

Reflections on the Life and Contributions of Dr. Tadashi Yamamoto

By Dr. Yoshiaki Matsuda



It was a big surprise to hear of the death of Dr. **Tadashi Yamamoto**. I met him at his house two months ago and found him in good condition. With Dr. Okamoto, a JIFRS member, I had planned to revisit him on around November 14 in conjunction with JIFRS' annual meeting in Tokyo.

I met Dr. Yamamoto the first time in Honolulu on his way back to Japan after his retirement from the FAO. At that time, I was working on the Oceans Project at the East-West Center Environment and Policy Institute. Immediately after returning to Japan he became a Professor at the Faculty of Economics of Nippon University; his interest was in developing a fisheries forum consisting of people from industry, administration, academics and the general public. In 1982, he established the Japan International Fisheries Research Society (JIFRS) with Dr. Yutaka Hirasawa (now deceased), Shigeaki Shindo, Dr. Tsunenori Kusakawa (now deceased), Mr. Miki Kasuhiro and Mr. Akira Enoki.

Under Dr. Yamamoto's guidance, JIFRS's ordinary activities have included an annual meeting/symposium with paper presentations and publication of two newsletters. JIFRS published "Studies of International Fisheries" from Koseisha—Kouseikaku in 1986, "Journal of International Fisheries vol. 2" in 1987 and "Journal of International Fisheries vol. 3" in 1988. In 1991, Dr. Yamamoto organized JIFRS/ZENGYOREN/IIFET's Symposium on Fisheries Management at the National Research Institute of Fisheries, Tokyo, 26 August to 3 September 1990, and published the proceedings. Further, JIFRS published "Fisheries Management in the World" in 1994 and "Fisheries in the World" in 1999.

JIFRS continued to publish the "Journal of International Fisheries" vol 4 to vol. 6 until 2004, and acted as the local organizer of the 12th IIFET 2004 Japan Conference in 2004. Dr. Yamamoto contributed 10 million yen to start off the conference fundraising, which ensured the conference's success. Regardless of the fact that this conference was being organized in the middle of a very depressed economy, the organizers succeeded in collecting 35 million yen, of which 7 million yen were used to support travel of participants from developing countries, and 2.7 million yen were donated to fund the ongoing JIFRS Yamamoto Prize. Participants in the IIFET 2004 Japan Conference consisted of 140 from Western countries, 156 from developing countries and 247 from Japan, totaling 543. As a result, the number of countries represented within IIFET and the international nature of our network grew significantly. This was the first and largest scientific conference on fisheries held in Japan. In doing so, JIFRS became well known throughout Japan and in other areas of the world, and has been listed among the outstanding fisheries organizations in the Fisheries Yearbook of Japan.

Five years have passed since IIFET 2004 Japan. JIFRS continued its activities with Dr. Yamamoto's support. These include organizing the first Fisheries Seminar between Japan and Taiwan with the support of the Interchange Association of Japan in 2005, participation in the 13th IIFET conference, IIFET 2006 Portsmouth (England) and organizing the 2nd Fisheries Seminar between Taiwan and Japan in 2006.

Although Dr. Yamamoto could not attend the 14th IIFET conference, IIFET 2008 Vietnam, many other JIFRS members did participate. The Coordinator of the Organizing Committee of IIFET 2008, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kim Anh Thi Nguyen, was the recipient of the JIFRS Yamamoto Prize at IIFET 2004 Japan. Since its inception in 2004, nine people from developing countries and three Japanese have benefitted from the JIFRS Yamamoto Prize. In 2008, JIFRS organized the social science sec-



Dr. Yamamoto's funeral bier, including the large fish banner displayed at the IIFET 2004 Japan conference.

tion of the 5th World Fisheries Congress in Yokohama Japan in which 70 people (34 foreigners and 36 Japanese) from 19 countries participated, and supported the participation of 14 people from developing countries. The "Journal of International Fisheries" vol 8 will be published before the end of 2009.

Dr. Yamamoto had a long and distinguished career with FAO as a statistician. To effectively implement fisheries resource management, good statistics are essential as a scientific base. Few in administration or academic societies paid as much attention to this as Dr Yamamoto. One of his biggest worries was that, despite all of his efforts, an adequate number of successors in this vital work have not been found.

Dr. Yamamoto's spirit lives on in all of our efforts to encourage the wise management and utilization of ocean resources. JIFRS offers its sincere admiration of Dr. Yamamoto's accomplishments and will continue his vital work, inspired by his spirit.

May you rest in peace, and continue to inspire us in the future.