



Ribbon-cutting ceremony in front of the main building (second person from the right is Mr. Toshio Kodama, President of JAEA)

Completion of research base for environmental restoration of Fukushima in Miharu Grand opening of Fukushima Prefectural Center for Environmental Creation

The Center for Environmental Creation, a comprehensive research base developed by Fukushima Prefecture to carry out radiation monitoring, survey research, information gathering/dissemination, and education/training/exchange for restoring and creating the environment, has fully opened. The main building, research building and facility in Minamisoma City opened before this spring. Now that the construction of the information and communication building was completed, full operation of the entire facilities started. At the information and communication building — nicknamed "Comutan Fukushima" — visitors can learn, using various pieces of equipment, about the principles of radiation and efforts for environmental restoration. Also, the Environmental Creation Theater in a shape of a sphere with a 13m diameter in this building allows visitors to experience current conditions in Fukushima with dynamic 360-degree projection inside the sphere.

The Center for Environmental Creation was developed by Fukushima Prefecture in the aim of achieving early recovery of the environment contaminated by radioactive materials released by the accident of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. (TEPCO), and of creating an environment



Science Cafe held at event commemorating the grand opening

where residents of the prefecture can live with peace-of-mind. The Center is comprised of the main building, research building and information and communication building in Miharu Town, and the Environmental Radiation Center and other facilities in Minamisoma City.

The construction of the main building which is the core of the Environmental Creation Center was completed in October 2015. The research building opened in April 2016, and staff of the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) and the National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) are already engaged in environmental research and investigation. The information and communication building is used for experience-based learning targeted at children, and as a forum for various types of interaction. At the Environmental Radiation Center completed in Minamisoma City in November 2015, in addition to constant monitoring of the situation around the nuclear power station and air dose rates, JAEA is conducting research and development on remote radiation monitoring using unmanned observation ships, unmanned aircrafts and so forth.

Fukushima Prefecture held a commemorative ceremony on July 21, the day of the grand opening. At this ceremony, the ribbon cutting was done by Mr. Masao Uchibori (Governor of Fukushima Prefecture), Mr. Shinji Inoue (Senior Vice Minister of the Environment), Mr. Masayoshi Yoshino (member of the House of Representatives), Mr. Koichiro Gemba (member of the House of Representatives), Ms. Emi Kaneko (member of the House of Representatives), and others. Toshio Kodama, President of JAEA (photo at right) said: “Five years have passed since we started the effort for contributing to environmental restoration and measures for the recovery of the affected areas, holding the responsibility seriously as the Japan's only comprehensive research and development organization for nuclear energy. Our efforts towards the restoration of Fukushima have made a certain progress owing to the supports by various people and organizations. We keenly realize that we need to move the effort to the next step to ensure even greater safety and remove anxiety of people. I hope that the completion of the information and communication building will promote



Toshio Kodama (President of JAEA) making a speech in the ceremony



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cooperation between Fukushima Prefecture, NIES and JAEA to provide the residents of the prefecture with knowledge of radiation that support them to develop a vision for the future of Fukushima.”

Efforts by JAEA towards the environmental restoration

Fukushima Prefecture, NIES and JAEA have signed a collaborative agreement for this Fukushima Prefectural Center for Environmental Creation. Through the collaboration, the three organizations will carry out activities such as: 1) analysis/evaluation of data on environmental radiation monitoring, 2) research/investigation and information gathering

on radiation measurements, decontamination, waste disposal, environmental dynamics, environmental creation, 3) dissemination of easy-to-understand information to prefecture residents, 4) international information sharing, 5) education/training/exchange to cultivate future creation, and 6) long-term collaboration with universities and human resource development.

Based on the above collaborative agreement, about 80 staff of JAEA are working at the research building in areas such as research on migration of radioactive materials in the environment, and development of technologies for radiation monitoring, decontamination, and volume reduction of radioactive waste.

In addition, at the Environmental Radiation Center in Minamisoma City, about 20 staff are engaged in development of remote monitoring technology using unmanned helicopters and multicopters (generally known as "drones") in order to efficiently measure radiation around the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and the east coast of Fukushima Prefecture (Hama-Dori district).

After the accident of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station due to the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, the staff of JAEA quickly came to Fukushima Prefecture, and started to conduct environmental radiation monitoring and support for the evacuation of residents. In June 2011, JAEA set up an activity base in Fukushima City. After that, JAEA has been engaged in various tasks related to environmental restoration in Fukushima.

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