

Dioxin2001
Gyeongju, Korea
Sept 9-14, 2001

Organization

Dioxin 2001 was the first conference held in the new Millenium. About 900 delegates from 29 countries attended the conference. Six hundred original research papers (200 oral and 400 poster) were presented in 30 different major sessions, and were published in over 2,500 pages of proceedings. For the first time in the Dioxin series of symposia, only the PowerPoint presentation format was permitted for verbal presentations.

Members of International Advisory Board; IAB awarded the plaque of appreciation to Dioxin 2001 chair (in the middle).



Contribution to the host country

As the conference was held in Korea for the first time, high interest and support was received from government, industry, NGO groups, and academia in Korea, including excellent numbers of delegates from all these sectors. The conference provided the host country with the valuable opportunity to boost academic research and public interest concerning dioxins and related compounds. Since Dioxin 2001, the number of delegates from Korea in subsequent conferences of this series has tripled. The success of Dioxin 2001 shows how this series of symposia can significantly enhance public concern and action in the host country, in addition to providing an excellent means of technology transfer. By continuing a tradition of choosing the host country for this symposium from a wide selection of various countries from different regions, increased environmental protection initiatives may be generated world-wide.

Financial support

Outstanding support from the various sponsors was invaluable to the success of the conference. In particular, Wellington Laboratory's support at the early stages of conference preparation was extremely helpful and encouraged the organizing committee. Over 20 companies from 6 different countries participated as exhibitors and provided significant financial support. Gyeongju city, Korean FDA, and the Ministry of

Environment were major governmental agencies who provided financial support. In addition, Japan supported the conference with a large number of participants. One third of the total delegates were from the neighboring country, Japan.

Social events

About 600 people attended the informal reception on Sunday night (September 9) and enjoyed the excellent hotel buffet meal. To our knowledge, this was the largest size gathering for the informal reception. On Tuesday (Sept. 11), an official welcome reception was held in the grand ball room of the Hyundai hotel. Due to the rainy weather, most of the registered gave up adventuring the night life of the old capital and attended this event.

Korean traditional folk dance during the official welcome reception; the picture shows the date of reception-Sept. 11, 2001. Most delegates heard news of the 9-11 attack late in the evening after returning to their rooms from this reception.



The Korean traditional folk dance was performed on a rhythm of percussionist. Fortunately, the weather was cooperative on Wednesday host tour. Delegates toured Bulkuksa buddhist temple (World cultural heritage monuments designated by UNESCO), the oldest astro-observatory in the Orient and others. Symposium banquet on Thursday was opened by Dr. Karasek's toast. Many of delegates remained in the conference until the final day. While delegates were busy attending the sessions, the accompanying persons enjoyed full day or half day tour such as Yangdong folk village, folk craft village, and national museum.

Dinner at a Korean traditional restaurant; delegates enjoyed a variety of the Korean style tastes and were challenged with Korean common lifestyles such as knee-down and the use of chopsticks.



Unprecedented challenges;

Upon returning to their rooms after enjoying wonderful food and a Korean traditional art performance at the official welcome reception, participants couldn't believe their eyes on what they saw on television. The 9-11 attack dominated the whole world media. The next morning, everyone was worried about the situation. In particular, delegates from the US tried to contact their families and get updated information. All airplanes bound for the US continent were cancelled at once – an unprecedented situation in the world's modern history. The organizing committee did their best to provide updated travel information. Despite such a challenge, all conference schedules were run without any problem, with the help of delegates' active participation. Fortunately, US delegates found the means of returning home safely by the end of the conference. Because the news media spent their entire time covering the 9-11 terror, scheduled coverage of the Dioxin 2001 event from the various mass media was all cancelled. Some of the important issues that would have drawn a great deal of public attention were not exposed to the general public.

Acknowledgements;

The organizing committee appreciates Judy Kang and her crew for their excellent secretariat support.

Students are packing delegate bags on the eve of Dioxin 2001. Students take a break in the stacks of bags, books and other materials to be stuffed.



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