

Advisory Council 2004

The Advisory Council 2004 met on 26 April 2004 at NIAES to provide outside opinions and recommendations on the management of NIAES. The members of the council are external experts, including a professor, a consumer representative, and the directors of other national institutions (see Appendix).

Members were informed of the general activities of NIAES in 2003 and were presented with the main research results for 2001–03.

The opinions expressed by the members were as follows:

- 1) NIAES is very highly motivated in its actions and is performing trials with special features. I want NIAES to continue this approach.
- 2) When an organization's system changes, different approaches are tried, but this attitude tends to be lost with time. Please do not forget this stance of challenging new things.
- 3) Please do not adhere to the principle of immediate evaluation; do work that is worthwhile and has true meaning, and don't be particular about the at-hand results.
- 4) The official announcement of an environmental report may be called for after 2005. Please release proactively the information that environment is considered in NIAES.
- 5) I am evaluating the progress of NIAES is taking various actions, such as installing a research assistant system in order to substantially accelerate the study process.
- 6) I understand that NIAES has established a project research committee and is making efforts to receive competitive funding. Please try hard to improve the quality of the staff and to acquire postdoctoral research fellows that will help you to reach this high level of quality.
- 7) NIAES has various information sources, such as the Natural Resources Inventory, which is utilized widely by many researchers. Environmental Research Organizations in Japan need to compile this kind of information into a database and update it regularly to generate a universal database that will extend research opportunities.
- 8) Observation is important work for NIAES. In cooperation with Environmental Research Organizations in Japan, NIAES should continue its observations of global resources.
- 9) In risk analysis studies, it is important to do probabilistic evaluations.
- 10) To establish a method of removing the cadmium accumulated in the rice, it is important to do research that can see the big picture and involve cooperation with related fields of study.
- 11) It is important to clarify the mechanisms by which contaminants such as cadmium accumulate. Furthermore, in parallel with such fundamental research, NIAES needs to forge ahead with developing a grasp of actual conditions and technical developments.
- 12) I want NIAES to establish techniques for monitoring the agricultural environment and for early environmental evaluation; by using these techniques we could take field data and use them to preserve the agricultural environment.
- 13) I want NIAES to offer information on research results proactively and to participate in the development of environmental standards in relation to, for example, crops, while cooperating with the administration.
- 14) There is need to offer important information to society quickly and to urge caution in cooperating with the administration.
- 15) NIAES is expected to act as a think-tank for agricultural and environmental policy. It is required to offer the results it obtains not only to the administration, but also to citizens' groups and NGOs that have an interest in the environment.
- 16) I think there is a high possibility that NIAES will produce valuable results and will produce researchers of high standard. The production of prominent researchers will be a strong indicator of the value of NIAES to our society.