

琉球大学学術リポジトリ

御挨拶

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GREETINGS

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

On behalf of the University of the Ryukyus, it is my great privilege and pleasure to have this opportunity to welcome all of you who gathered here for the second International Symposium of the 21st Century COE Program on “the Wildcats: Ecological Diversity and Conservation Strategy”. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your participation today.

The University of the Ryukyus, as a university with local and global features, has actively promoted education and research taking advantages of geographical characteristics and natural environments in Okinawa. Especially our university has been cooperating closely with countries in Asia and the Pacific region. In this sense, it is quite timely to organize this international symposium discussing the diversity of the wildcats.

The 21st Century COE Program has been promoted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology since 2002 in order to provide prioritized assistance for formation of global research and education centers by introducing the principle of competition and create internationally competitive universities of the highest quality in the world. The program proposed by our university, "The Comprehensive Analyses on Biodiversity in Coral Reef and Island Ecosystems in Asian and Pacific Regions" was successfully adopted last year and about 80 researchers and young scientists involved in this program already started various research activities.

In our program, the marine and terrestrial environment of subtropical islands including coral reefs is regarded as a single large ecosystem. Researchers from multiple fields collaborate in research and education regarding the evolution and the mechanism of maintenance of biodiversity in the Ryukyu Islands, employing methodologies from various fields of study, from molecular biology to ecosystem ecology, and examining diverse phyla from microorganisms to higher plants and vertebrates, and from land to the coastal zone.

In this Second International Symposium of our COE program, we are much honored to invite active researchers of the felid biology from different aspects such as molecular biology, ecology and conservation biology. This kind of integrated discussion is completely fit to the spirit of our program.

It is our sincere hope that this symposium will provide you with opportunities to exchange diverse information and deepen relationships among us, and it will contribute to further development of this program. In closing, we sincerely hope, all of you will benefit from active discussions and this symposium will be a great success. Thank you very much.

Moshin Morita (President, University of the Ryukyus)