

Welcome Address

Hiroshi Fujimaki
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Distinguished guests and participants,

Good morning ladies and gentlemen !!

It is my great pleasure to extend greetings to the distinguished guests and participants on behalf of the National Institute of Agrobiological Resources.

The present symposium has been hosted by the Tropical Agriculture Research Center in collaboration with our Institute.

The National Institute of Agrobiological Resources was established here at Tsukuba Science City 10 years ago to carry out basic advanced research on genetic resources as well as biotechnology.

We have developed a gene bank with advanced facilities to promote active exchanges with all the MAFF research institutes and international organizations such as IBPGR. Our institute plays a major role as MAFF "Center Bank". We are now planning to setup a new DNA bank equipped with a super-computer this coming October in order to expand the research activities of the gene bank.

For the past ten years, there has been a growing concern worldwide about the erosion of genetic resources associated with the drastic changes of the global environment. The environmental deterioration seems to be more serious in the tropical developing countries due to the difficulty in promoting environment-friendly or sustainable development.

Genetic resources problems are attracting the attention of scientists worldwide in relation to further progress in biotechnology. All kinds of organisms and genes on this planet are valuable materials which evolved through long natural selection or artificial improvement and have the potential of becoming genetic resources. They should be a common property equally shared among human beings.

I believe that the present symposium will contribute significantly to the exchange of opinions and scientific information on genetic resources in the tropics and I do hope that this symposium will be profitable to each participant.

Thank you.