

Greetings



Endocrine disrupters (EDs) have become the focus of great concern among the general public over their adverse effects on human beings and wildlife, but there is still much to be explored scientifically making EDs a key environmental safety issue. Therefore, the Ministry of the Environment, Japan, is conducting environmental monitoring and hazard assessment, and is also engaged in the exchange of information with other countries and international organizations under a framework of international coordination.

As a part of these activities, the Ministry has held International Symposiums on Environmental Endocrine Disrupters since 1998. The past symposiums brought together leading scientists from all over the world. Their productive discussions were highly appreciated on an international level.

There are three major aims of the Symposium:

- to share information concerning initiatives taken by various countries of the world for dealing with ED-related issues;
- to discuss the direction of future research on endocrine disrupters through international cooperation; and
- to provide an opportunity for an exchange of opinions on chemicals that various stakeholders (e.g. general public, NGOs, technical experts, industry and government) may have.

This year's symposium takes a look at the effect of endocrine disrupters on children, and we will have sessions and a special lecture by Dr. Tsutsumi, who serves as a Professor of Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Tokyo.

We are also scheduled to hold a panel discussion on "environmental risk communication" since emission data are made publicly available and the role of risk communication increases at the end of this year in accordance with the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (the Law Concerning Reporting, etc. of Releases to the Environment of Specific Chemical Substances and Promoting Improvements in Their Management).

In order to address environmental problems, nationally and internationally to recognize the importance of development of partnerships among concerned stakeholders in the society and Japan's initiative.

I earnestly hope that it will be a valuable conference for the stakeholders around the world.

鈴木俊一

Shunichi Suzuki

Minister of the Environment