

Health Effects of Radiation and the Role of the Media
Hokkaido University Office of International Affairs
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Opening Remarks by Dr. Takeo Hondoh (Vice President of Hokkaido University)

Good evening. I'm Dr. Takeo Hondoh, Vice President of Hokkaido University and the head of the Office of International Affairs. Two weeks ago, we held the first special lecture on the latest information on the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant in response to the lack of information for non-Japanese speaking international students and scholars. Since then, we have heard that many international students and scholars are concerned about the radiation effects on human bodies. In order to minimize such concerns and anxiety, we organized this second special lecture entitled "Health Effects of Radiation and the Role of the Media."

As was described by Dr. Fujiyoshi in the first lecture, small amounts of radioactive materials (radionuclides) have been detected in Sapporo which are presumed to have been carried from the Fukushima nuclear power plant by atmospheric circulation. However, it should be emphasized that the concentrations of the radioactive materials were so small that they were only detectable by highly sensitive analyzing equipment. The concentrations measured were well below the governmental limits, and the radiation dose rate after the accident has been within the natural fluctuation level measured for the last five years in Sapporo.

In today's second special lecture, Dr. Tamaki will detail the effects of radiation on our health. Dr. Yamaguchi will discuss food safety issues based on his latest data, and Dr. Seaton will discuss international media responses to the accident of the Fukushima nuclear power plant.

I sincerely hope you gain a scientific understanding of the nuclear power plant situation through today's talk on these three different topics.

Thank you.