

**Address by Dr. Torng-chuan Wu, Vice Chairman  
Council of Agriculture, at the Opening Ceremony of the  
“Third Symposium on the Impact of Climatic Change on  
Agricultural Production in the Pacific Rim”  
Taipei, May 17, 1993**

Dr. Tsay, Vice Minister Mao, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am honored to be given this opportunity to address the opening ceremony of this important international symposium on behalf of Dr. Paul M. H. Sun, Chairman of the Council of Agriculture, who is unable to be here with you because of other commitments this morning. The third of its kind, the present symposium would certainly continue to make contributions to the cause of agroclimatic studies because of the wide range of topics covered and the outstanding group of experts and scholars assembled for this gathering in Taipei. May I first of all extend a hearty welcome to all participants, especially those from abroad, and express grateful appreciation to the principal sponsor, the Central Weather Bureau, and other cosponsors on behalf of the Council of Agriculture, another cosponsor.

Agriculture remains a fundamental sector of the economy in this country. Despite the gradual decline of its relative importance in the economy as a result of rapid economic growth. Besides being a food supplier, agriculture is even more important when it comes to protecting the environment, conserving ecological systems and stabilizing rural society. Agriculture is now in a crucial stage of restructuring as it is confronted with the impact of economic liberalization and internationalization. The agricultural effort will from now focus upon resource planning, restructuring, technological innovation, and marketing streamlining in a bid to boost productivity and make agriculture a sustainable and competitive industry.

It goes without saying that agricultural production is easily susceptible to climate and other natural factors. Crops in particular are most vulnerable. Situated in the subtropical zone, Taiwan is often subjected to attack by typhoons and storms, which inflicts serious damage on crops. The per-hectare yield and quality vary a lot with sunshine, rainfall, temperature, and other climatic factors. Agroclimatic studies offer various practical guides for selecting crop varieties, forecasting yields, planning for processing and marketing schemes, and minimizing damage from natural disasters.

In an effort to minimize agricultural losses and to make the best of agrometeorological data, the Council of Agriculture started in 1986 to cooperate with the Central Weather Bureau and the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Forestry in developing an agrometeorological observation network in Taiwan. By the end of 1992, 27 observation stations had been installed. In order to strengthen the application of data collected in regard to agricultural production, the Council has financed research projects since 1989. One of the primary goals is to ensure a firm

grasp of various climatic factors affecting crop growth in order to improve the quality of agricultural products.

I am sure that this symposium, with a relatively large number of participants from six countries in the Pacific Rim, will be able to come up with very useful conclusions and recommendations through the presentation of papers coupled with a full exchange of views and expertise. The impact on future agroclimatic studies and applications will certainly be deep and constructive.

In concluding, I would like to wish the symposium a great success and all participants a most productive gathering.

Thank you.