

# Message from the President

## Our Progress in Achieving the Goals of the Five-year Plan



*Dr. Yohei SATO*

The National Institute for Agro-Environmental Sciences (NIAES) was reorganized on 1 April 2001 as an Independent Administrative Institution whose mission is to study agriculture in environmental space-time. At the same time, a 5-year Plan with a target year of 2005 was formulated. The plan aimed to pursue Safety, Security, Restraint, and Succession as key concepts and to fulfill the following research missions on a global scale: 1) implementation of strategies to ensure stable food supplies under global environment change, 2) assuring the safety of food and the environment by utilizing the natural circulation function of agriculture, and 3) succession of our agro-environmental resources to future generations.

FY 2004 was quite an important year for us in achieving the goals described in the Plan. We reviewed our yearly research plan on the basis of a strict post-evaluation of production over the last 3 years and the degree to which we had fulfilled our objectives and had endeavored to steadily implement the 5-year Plan. To this end, we examined the following 9 objectives, which are fundamental to implementation of the Institute's functions, and constantly checked our progress against them:

- Reception (of ideas from the public, other disciplines, and policy needs)
- Research (expansion to solve problems and engage new issues)
- Cooperation (with other disciplines and policymakers, and in the signing of international Memoranda of Understanding—MOUs)

- Discussion (in seminars, extension work, and public education)
- Accumulation (of information in an agro-ecological research resource inventory)
- Evaluation (of research, management, and institutional mechanisms)
- Transmission (to specialists, and to the general public during public evaluation of our work)
- Proposal (in the form of risk evaluations and environmental management plans)
- Dissemination (via the press, TV, journals, and the Internet).

A few examples of the products of our progress in terms of these 9 objectives were:

- Submitting a proposal for a research project on “Risk evaluation of alien plant species and prevention of their proliferation” to the Special Coordination Funds for Promoting Science and Technology financed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan and receiving funding (Reception)
- Developing a washing method for the rehabilitation of paddy soil contaminated with cadmium (Research),
- Signing an MOU with a research institute in Laos and achieving MOUs with German, Chinese, and Korean institutes (Cooperation),
- Creating a system for an Asia-Pacific Alien Species Database (Accumulation),
- Issuing the Nanjing Declaration at the Third International Conference on Nitrogen (Proposal),

These are just a few examples; many other products from FY 2004 are presented in this annual report.

It will be to our great delight if the reports of our work in FY 2004 can inspire the further development of research on the agro-environment and can be used to solve agro-environmental problems. A list of research papers published is included at the end of this report. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to have a copy of a paper, or if you have questions concerning any aspect of agro-environmental research.

Yohei SATO, Dr. Agr.  
President