

# **International Workshop on Asian Air Pollution and Biodiversity Conservation**

The Eighth Tripartite Presidents Meeting among NIES, NIER and CRAES

## **Opening Speech (Session2)**

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Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen. I believe that you all enjoyed the international and local taste at the lunch and the dance which is specific to Okinawa. I was very much impressed by the sound of the drums, because they have four drums but the sound is like just one. So they are very much synchronized, and I think they practiced a lot. Anyway now, I would like to open the afternoon session and to make a few brief comments to open the session.

The term biodiversity is relatively new. It has been here since the 1980s, although the concept goes back to the late 1960s. Now the term has gained wider use amongst biologists, environmentalists, political leaders and concerned citizens. Last year COP 10 was held in Aichi Japan and since then biodiversity and biological diversity have appeared in the media and most Japanese know this term. But the concept is complicated, with many interpretations. Since we are scientists of environmental studies, it is expected that species diversity and ecosystem diversity will be primarily discussed. Okinawa prefecture consists of many islands, the nature of which lends itself to biodiversity. If you are lucky, when landing at the airport you could enjoy the beautiful coral reef.

At this session the *Yanbaru Kuina* or Okinawan Rail will be the subject of a special talk. In addition, several speakers from the local institutes in Okinawa will give talks. I look forward to listening to these. I also look forward to listening to the talks of colleagues from China and Korea concerning conservation of nature and biodiversity.

Also, I would like to remind you that this building was constructed for the purposes of the G8 Kyushu Okinawa summit in 2000, so it is very symbolic for us to present on and discuss biodiversity conservation here, while considering the future direction of our activities.

Without further ado let us begin the second session. Thank you!