

# General Comment

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Let's move on to the panel discussion, which is the second part of the program. This panel discussion is given under the theme of "Environment Hormones in the 21st Century - Searching for Widely Applicable Approaches," where we will have a discussion from various viewpoints by specialists in a variety of fields that moves towards solving the problem of environmental endocrine disrupters. Let's get started right away. I suppose you are wondering what sort of job a news commentator is. Conventional newspaper companies make a relatively clear distinction having job titles such as an editorialist and a member of the editorial staff. What a news commentator does is however sometimes the topic of discussion. Besides broadcasting over public airwaves, the commentator must not express his personal views, so we are called commentators. Because I am in charge of the field of science, there are a lot of things I have to explain. Most of my time is spent on explaining in such a manner that it can be understood by the general public, and there is never enough time to express my opinions.

Thus the difficulty in understanding also plays an important part in endocrine disrupters. How this difficulty in understanding should be handled includes a certain sense of anxiety concerning vagueness for people in the position of government, researchers, and the general public.

With this as our theme, today we shall therefore attempt to deepen our understanding of how this difficulty in understanding should be treated through lectures and discussion.

Although it is extremely unfortunate, one of our panelists, photographer Yoshino Oishi, was unable to be with us today due to poor health, so the entire panel consists of men only. Because we are talking about environmental endocrine disrupters, there are some facets of environmental endocrine disrupters that a woman's perspective would be extremely beneficial, so it is extremely unfortunate that she could not be with us here today. As you know, many of Ms. Oishi's photographs captured the effects of chemical substances used during the conflict in Vietnam and Minamata Disease from the human perspective. We were therefore really looking forward to hearing her thoughts on these subjects, and it is regrettable that she can't attend. With that in mind, I would like to introduce the rest of our panelists.

Starting from my side, we have Prof. Chisato Mori. Prof. Mori is a professor at Chiba University's Department of Bioenvironmental Medicine, Graduate School of Medicine. Prof. Mori is a pioneer in his field and is on the cutting edge of environmental endocrine disrupter research. We heard a little while ago that he has begun to conduct research related to chemical substances found in umbilical cords. Prof. Mori was the first to report that chemical substances had been detected in umbilical cords.

Next we have Prof. Ichiro Kono. Prof. Kono is involved in sports medicine at the University of Tsukuba. Because the Olympics are approaching, you are all probably more or less aware of doping in sports. Prof. Kono is the foremost authority on doping in Japan and is also the director of the Japan Anti-Doping Agency. We all have fond memories of the Seoul, Barcelona and Atlanta Olympics, where Prof. Kono was the official doctor for the Japanese team. Prof. Kono is scheduled to provide a lecture on the correlation of doping and hormones later on.

Next we have Prof. Kazuyuki Aihara who is a professor of engineering at the graduate school of the University of Tokyo. I think many of you may have heard of "chaos engineering" but there are probably few who understand this subject. Prof. Aihara is one who first introduced this science to the world, and I think it may be a typical example of the difficulty in understanding I mentioned a little while ago. Today Prof. Aihara will provide a lecture and join in a discussion from the standpoint of a researcher to study this subject.

The next person I am sure you are well acquainted with. It is the co-author of “Our Stolen Future,” John Peterson Myers. Dr. Myers is currently the director of the Alton Jones Foundation, which is involved in environmental preservation and prevention of nuclear war.

Next we have Prof. Takeshi Yoro, who specializes in anatomy, and who I am sure you are also familiar with. NHK, the company I work for, enjoys a close relationship with Prof. Yoro and often has Prof. Yoro on our programs as a guest to have access to his great source of knowledge. They say that Prof. Yoro draws the biggest viewing audience of all teachers that appear on NHK educational television, the channel three in the Kanto region. I’m sure you will enjoy hearing what he has to say.

Last but not least we have Mr. Soichiro Iwao, Director-General of the Environmental Health Department of the Ministry of the Environment, under whose auspices this symposium is being held. Having first served as Director of the Health Sciences Division of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, he assumed his current post in 2001. We will hear from Mr. Iwao later on how the government feels this difficulty in understanding and what they are doing about it.

Our first speaker will be Prof. Ichiro Kono, and the title of his lecture is “Environment and Doping.” Each speaker will be allowed fifteen minutes. Prof. Kono will be followed by Prof. Aihara and Prof. Yoro. We will then move on to our discussion.