WELCOME ADDRESS

Motoi YOSHIOKA (Dean, Graduate School of Bioresources, Mie University)

On behalf of the Faculty of Bioresources at Mie University, it is my pleasure to give these opening remarks and host the FORCOM 2011 symposium. First of all, let me express my warmest welcome to the distinguished participants, especially to the speakers who came from abroad. For the Faculty of Bioresources, where our research activities focus on international perspectives of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food, it is quite an honor that our campus and university forest have been selected as venues for this conference. The United Nations has designated 2011 the International Year of Forests. Many related events have been, and will be, held in Japan. Research on comprehensive theory and technology related to forests is needed to make full use of the materials and environmental resources provided by forests. This includes such topics as forest ecosystems, tree physiology, sustainable control and management, and evaluation of scenery. The topics and programs listed for this conference, forest planning, resource assessment, and GIS, to name a few support these research needs, and are just right for the International Year of Forests. Personally, I have become very interested in the term "e-forest," or, forest information systems, in the recent ICT era. Several days ago, a large typhoon made landfall in Japan, severely damaging forests in Mie and neighboring Nara and Wakayama Prefectures. Our university forest was no exception. Professor MATSUMURA, who is head of the forest station, is working with other staff members to implement recovery measures for the university forest. What we human beings can do for nature is limited, but I believe the best forest planning measures will lead to the most sustainable use of forest resources. Finally, I will conclude my opening remarks here: I look forward to fruitful discussion during this three-day conference that includes two field excursions to Odai-town and the Ise Shrine. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Fumio NISHIMURA (Deputy Director General of Forest and forestry section, Department of Environment and Forestry, Mie Prefectural Government Office)

Thank you for the introduction. My name is Fumio NISHIMURA, and I am the Deputy Director General of the Forest and Forestry Section, Department of Environment and Forestry, Mie Prefectural Government Office. It is a pleasure to speak to you and open this International FORCOM2011 Conference. I am pleased to say, "Welcome to Mie Prefecture!" I would like to thank Dr. MATSUMURA and the organizing committee members for the work they have done to hold this conference at Mie University. Afforestation has been encouraged in the Mie Prefecture since the Edo period. Furthermore, intensive forest management practices like pruning and thinning have been successfully used to produce fine sugi and hinoki wood products. As a result, the proportion of plantation forest in the Mie Prefecture is about 60%, higher than the mean value for Japan. The United Nations has proclaimed 2011 the International Year of Forests. Additionally, "the first year of forestry revitalization" has been selected as a key theme of the International Year of Forests in Japan. Last year, the government released "The Forestry Revitalization Plan," which set the target for timber self-sufficiency at over 50% in the next decade. To achieve this goal, in April of this year forest laws were changed to reflect a new forest planning system. In the Mie Prefecture, it is a priority that sustainable forest management practices are used to increase timber production. Therefore, we need the best possible information to guide our efforts. This conference is deeply significant and timely. Scientists, researchers, and students will once again gather, to exchange information and discuss various topics about sustainable forest resources management. I hope this conference brings lively discussion and fruitful discourse. Thank you for your attention.

KEYNOTE SPEECH

Philosophy and Techniques for Forest Resource Management: Follow up and New Challenges for Coming Generations

Naoto MATSUMURA, Yutaka YURUGI and Shinya NUMAMOTO (Mie University, Japan)

Ensuring the sustainability of forest resources for future generations has been a central concern for scientists and managers who have been engaged with the science and practice of forest management. Forest resources provide innumerable ecosystem services that benefit society and the environment. Effective and innovative scientific and practical methods have been developed and implemented to protect important ecosystem functions while meeting increased demands for forest products. Changing societal values demand innovative and/or integrated approaches to forest management that meet social, ecological, and economic goals. New monitoring approaches involving continuous evaluation of harvest-induced and human-induced changes in forest structure and/or function are needed. Additionally, new approaches to forest management, as well as innovative political measures, are needed to encourage the most efficient and effective use of resources. The objective of this conference is to gather state-of-the-art research results and techniques relating to the management and analysis of forest resources. The organizers would like to welcome and invite those who intend to share their ideas and thoughts about current problems in forest management with others from different regions and research areas.

A Perspective on Forest Registration for the Next Generation in the Era of GIS

Kazuhiro TANAKA (Kyoto Prefectural University, Japan)

Data of forest registration managed by prefecture are used as attribute data of forest GIS in Japan. There are some issues of data of forest registration as follows: Inadequate data on forest operation records, discrepancies with actual forest condition, insufficient data on public interest, slow pace of update, not open to the public because of private information protection, and insufficient data on forest structure and ecosystem function.