

Inaugural Address

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Director General
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Distinguished Guests and Participants,

On behalf of the Symposium Organizing Committee of the Tropical Agriculture Research Center (TARC), I have the honour and privilege to open the “International Symposium on Soil Constraints on Sustainable Plant Production in the Tropics” which is being held as a satellite symposium of the 14th ICSS under the co-sponsorship of the TARC, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan.

Above all, I would like to extend my cordial welcome to all the guests and the participants, in particular to those who have come to Japan from abroad.

The TARC was established in 1970 with the objective of contributing to the development of agricultural technology in the tropical areas in undertaking research programs in a spirit of international collaboration.

The basic principle of our research activities is to work together with overseas scientists on a partnership basis to solve technical obstacles which hamper the agricultural development of the tropical and sub-tropical countries and regions. The TARC activities cover a fairly wide range of research fields such as crop production, soil and water management, plant protection, pasture and animal husbandry, agriculture and food engineering, forestry and agroforestry, etc.

One of the major activities of the TARC is to send research scientists to overseas research institutions located in the tropical and sub-tropical countries and regions to conduct collaborative research work on the above-mentioned research areas. Over 40 staff members of the TARC with long-term assignments have been engaged each year in such collaborative activities in many parts of the world, mainly in the Asian countries and partly in South America and Africa during the past two decades.

Another important activity of the TARC is to hold international symposia for exchanging information and ideas among different countries and among scientists concerned. Since 1967 these symposia have been held each year, covering such subjects as crop production, plant protection, pasture and animal husbandry, soil and water management, etc.

The present symposium, the twenty-fourth of its kind, will give the opportunity to consider and estimate in detail the soil constraints on sustainable plant production in the tropics.

It is generally recognized that presently the tropical and sub-tropical countries and regions are faced with various kinds of soil constraints on sustainable plant production in cultivated lands, pastures and agroforestry schemes, which are presumably caused by fertility, acidity and salinity, erosion, micronutrient deficiency or excess, physical, chemical and biological limitations, etc.

In the nearest future, to promote sustainable plant production, it will be necessary to evaluate the factors responsible for such soil constraints in order to implement appropriate measures to control these factors.

In the present symposium, the causes of the constraints will be evaluated based on scientific data. The establishment of relevant measures for their alleviation with emphasis

placed on low-input and sustainable plant production in taking account of the preservation of the eco-systems and environment in the tropics and sub-tropics will be discussed.

I am convinced that these exchanges of information will further contribute to the enhancement of research in these areas.

I sincerely hope that this symposium will be successful and useful in contributing to the development of effective measures for the promotion of sustainable plant production in the tropics and sub-tropics.

I also hope that our friendship and cooperation will be further strengthened through our joint effort in reaching this common target of immense importance.

Thank you.