p>Senior Maritime Industry Development Specialist of Domestic Shipping Service Maritime Industry Authority</p> <p>Consider utilizing various social media and digital platforms to strengthen the fellowship network and encourage knowledge sharing among members. For instance, use Facebook and Instagram for content sharing on maritime topics, or Twitter for real-time maritime updates and events, or Zoom or Teams for virtual meetings.</p>	 <p>Uganda MEM</p>	<p><b>John Peter KABONGE</b></p> <p>Marine Surveyor of Department of Maritime Administration Ministry of Works and Transport Uganda</p> <p>I want to thank the Sasakawa Peace Foundation for sponsoring my studies at WMU. While at WMU, I hope to be a positive change driver within the student's community. On my return to Uganda, I look forward to championing for good governance and socio-economic change, and contributing to the development of Uganda's maritime industry.</p>
 <p>Seychelles OSGM</p>	<p><b>Abel Alexandre SORRY</b></p> <p>Principal Research Officer of Department of the Blue Economy Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy</p> <p>Successfully graduate and use the acquired knowledge to contribute towards a world that appreciates the abundant favours and blessings of mother Earth and be one of the bold to repay her kindness with protection of her oceans and the plethora of life that it supports for the future of mankind.</p>	 <p>Viet Nam MSEA</p>	<p><b>Quoc Anh PHAM</b></p> <p>Maritime Coordinator Officer of Viet Nam Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Center Viet Nam Maritime Administration</p> <p>It is a great honor to be a part of the esteemed Sasakawa network. Together, we consistently strive towards a promising future, channeling our collective efforts towards the advancement of the maritime sector.</p>
 <p>Sierra Leone OSGM</p>	<p><b>Kadiatu Seaport SAM KOSSABA</b></p> <p>Deputy Head of Div, Statistics, Research and Policy Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources</p> <p>I am grateful to have been granted this opportunity, which has enabled me embark on this journey of academic excellence at the WMU. This course will equip me with the expertise to handle national and trans-boundary challenges associated with the development and management of the maritime and marine industry.</p>	<div> <div>MET</div> <div>MEM</div> <div>MLP</div> <div>MSEA</div> <div>OSGM</div> <div>PM</div> <div>SML</div> </div> <div> <div>(Maritime Education &amp; Training)</div> <div>(Maritime Energy Management)</div> <div>(Maritime Law &amp; Policy)</div> <div>(Maritime Safety &amp; Environmental Administration)</div> <div>(Ocean Sustainability, Governance &amp; Management)</div> <div>(Port Management)</div> <div>(Shipping Management &amp; Logistics)</div> </div>	
 <p>Somalia MLP</p>	<p><b>Idil MOHAMED</b></p> <p>Legal Officer of Legal Dept Mogadishu Port Authority</p> <p>The Sasakawa scholarships is more than an educational opportunity- it is a stepping stone towards fostering sustainable maritime practices in my home country. I look forward forward to collaborating with the Sasakawa fellows to build a lasting professional relationship that will bridge maritime expertise across regions.</p>		

# The Academic Agenda WMU@50



**Dr. Jens-Uwe Schröder-Hinrichs**

Vice-President, Strategic Initiatives and Professor,  
WMU

World Maritime University (WMU) has over the period of its existence been subject to many reviews in relation to the academic quality of the programmes of the University together with its financial sustainability. The 2015 review focused on the financial sustainability of WMU and triggered the expansion of the scope and mandate of the University into ocean matters. It also contributed to the development of the Maritime and Ocean Research Agendas. All these reviews provided the basis for the next step in WMU's institutional growth including the creation of a vision for further development of its academic offerings during the period extending to the celebration of its 50th Anniversary, hence the title of this document Academic Agenda WMU@50.

