

OUTLINE OF SUBJECT I: ECOLOGICAL AND REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF PRINCIPAL CATCHMENT BASINS

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From the viewpoints of both natural and human geography, a rain catchment basin can be considered to be a significant regional unit. On the other hand, many geographers have been basing their research on ecological strategies. By combining ecological geography and the regional geography of a catchment basin, a new aspect of geography will evolve. In particular, this approach seems to be very meaningful on the grounds that a number of researchers from various scientific disciplines can cooperate to study the economically and ecologically important aspects of a region (the catchment basin) from diversified viewpoints. Thus they can perform comprehensive geographical studies.

Setting their goal at such a research as stated above, the Japanese members of Team I consisting of an ecological geographer, a plant ecologist, two tropical agronomists and a geologist and three collaborators in Papua New Guinea undertook a cooperative survey in the Markham Basin (see map) for several days from 22 November, 1989. In looking through the following first two papers, one can grasp in what aspects of the region they were respectively interested.

Regrettably, there was not enough time to make an intensive study. The members, however, did succeed in roughly comprehending the features of the basin from their respective viewpoints. I am sure that this survey taught us how to make guidelines for further interdisciplinary research on ecological and regional geography of the Markham Basin.

After the original group operations, the researchers separately visited the sites, either inside or outside the basin, where they were particularly interested. Their studies at sites outside the Markham Basin were made in accordance with the strategy comparative with the cases there. The third paper of Subject I, related to Ok Tedi in the Fly catchment basin (see map), reports the study which was conducted in such days of the whole survey period.

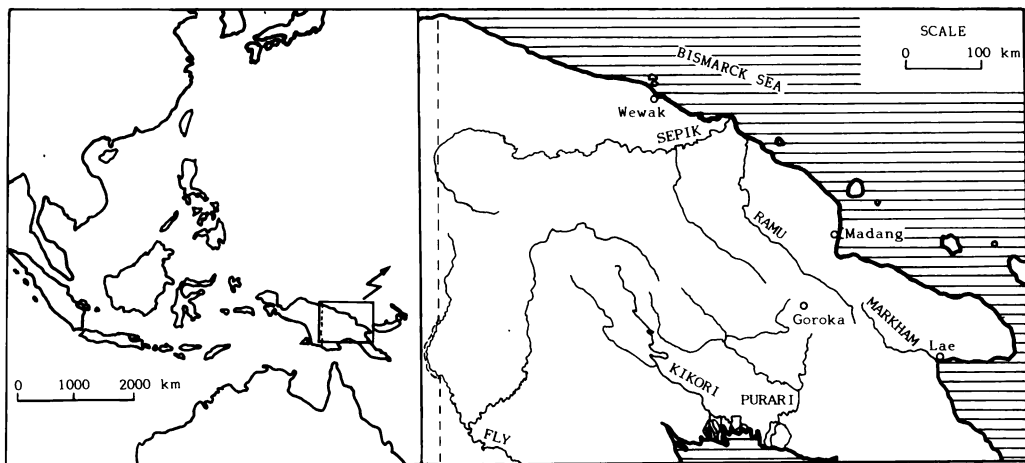


Fig. 1. The map suggesting the principal catchment basins in Papua New Guinea.