

Message from the President

Report on the Society's activities in 1997

MAKOTO OMORI

A year has passed since I was assigned the great responsibility of becoming the president of the Plankton Society of Japan and the new executive committee took office. During this period, we issued Volume 44, No. 1 and 2 (combined) and Volume 45, No. 1 of both the English journal (*Plankton Biology and Ecology*) and the Japanese journal (*Bulletin of the Plankton Society of Japan*), revised the Membership Directory, and held three symposia, "Biodiversity of planktonic organisms" in Tsukuba in April, 1997, "Plankton research in the coastal waters of Kyushu—an environmental scientific approach" in Kagoshima in October, 1997, and "The microbial loop and the planktonic food chain" in Tokyo in April, 1998.

To my delight, the number of contributions to *Plankton Biology and Ecology* have increased dramatically following the changes in design and style of the journal, and following our decision to accept excellent research papers from non-members. As a result, the number of printed pages increased considerably and exceeded our initial predictions for the 1997 fiscal year. We saw high level of participation by graduate students and non-member research scientists at every symposium. This phenomenon could be said to reflect an increasing interest in planktology as both in the research field and in the community at large.

When the number of volumes of the English and Japanese journals increased from two a year to four a year, as a matter of course, publication expenses increased accordingly. I had of course predicted this would happen. We have kept membership dues stable for the last seven years by allocating a part of the balance carried forward by the society each year to cover deficiencies, and have not changed the budgeting structure greatly. However, firm financial foundations are indispensable for the sound development of the society. At the general assembly in April 1998, I received the consent of members for a partial increase in the membership dues (for Regular Members from 4,000 to 6,000 yen; Foreign Members from 4,500 to 6,000 yen; those who subscribe only to the English journal 5,000 yen; Institutional Members from 8,000 to 12,000 yen). I express my gratitude for your understanding concerning this matter. In connection with this, I would like to emphasize the importance of securing a stable and sufficient income source as being extremely important for the furtherment of our society. The number of members is 663 at present. However, I hope to see this increase and to also make greater profits from advertisement fees.

We donated copies of our society's journals to the National Diet Library as well as to 68 overseas institutions and universities to attract interest in our activities. At the general assembly, it was decided that Honorary Members be expanded to foreign members. Furthermore, the article concerning "Special Members" was admitted to be incorporated into the society's charter. Its purpose is to express our gratitude to regular members of over 68 years of age who have been members of the society for more than thirty years, for their years of contribution to the society's activities. Furthermore, since there has been a request from members to set up a "Society Award", this matter will be discussed further by the councilors, with proposals made

and deliberated on at next year's general assembly.

Recently, research on plankton has been attracting public attention, in particular, concerning several environmental issues such as the occurrence of red tides causing mass mortalities in pearl oysters, the diffusion and concentration of agricultural/industrial chemicals, particularly of endocrine disruptors, the iron fertilization strategy to reduce atmospheric CO₂ concentrations, and the potential impact of CO₂ storage in the deep oceans. Beyond these concerns, both for the prediction of fluctuations in fisheries resources and the preservation of biological diversity, more research on the role of plankton in the world ecosystem has become urgent. In order for the Plankton Society of Japan to provide correct and useful information to society in the areas of concern, I earnestly hope to see renewed efforts and more active roles played by our members.