

COUNTRY REPORT

21ST CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL LIBRARIES IN ASIA OCEANIA (CDNL_AO) 2013

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1. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RECENT MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

The NDL is the sole national library in Japan, and at the same time the legislative reference library belonging to the Diet (parliament). It consists of three main facilities – Tokyo Main Library, Kansai-kan, and International Library of Children’s Literature (ILCL) - and branch libraries established within the executive and judicial bureaus. The Kansai-kan marked its 10th anniversary in October 2012. In the ILCL an annex building is under construction to be completed in FY2015. Anyone aged 18 or over can use the library service. The ILCL is open to children as well as adults.

Mission and Objectives 2012-2016

In July 2012, the NDL formulated “Mission and Objectives 2012-2016 (M&O),” which replaces the earlier “Vision for the NDL’s 60th anniversary.” The M&O reaffirms the fundamental responsibility of the mission: “The National Diet Library extensively collects and preserves publications and other materials/information from inside and outside the country as a knowledge base and cultural infrastructure; assists the Diet and provides library services to the executive and judicial branches and the public; supports the creativity of the nation and contributes to the development of democracy.” Additionally, the M&O sets six pillars of objectives: Support to the Diet, Acquisition and Preservation, Information Access, Collaboration and Cooperation, Archives of the Great East Japan Earthquake, and Administration. Its full text is available on our website <<http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/aboutus/mission2012.html>>.

The Great East Japan Earthquake Archive

The NDL has been energetically working on building archives of the Great East Japan Earthquake, to be opened to the public in March 2013.

(see 7. EXAMPLES OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE NDL AND OTHER NATIONAL COLLECTING INSTITUTIONS (LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS))

2. RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT

The NDL was established in 1948 by the National Diet Library Law, based on Article 130 of the National Diet Law, “the National Diet Library shall be established in the Diet by a separate law, in order to assist Diet Members in their study and research.” The National Diet Library Law declares the ideal of the library’s establishment in its preamble, “the National Diet Library is hereby established as a result of the firm conviction that truth makes us free and with the object of contributing to international peace and the democratization of Japan as promised in our Constitution.”

3. KEY FACT AND FIGURES

Collections (as of March 2012)	(Total) 38,413, 236 items	
	- Books	9,887,050 volumes
	- Serials (periodicals and newspapers)	14,846,587 items
Total number of digitized contents (as of the end of 2012)	2,165,000 volumes	
Number of staff (as of April 1, 2012)	890	
Annual budget (FY2012)	19.683 billion yen (approximately 247 million in USD. At average exchange rate of 2012)	

4. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN CREATING AND BUILDING COLLECTIONS

In the rapidly developing digital environment, the NDL is working hard to deploy library services most appropriate to this new era. One pressing need, among others, is to gather various digital information as well as conventional printed materials, and to build a system which makes them available for future use. As a step forward, privately published free online materials will start to be collected institutionally from July 2013 onward, enabled by the amendment of the National Diet Library Law in June 2012. The NDL will also work on preparing a long-awaited scheme to acquire privately-published, commercially-available (i.e. priced) online publications.

5. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN MANAGING COLLECTIONS

The NDL introduced a new integrated library system in January 2012. This system functions as a foundation for more efficient collection management as well as a control system for the on-site services.

6. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

Digitized contents

The NDL has been digitizing its holdings. As of the end of 2012, some 2,165,000 items are digitized in total and available on the premises, of which copyright-cleared some 430,000 items are released on the Internet.

To make the most of NDL’s digitized contents, out-of-print items will start to be transmitted to public and university libraries in Japan. Users can access and copy them in a public or university library close to their residence. This is enabled by the amendment of the Copyright Law of Japan in June

2012, which comes in force in January 2013. The service is to be launched in January 2014 after the system development.

Sound data have been already transmitted to public libraries. Since last year the NDL has been providing the Historical Recordings Collection consisting of sound sources in Japanese records from the early 1900s to around 1950 digitized by the Historical Records Archive Promotion Conference (HiRAC). A trial service to deliver data began in January 2012 and came into fully-fledged service in July. The number of contents has been increased; 39,000 sources can be heard in public libraries as of the end of 2012.

Online reference tools

Along with providing digitized contents to the public, the NDL has been reinforcing its own reference tools via its website. For example, RESEARCH NAVI, launched in 2009, helps users find information effectively with a guide for searching, actual reference cases, databases for searching, advice on searching and other related information.

Joining VIAF

As an international movement, the NDL has been participating in VIAF (Virtual International Authority File) from October 2012. Over 960,000 of the NDL's authority data including personal names, corporate names, family names and uniform titles are provided in VIAF. In addition, Web NDL Authorities exchanged links with VIAF in December.

7. EXAMPLES OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE NDL AND OTHER NATIONAL COLLECTING INSTITUTIONS (LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS)

Great East Japan Earthquake Archive

The NDL continuously makes efforts to establish a system for the Great East Japan Earthquake Archive to pass on the records of and the lessons learned from the unprecedented disaster to future generations. The NDL is expected to play a pivotal role in nationally important duties: harvesting and preserving such records, utilizing them for reconstruction, and handing them down to future generations, all in cooperation with other institutions. An integrated portal system is now under development in collaboration with a variety of organizations including the private sector, along with both national and local governments, and research institutions inside and outside Japan. It is scheduled to go into full swing in March 2013, following its beta version released in November 2012.

Great East Japan Earthquake Reconstruction Assistance

The NDL supports restoration of the affected library materials including the rescue programs organized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs for cultural properties affected by the Earthquake. Other examples include conservation treatment for local documents of the 17th-19th century affected by the tsunami, which is designated as Iwate prefectural cultural property. The work was started in 2012 based on a request from the Iwate Prefectural Board of Education, and will be continued until September 2014. Progress of the conservation project is posted on the Facebook page (in Japanese). < <http://www.facebook.com/yoshidakeshufuku> >

The NDL also greatly contributed to the research conducted by the NAIC (The National Diet of Japan Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission) established on December 8, 2011 by dispatching highly professional researchers and providing various information, culminating in the submission of its final report to both Houses of the Diet on July 5, 2012. The materials related to the research are available in the Great East Japan Earthquake Archive.

Collaborative Reference Database and Training programs for librarians

The NDL continues activities to promote collaboration among libraries in Japan.

For example, the Collaborative Reference Database launched in 2002 is a useful online reference tool for libraries. It is assembled by the NDL together with member libraries to share records of reference examples.

The NDL provides a wide range of programs to support the activities of Japanese and foreign libraries. The programs are classified roughly into three types: group training programs at the NDL, training programs by NDL staff members dispatched to other institutions, and E-learning programs. In addition, as the IFLA/PAC regional centre for Asia, the NDL carries out some training courses on preservation. In August 2012, the NDL sent its staff members to Thailand upon request to give lectures on disaster preparedness in the workshop held by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts.