

Foreword



Tottori University celebrated its fiftieth anniversary on November 5, 1999. Among the participants were the presidents of Hebei Medical University, China, Qingdao University, China, and Yeungnam University, Korea, and the director generals of the Center for Biological Research of Northwest Mexico, Mexico, the Agricultural Research Corporation, Sudan, and the Research Institute for Informatics, Romania, and a professor from the University of Waterloo, Canada. During the ceremony, Tottori University promised to continue working closely with national and international institutes all over the world in solving the desertification problem which has already affected 25 per cent of the Earth's total land area (3.6 billion hectares) and roughly one-sixth of our planet's population. In addition to that,

Prof. S. H. Salih, the Director General of the Agricultural Research Corporation in the Sudan delivered a lecture at the Arid Land Research Center (ALRC) on the on going research activities for combating desertification in the Sudan. Prof. S. H. Salih, furthermore, stressed on the importance of international cooperation in the field of combating desertification.

As part of the promise made by Tottori University, the ALRC received Dr. U. Kafkafi of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, Dr. C. Dirksen of Wageningen Agricultural University, The Netherlands, and Dr. H. S. Ibrahim and Dr. N. E. Ahmed of the Agricultural Research Corporation, Sudan, as visiting professors. Besides that, there were three post-doctoral fellows from Canada, China, and Sudan, and twelve postgraduate students from China, Ghana, Oman, Sudan, and Zimbabwe.

With regard to the importance and urgency of a global action for scientific and technical contribution to the development of policies and strategies, methodologies, and technologies in combating desertification, the ALRC is looking forward to establishing scientific linkages with national and international institutes around the world. Therefore, I welcome scientists all over the world to join us at the ALRC in finding solutions to the problems of desertification which is a catastrophic consequence of the one sided relationship between man and nature. I am optimistic through global scientific cooperation and collaboration, we can feed today's hungry world and provide food security for the future. For those who are interested in participating with us at the ALRC, please refer to the 'Visiting Foreign Research Fellow Program' in this annual report, and make direct contacts with the concerned scientists at the ALRC.

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Director