With the approval of its governing boards, a process was initiated at WMU in 2019 to carry out a comprehensive review of trends and drivers with the potential to impact the University in its academic work and to provide strategic academic directions for further growth of the University in this respect. The Academic Agenda WMU@50, adopted in 2021 by the Governing Boards of the University after an intensive two year period of work, is a long-term vision for the development of WMU's academic programmes. It takes WMU's current achievements into consideration and provides recommendations to address current weaknesses. Its core part are eleven strategic academic directions for future developments of academic work at the University in response to the many contemporary and anticipated challenges, trends and developments to ensure that WMU will also be "fit for purpose" in the future.

Following the adoption of the Academic Agenda in 2021, an initial implementation period was undertaken from 2022 – 2023 focussing on measures to strengthen academic excellence, building partnerships in support of WMU's mission and fostering leadership and internal capacity building.

Outcomes from this initial implementation plan include, among others:

- The award of a European Charter of Higher Education (ECHE), enabling participation in the ERASMUS program, which funded staff and student mobility initiatives.
- A stronger emphasis to Active Academic Partnerships. WMU became a member of the University of the Arctic network and joined as Associate Member the EU funded European University of the Seas



(SEA-EU) Alliance, a collaboration of nine EU based universities with maritime and ocean programmes. At the same time, WMU started to actively engage with universities in areas of significant importance in relation to WMU's mission and created, as an example, a partnership with the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

- The introduction of Summer programmes and the so-called Education for Professional Excellence (EPEX) programme. A total of 8 weeks of such programmes were organized in 2022 and 2023.
- The design of a concept for Round Tables with the objective to create impact-making reports in support of contemporary policy developments. A first Round Table on "Mastering the Decarbonization of the Maritime Sector – The role of education and capacity building" was organized at WMU in August 2023.
- The development of the concept of Educational Partnerships allowing for further collaboration with industry partners and other stakeholders of the University in support of its academic activities. Educational partnerships concluded in the first implementation period introduced, e.g., internship opportunities for students at WMU.

The 2022 – 2023 Implementation Plan was considered a full success by the Governing Boards who supported further continuation of the work on the implementation of the Academic Agenda through the 2024 – 2025 Implementation Plan, which is currently ongoing with an extended focus on expanding the work on the Agenda including, e.g., the introduction of new academic focus areas (e.g. sustainability) and initiatives to develop new academic programmes.

## Fostering Global Connections The Joys and Rewards of Being a Host Family in Malmö

### Mr. Kjell & Mrs. Bitte Wernebecker

We are a Swedish couple living in Åkarp, near Malmö, and have hosted 2-4 international students each year, many of them Sasakawa Fellows. While the World Maritime University (WMU) encourages host families to meet students at least once annually, we believe in maintaining closer connections. We organize activities, provide support, and introduce them to Swedish culture through simple gatherings like "fika" (coffee breaks) or larger events such as visits to a Viking village, winter skating, or singing in Lund on May 1st to welcome spring. Our annual crayfish party in August is a highlight, where students often bring WMU friends to celebrate.

Being a host family enriches us deeply. It not only allows us to





share Swedish culture but also strengthens our global connections. When we travel, former students warmly welcome us, offering insight into their countries. Last year, we visited six countries—Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Vietnam, Thailand, and Dubai—over ten weeks. While exploring their homelands, we enjoyed reunions with over 100 students and their families, ranging from the Class of 2003 to recent graduates. Hearing their stories of career progress and family life was incredibly fulfilling.

In 2024, we hosted three remarkable female students from the Philippines, Thailand, and Tonga, all Sasakawa Fellows. We understand that host families play a significant role in helping students adjust to life in Sweden, offering support, companionship, and cultural exchange. For us, these connections form a meaningful part of fostering global relationships and understanding.



