

# Foreword

This is the Fourth International Rice Genetics Symposium in the series of symposia held at IRRI every five years. The first, held in 1985, led to the birth of the Rice Genetics Cooperative (RGC). The RGC took the lead in organizing these symposia and greatly enhanced international collaboration. In the same year, the Rockefeller Foundation established its International Program on Rice Biotechnology, which has played a major role in advancing frontiers of knowledge on cellular and molecular genetics of rice, international collaboration, and human resource development. In the second symposium, a unified system of numbering rice chromosomes and linkage groups was adopted. The orientation of classical and molecular maps was one of the many highlights of the third symposium. The fourth symposium brought together 520 rice scientists from 32 countries and provided an excellent forum for scientists from developed and developing countries to share information on the latest advances in rice science and to develop collaborative research arrangements.

The symposium featured 31 plenary lectures in seven sessions, 130 contributory papers in six concurrent sessions, and 240 poster presentations on different aspects of rice genetics. World famous geneticists delivered plenary lectures covering a wide range of topics from classical genetics to the most advanced research on sequencing of the rice genome and functional genomics. Various sessions provided an important forum for reviewing the latest advances in rice research and for in-depth discussion and exchange of information on classical genetics, biosystematics and evolution, molecular markers, transformation, genome organization, gene isolation, regulation of gene expression, sequencing of the rice genome, and bioinformatics.

Also during the symposium, three workshops were held on molecular breeding, functional genomics, and bioinformatics. These workshops led to initiatives among the national agricultural research and extension systems to join the international program in these three areas.

I am pleased to see that the plenary lectures have been published in this book. The concurrent and poster presentations will be published in a supplementary volume.

I would like to thank the organizing committee and other colleagues at IRRI who have devoted a great deal of time to organizing this symposium. IRRI would especially like to acknowledge the Rockefeller Foundation for its financial support for this symposium.

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