



**CENTER FOR DEEP EARTH EXPLORATION**  
Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology  
3173-25 Showa-machi, Kanazawa-ku, Yokohama Kanagawa 236-0001 Japan  
<http://www.jamstec.go.jp/chikyuu/>



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Dear Scientific Drilling Community,

A budget shortfall resulting from the sudden cancellation of industry-contracted drilling planned for Spring 2014, combined with a sudden weakening of the Japanese Yen (by ~20%), has made it necessary to reduce operations planned for IODP Expedition 348, due to start on 15 August 2013. JAMSTEC upper management has considered the financial impact on the drilling plan, especially considering the planned target for setting casing for logging and sampling the megasplay fault estimated at 5200 mbsf. Options are to either curtail riser operations or to remove observatory operations; both cannot be carried in light of the current budget revision.

The current plans include riserless operations comprising recovering the GeniusPlug temporary observatory now deployed in Site C0010, and replacing it with a long-term borehole monitoring system (LTBMS), a CORK-type observatory in an extension of the C0010 cased borehole, followed by riser operations in Hole C0002F, logging and casing, with limited core recovery, to 3600 mbsf (possibly 4400 mbsf). Unfortunately, as mentioned above, the revised budget situation will not allow both operations; therefore, based on the previous NanTroSEIZE PMT prioritization, the best course in this situation would be on preserving the riser operations, rather than the riserless observatory section. There may remain a slight possibility of recovering the deployed GeniusPlug and its invaluable data, but this possibility is still being weighed.

The riserless observatory portion of NanTroSEIZE remains a JAMSTEC priority, especially considering the effort, time, and money spent on developing the various components and substitute missions (e.g. the temporary observatories); this is especially true when the hookup to the DONET system is concerned. Natural hazard mitigation remains a clear and high priority for JAMSTEC. JAMSTEC & CDEX will make a concerted effort to achieve the goals of the NanTroSEIZE project.

We understand that the IODP science community may feel uncomfortable about the commitment to the project on the part of JAMSTEC and CDEX, especially given the extremely short notice; we also understand the pressure that this decision places on the scientific community, who have dedicated much energy, time, and resources to



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NanTroSEIZE, and that this pressure is equally felt by us within JAMSTEC and CDEX. We hope that we will be able to convey to the community, and to other observers, that our commitment to finishing the NanTroSEIZE project remains strong and unwavering, despite the current financial realities. We will be working with our partners to ensure that this project is as successful as possible.

Director, CDEX  
Wataru Azuma

*W. Azuma*