With the class of 2003 in Manila



Crayfish party in 2014

## Cameroon's Involvement in Improving Transparency of Its Fisheries Sector



**Noella Mbotiji**  
(Cameroon, 2019)

*This article was voluntarily submitted by the author. We look forward to receiving contributions from all of you as well!*

My name is Noella Mbotiji, and I specialize in combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing at the African Marine Mammal Conservation Organization (AMMCO). I hold a master's degree in Ocean Sustainability Governance, and Management (OSGM). The expertise and insights gained at WMU have shaped my career in international fisheries regulation in Cameroon.

IUU fishing poses a persistent problem to many countries, leading to the overexploitation of fishery resources and severe impacts on marine ecosystems. In Cameroon, the lack of transparency exacerbates the impacts of IUU fishing on food security, local livelihoods, and economic stability.

In February 2021, Cameroon was found notorious for issuing Flags of Convenience (FOC) which led to the issuance of a pre-identification notification "yellow card" by the European Commission (EC). Other loopholes identified included an obsolete legal framework, a weak monitoring and control system, lack of a fishery management plan and insufficient collaboration between administrations.

This problem prompted the implementation of the project "Stop IUU fishing in Cameroon" by AMMCO in collaboration with the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA) and the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF). The objectives of this project entail revising Cameroon's fishery legal framework to meet

higher transparency standards, reinforcing the capacity to monitor and control fishing activities and elaborating a fishery management plan.

Following the "yellow card" notification, Cameroon received a sanction "red card" in January

2023 because of its continuous issuance of FOC. Certain results have been achieved by the project partners to remediate the situation.

To begin with Cameroon's legal and regulatory framework has been revised to meet international standards. The fishery draft includes principles of international conventions such as the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA). The country's fishing license lists for 2023 and 2024 have been published on the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Global record and on MINEPIA's website to increase transparency not only at a national level but globally. To access the FAO Global Record, please visit: <https://globalrecord.fao.org/>

Journalists have been trained on how to report on IUU fishing and its cumulative impacts with numerous articles published. In addition, state actors' capacities have been built on governance measures and satellite tracking of fishing vessels to enhance public sharing and access to fisheries data. More so, advocacy actions have been carried out with high level diplomatic authorities in Cameroon.

Notwithstanding, the results obtained shall be reinforced through actions such as carrying out advocacy actions for higher fisheries transparency and governance standards as well as the swift adoption and implementation of the draft fishery law. Given that the country does not have a fishery management plan, workshops will be organized with stakeholders involved in fishery management to elaborate one. Actors in charge of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of fishing activities will be trained on navigation and safety to foster a robust MCS system. Debates will be organized to better communicate on effective conservation measures. Emphasis will equally be laid on raising awareness on ocean and fisheries issues and continuous creation of synergies with local communities, the government and international organization to foster collaborative efforts for the sustainable management of the fishery sector.

Enhancing transparency of Cameroon's fishery sector will lead to a better management and traceability of its fisheries resources, protection of its marine biodiversity and improvement of the livelihoods of coastal communities.

Links to some articles written so far:

- <https://www.ammco.org/index.php?rub=17&id=33>
- <https://www.ammco.org/index.php?rub=17&id=34>
- <https://fisheriestransparency.net/shining-a-light-on-camerouns-fisheries-sector/>



Photo by GIDEON News

## Rising to New Heights: Congratulations on Your Well-Deserved Promotion

We are pleased to announce our esteemed colleague and 2017 WMU graduate, Rear Admiral Y.R. Serasinghe, has been appointed as the Director General of the Sri Lanka Coast Guard, with effective from 22 October 2024. This prestigious role is a testament to his exemplary service and leadership within the organization.

Before this appointment, Rear Admiral Serasinghe held several key positions in the Sri Lanka Coast Guard, including Director of Operations and Director of Training at the Coast Guard Headquarters. His outstanding performance and leadership eventually led to his appointment as Deputy Director General, further solidifying his reputation as a dedicated and skilled officer, he has taken the helm of the organization as its Director General.

