

## Message from the President

# Role of the Plankton Society of Japan

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It was 1899 when a red-tide at the head of Suruga Bay was reported and its forming agent identified as *Noctiluca* by T. Nishikawa. In the year following this, the first scientific report on plankton in Japan, the terms “plankton” and “planktology” were translated into Japanese by the psychologist K. Okamura. It was 13 years after the terms were proposed by V. Hensen. Planktology in Japan therefore has a history of nearly 100 years. As Japan is surrounded by sea, the fields of marine science and naval research have enjoyed great interest right from this early period. From these beginnings to the 1950s, planktology in Japan progressed mainly in the fields of taxonomy, biogeography and also in its relationships to aquaculture and fisheries. Thanks to the great effort of Dr. S. Motoda and others, the Plankton Society of Japan was initiated in 1952 and these planktological studies were expanded in the 1960s to include aspects of experimental physiology, population dynamics, productivity estimates and the like.

During the international cooperative study of the Kuroshio from 1965–79, opportunities for Japanese scientists to go abroad for study increased, and subsequently planktology in Japan has further diversified and deepened. Research effort has been very significant in the areas of red tide/toxic flagellates, mass culture of food organisms for aquaculture, and fisheries targeting planktonic organisms. Nearly 100 years of data on the taxonomy and distribution of plankton in waters around Japan produced a 1574 page, monumental publication, “An Illustrated Guide to Marine Plankton in Japan”, published in 1997. Global warming and other anthropogenic effects on plankton ecology are becoming more pressing as a subject for research. Another major objective for planktology in Japan will be to develop a holistic picture of marine productivity.

At their general assembly in 1997, the Plankton Society of Japan approved my presidency, together with the appointment of other committee officers, including Secretary General/Treasurer (Dr. Y. Endo) and chief editors of the journals (Dr. S. Nishida and Dr. N. Shiga). With these committee members, I believe that we can deal successfully with any eventualities and can look forward to the steady development of the Plankton Society. However, further growth of the Plankton Society depends on the existence of exciting research activities and close cooperation between members.

Starting this year, the Plankton Society will issue, biannually, two journals: “Plankton Biology and Ecology” in English and “Bulletin of the Plankton Society of Japan” in Japanese. In order to strengthen the former journal, I am pleased to announce that we have added, along with Dr. C. B. Miller and Dr. F. D. Ferrari of the USA, and Mr. D. J. Lindsay of Australia, two more members to the editorial board: Dr. J. G. Greenwood of Australia and M. Madhupratap of India.

I would like to take this opportunity to propose two more important maxims for strengthening the Plankton Society—internationalization and contributions for the benefit of the public at large. Internationalization entails the dispatch of our most exciting results to the world and

contributions to the public can be made carefully determining what the expectations and demands of the public are. The first issue of "Plankton Biology and Ecology" is the first step towards true internationalization of the Society. We have decided to provide a limited amount of space for the presentation of exciting results submitted by non-members. Fortunately, the number of manuscripts submitted to the journal has increased dramatically, so the quality of papers therein should improve significantly. This will of course lead to the journal drawing more attention internationally. It is therefore necessary for members to cooperate in submitting more comprehensive manuscripts of a finer quality than before. At the same time, we need to make greater efforts to include information for the benefit of the public at large. There have been a number of inquiries from the public concerning such topics as fisheries resources, coastal area management, oil pollution, global warming, etc. To give the public precise predictions, useful opinions and warnings, if necessary, we face quite a challenge.

In addressing these concerns, I believe that many members of the Plankton Society will enhance their self-confidence both in research and presentations of the results, and will enjoy friendship and cooperation within our group. I put forward these suggestions for your consideration and welcome your views and ideas.