
Message

Professor Takashi Onishi

President, Science Council of Japan

Science Council of Japan (SCJ) is an organization whose mission is to deliberate on key issues concerning science. As a body which represents the scientist communities of Japan subsuming humanities and social sciences, life sciences, physical sciences, and engineering. Our Council has emphasized scientific discussion on 'building a sustainable society' along with prominent global academic organizations; such as, International Council for Science (ICSU) and IAP/IAC. For that purpose, SCJ has contributed to build a sustainable global society while launching various scientific programs within Japan since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED: Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992.

Following the Earth Summit aforesaid, environmental protection has become significant, influential movements worldwide. International academic institutions, such as ICSU, together with national science academies worldwide, have promoted elucidation of causes, future projection, and implementation of environmental policies in order to cope with global challenges of our time. These institutional practices have carried out substantial achievements, whereas bringing us further reflections on building sustainable global development. Based on such reflection, 'Future Earth Initiative' was launched at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development ('Rio+20') in June 2012, aiming at promoting more integrated, collaborative research for global problem solutions. The Initiative has brought about significant impacts on academia including ICSU and ISSC since then; in this context, SCJ had also held an academic forum entitled 'Future Earth: for Sustainable Society in the Future' in June 18, 2013.

At today's conference 'International Conference on Science and Technology for Sustainability', co-organized by United Nations University, we will cover the topic of 'Transdisciplinarity for Global Sustainability: Strategies for Research and Capacity Building.' For a successful achievement of this conference, Professor Kazuhiko Takeuchi, Senior Vice-Rector, United Nations University accepted our offer to be the chairperson of the organizing committee. We also invited as speakers prominent professors from overseas and Japan: Dr. Eun-kyung Park, Chair, Korean National Committee on ESD for UNESCO; Professor R.B. Singh, University of Delhi; Mr. Frans Berkhout, Interim Director of Future Earth; Senior Professor Kaoru Sugihara, The National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies; Professor Yukio Himiyama, Hokkaido University of Education; as well as Dr. Tetsuzo Yasunari, Director-General, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature.

I sincerely hope that this conference will be fruitful for all of you. And in closing, I would like to mention my deepest gratitude to United Nations University for taking the role of co-organizer of this meaningful conference.