Throughout his career, Rear Admiral Serasinghe has demonstrated unwavering commitment to maritime safety and security, playing a crucial role in safeguarding the coastline and maritime zones of Sri

**DIRECTOR GENERAL  
SRI LANKA COAST GUARD**  
**REAR ADMIRAL YR SERASINGHE**  
WMU, BWP\*, BSc\*\*\*\*, USP, psc, MSc in Maritime Affairs, BSc (H) Mech Eng



Lanka. His contributions have been pivotal in advancing the mission of the Sri Lanka Coast Guard. We are thrilled to celebrate his well-deserved promotion and share this exciting news with all of you.

For more details, please visit: <https://coastguard.gov.lk/director-general-of-slcg/>

## Introducing Our New Logo: A Symbol of Unity and Enduring Connections



We're proud to unveil the new logo for Friends of WMU, Japan—a visual identity designed to capture the spirit, purpose, and unity of the Sasakawa Fellows Network. This logo is more than just a symbol; it's a tribute to the enduring connections shared among our global community of Fellows.

At the heart of the design is the letter “S,” embodying Sasakawa Fellows, Ships, and the Sea—the elements that connect us all. The “S” is intertwined with a rope, symbolizing the strength and support of our network. Divided into seven blocks, this rope represents the seven seas, a

reminder of our collective reach and shared purpose across the world.

In addition, the shape of the “S” draws on the infinity symbol (∞), echoing our commitment to fostering connections and creating lasting ties that transcend generations. It reflects our aspiration for the Sasakawa Fellows Network to keep supporting and empowering each of you for years to come.

Stay tuned, as this new logo will be featured in all upcoming updates from Friends of WMU, Japan! We're excited to share this milestone with you and continue growing our global community together.

## Attention Needed!! Transitioning to Digital Newsletters

Considering recent changes in postal services worldwide and our commitment to the SDGs, we've decided to shift to primarily distributing newsletters electronically. However, if you'd prefer to continue receiving printed copies by mail, we'd love to hear from you! Please drop us a note at the email address below. Your input will help us plan the number of printed copies needed, and we truly appreciate your support in this transition. **Please email to → [wmuJapan@spf.or.jp](mailto:wmuJapan@spf.or.jp)**

### Editor's note

Dear Readers of the Friends of WMU, Japan, Newsletter!

Today, I had the wonderful opportunity to reconnect with two old friends from the Class of 2003—my classmates Inga and Jean, who now work at WMU and IMO, respectively. They engaged in a dialogue themed “Mental Health of Seafarers” for an upcoming issue of the newsletter. I was fortunate to witness this inspiring discussion while serving as a moderator from the editorial board. (I couldn't be more grateful to be a part of the board!)

Although the dialogue was held online, it felt as if we were meeting in person for the first time since our graduation ceremony more than 20 years ago!

Reflecting on my time at WMU, I realize that as students, we rarely discussed our areas of expertise before enrolling, and I only had a superficial understanding of my colleagues' careers. This dialogue provided a unique opportunity to deeply engage with my old classmates as they shared their professional journeys and what led them to pursue careers in the maritime field.

Without revealing too much about the content, I can say that hearing

their perspectives on mental health issues in the maritime industry and their thoughts on the way forward was truly inspiring. It was a privilege to witness their professionalism firsthand.

It's been over 20 years, and I'm sure many of our fellow classmates have also achieved incredible milestones in their careers. I look forward to hearing more stories when we meet again.

The dialogue will be featured in a future edition of the Friends of WMU, Japan Newsletter. Let's look forward to it together!

Here in Japan, the weather is getting colder, and we are enjoying the vibrant colors of autumn foliage as the year draws to a close. Soon, we will quietly celebrate the New Year, which always feels like a fresh start.

Wishing you all a joyous holiday season and a very Happy New Year!

**Yasko Suzuki**  
(Japan, 2003)

Hokuriku Shin'etsu District Transport Bureau  
MLIT



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