

Opening Remarks

KOYAMA Osamu

President, JIRCAS



Distinguished participants, good afternoon. As the President of the Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences, JIRCAS, it is my great honor and privilege to open the JIRCAS International Symposium 2022, organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency, FRA.

This year, we hold this symposium as a hybrid event, online as well as at the venue here in Tokyo. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, this is the first time in about three years that we are having the physical presence of the participants and some of the audience.

At this occasion, we have chosen the theme, “Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Sustainable Food Systems” for this year’s JIRCAS International Symposium.

In building the sustainable food systems, the potential of fisheries and aquaculture is enormous. Fishery and aquatic foods supply protein and other essential micronutrients more efficiently than other food groups in terms of per-unit weight greenhouse gas emission. At the same time, fishery and aquatic foods support the livelihoods of over 800 million people, the majority of whom work in small-scale systems.

The International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 is expected to highlight their importance in driving the food systems transformation as well as achieving sustainable development goals.

Despite their contribution, however, the role of small-scale fishers and artisanal aquaculture tends to be underrepresented in the global food systems debates. One of the reasons may lie in the fact that artisanal fisheries and aquaculture are primarily bounded by local environment, thus facing locally specific technical challenges to which no single solution is applied. In order to unlock the full potential of fisheries and aquaculture sector for food and nutrition security without leaving anyone behind, all the stakeholders should be able to share their experiences and lessons to accelerate science, technology and innovation, or STI.

Among the Japanese agriculture, forestry, and fisheries research communities, JIRCAS has played a central role in international collaboration. One of JIRCAS research projects promotes the development and dissemination of sustainable aquaculture technologies in the tropical area based on the eco-system approach. Given that, the JIRCAS International Symposium 2022 aims at providing a forum with national and international research and academic communities to discuss opportunities and challenges for a resilient, efficient and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture sector.

On behalf of the organizers, I would like to thank Mr. KOYA Takashi, Director General of Fisheries Agency, who will deliver the welcome remarks for the Symposium participants. I would also like to

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express my gratitude to our distinguished keynote speakers, Prof. YAGI Nobuyuki, of the University of Tokyo, and Dr. Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted of World Fish, who is the winner of 2021 World Food Prize. Let me also extend my appreciation to the Session Speakers with expertise and experience in developing innovations for the sustainable fishery and aquaculture sector, as well as the Chairpersons and Moderators, for joining us in this symposium to share their in-depth knowledge and insights.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all of our collaborators worldwide. Now, we are slowly resuming face-to-face collaborative research, which was somewhat disrupted during the COVID19 pandemic. This period has made us realize how we are interconnected despite movement restrictions, so that we need to act together to build the resilient food systems. We truly appreciate your continuous support and cooperation. Thank you very much.