

The President's Address at FY2026 New Employee Welcome Ceremony

Hello everyone. I am Koguchi, President of the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA). I am very pleased to welcome all of you today as new colleagues of JAEA.

Last October marked the 20th anniversary since our predecessor organizations, Japan Atomic Energy Research Institute and Japan Nuclear Cycle Development Institute, were merged to establish the Japan Atomic Energy Agency.

Our journey over these years has been far from smooth. In particular, Japan's nuclear energy activities were put to a halt due to the Great East Japan Earthquake that hit in March 2011 and the accompanying accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. These events directly affected JAEA, and many of our R&D activities had to be suspended or forced to change direction.

However, in the fall of 2022, the Japanese government introduced a major policy known as the GX Policy aiming at achieving a decarbonized society in Japan by FY2050, and redefined therein nuclear energy, which had been expected to phase out, as a key solution to realize this goal alongside renewable energies. Under this new policy trend, the range of options for utilizing nuclear energy has expanded significantly, and society's expectations towards JAEA have greatly increased accordingly.

By its very nature, JAEA is responsible for implementing the nuclear energy policies of Japan. In response to this significant policy shift of the government, in April 2023, JAEA presented, both inside and outside the organization, the directions of its R&D activities to undertake outlined in the form of Vision.

The Vision statement reads "Exploring the Future through the Synergy of Nuclear and Renewable Energies," and we have defined the three priority R&D areas as below, referring them as Synergy, Sustainable, and Ubiquitous, respectively, and classified each staff's R&D activities into one of these categories to clarify everyone's position.

- (1) Pursuit of synergies with renewable energy
- (2) Pursuit of sustainability in nuclear energy itself
- (3) Pursuit of nuclear applications across a wide range of areas

Also, with a view to revitalizing and strengthening our R&D framework to realize the new Vision, we have been implementing various management reforms and moving forward at

full speed to ensure we truly meet the expectations of the public and society to JAEA.

These reforms are a prerequisite to achieve significant outcomes by maximizing our limited resources, and as President, I am leading these efforts from the front.

Furthermore, nuclear R&D is making rapid progress worldwide in response to the demands of the time, and it is no longer realistic for Japan alone to address all the issues. Therefore, JAEA has been deepening collaborations with many research institutions and companies abroad.

However, as you all know, the world is changing swiftly and is not always predictable. Given such global circumstances, in order to reinforce international collaboration and achieve the targeted results, it is important to keep long-term objectives in mind and clearly define our position. For international partners to choose JAEA, we must demonstrate that we are an appealing partner in their eyes. In other words, international cooperation is also international competition. I hope you will all recognize this importance, refine yourselves, step outside your familiar world, and make the most of your abilities on the broader stage.

You have just joined JAEA at such a pivotal moment as new members. Unsurprisingly, an unknown world lies ahead of you, and you may feel anxious. Also, those who have worked with other companies or organizations before joining JAEA may feel uneasy about the difference here. But please don't worry. Your future colleagues are all looking forward to your arrival, and I am confident that exciting new days await you.

Finally, I have one request. JAEA has a history spanning more than 70 years, including those of the Japan Atomic Energy Research Institute, the Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation, the Japan Nuclear Cycle Development Institute, and the organizations that preceded them. We also run newer sites such as the Fukushima and Horonobe centers. Under such circumstances, there is a downside that each site becomes isolated from the others, which weakens the sense of unity across JAEA. This structure, commonly referred to as a "silo structure," acts as a barrier in pursuing various organizational solutions.

You have joined JAEA as members of the entire organization, and each site is merely the venue where your activities take place. Regardless of whether you belong to research, engineering, or administrative positions, you will strengthen collaboration through various tasks and serve as the driving force in advancing the nuclear energy of Japan. In order to achieve this, I encourage you not to stay confined within silos, but instead to make full use of your strengths within the broader framework across JAEA.

JAEA is taking a new step forward, setting itself apart from the past, to realize new social values. In that sense, the organization stands in the same place as you do, embarking on a new

beginning. I believe that the greatest achievements are realized when personal growth and organizational growth advance together. I hope you will reflect on this idea as we move forward side by side.

I sincerely hope that today marks the first step of your journey, and I offer this message to all of you who have just joined us as new JAEA colleagues.

KOGUCHI Masanori
President