



## **Begrüßungsrede**

### **Prof. Dr.-Ing. Matthias Kleiner** **zur Verleihung des** **Eugen und Ilse Seibold-Preises**

20. Mai 2011,  
Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften

Your Excellencies,

Dear Professor Seibold and Mrs. Seibold,

Dear Professor Tatsumi,

Dear Professor Erker,

Dear Japanese and German friends,

I extend to you my very warm welcome to the 8th Eugen and Ilse Seibold Prize award ceremony. This year, the ceremony will be followed by a Japan-German Symposium in the afternoon – jointly organised by JSPS, JSPS Alumni and DFG – which takes a look at the past, the present and our future of Japan-German Science Cooperation.

Before commencing the actual ceremony, I would kindly like to ask you to stand up and commemorate the victims whose lives have been claimed by the earthquake and tsunami in Japan on March 11 and to express our deep condolences to our friends and partners in Japan.

**\* minute´s silence \***

It is my great pleasure to welcome you here today on behalf of DFG in the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, to celebrate with us the prestigious Eugen and Ilse Seibold Prize. It is the second time during my presidency that I have the honor to present this award to outstanding Japanese and German scientists.

The eponyms of the award are Mr. Eugen Seibold, DFG president from 1980 to 1985, and his wife, Mrs. Ilse Seibold.

In 1994, the marine geologist Eugen Seibold – together with the US-American ecologist Lester Brown – received the Blue Planet Prize, an international award sponsored by the Asahi Glass Foundation. Eugen and Ilse Seibold donated a considerable amount of the prize money to the DFG, not only to express their gratitude, but particularly to

support and promote mutual understanding and research cooperation between Japan and Germany.

As you might know, according to the intention of the award's founders, the DFG has bestowed this prize every two years since 1997. The prize – which is endowed with €10 000 (for each prize winner) – is awarded to one German and one Japanese scientist who are recognised for their outstanding contribution to cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. The prize is awarded for particular achievements in all disciplines rotating between the humanities and social sciences with law and economics, and the natural sciences, including life sciences, engineering and medicine. This year, the prize will be awarded for achievements in the natural sciences.

Dear Mr. Seibold, dear Mrs. Seibold,

let me once again thank you for your commitment to promote scientific dialogue as well as exchange and interaction in research between Japan and Germany by providing the basis to create an award which is unique in Germany. Let me also and distinctly express my sincere thanks that you join the award ceremony here in Berlin today.

I would also like to welcome and thank the members of the jury.

Dear Professor Linscheid, dear Dr. Aufderheide,

thank you for your dedication to this honorary activity. Please convey my thanks also to Professor Urban and Professor Krönke who unfortunately cannot be with us today. This year, eleven nominees have been reviewed and appraised, among them five German and six Japanese prestigious scientists. It was a real challenge to come to a decision as all of the nominated scientists are outstanding and have very impressive biographies which shows their activity in Japanese-German collaborations. This has been true for all nominees since 1997. Altogether, we have received more than 80 nominations from 15 eligible organisations. I would like to thank all scientists involved who supported us not only by nominating peers but also by providing reviewers for the nominees thus enabling us to make our decisions.

Also, I want to express my thanks to the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities for their hospitality. It is always a special pleasure to be here.

Dear Professor Gerhard Erker of the University of Münster,

Dear Professor Kazuyuki Tatsumi of the Nagoya University,

thank you for coming all the way from Japan to receive today the Eugen and Ilse Seibold Prize 2011 together with Professor Erker.

It is a great pleasure to celebrate the two of you here today.

The Seibold Prize is a symbol for the long-standing trusted tradition of close scientific cooperation between Germany and Japan. A cooperation which is of utmost importance for the DFG and its research funding, clearly demonstrated also by the opening of DFG's office in Tokyo two years ago, the director of which, Dr. Iris Wieczorek, came from Tokyo to join us here today. Our main Japanese partner organisations and friends are the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) and the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST).

Expanding and maintaining bilateral contacts in science and research depends highly on the commitment of individuals. The two exceptional chemists we are celebrating here today have truly dedicated themselves to their work which genuinely integrates German-Japanese research collaborations. The research duo founded the first Japanese-German Research Training Group "Complex Functional Systems in Chemistry", which has been funded jointly by the DFG and our Japanese partner, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) since 2006.

The International Research Training Groups are a particularly strong instrument for exchange between countries. Looking into the future, this kind of exchange of scientists and researchers at a very early stage of their career is of high importance. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my sincere regards to Professor Ono, president of JSPS and a long-standing friend of DFG, who cannot be here today, but is represented by Professor Kobayashi, Mr. Hisashi Kato from JSPS headquarter in Tokyo and Professor Kodaira, director of JSPS Bonn Office, and many other JSPS colleagues, a warm welcome to you!

Professor Ono is also a strong advocate of supporting young scientists, and when I met him in Tokyo last year, we agreed on jointly promoting and expanding the IRTG programme further. Nevertheless, we need the dedication and help of individual researchers like yourselves, Mr. Erker and Mr. Tatsumi, to foster research cooperation. Allow me – especially in the current situation in the aftermath of the earthquake of March 11 – to appeal strongly to German researchers to travel to Japan, continue and deepen your cooperation with Japanese colleagues. The DFG encourages you and supports your collaborations wherever possible.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

We are now looking forward to the laudation.

Today's laudator is Professor Dr. Michael Linscheid. From 2006 to 2010 he was the Vice President of Research at the Humboldt University Berlin. Today, he is the chairman of the supervisory board of Humboldt-Innovation GmbH and a highly respected chemist with a wide international network.

He studied chemistry at the University of Cologne, where he also received his doctoral degree. In 1980 he went to Berkley, University of California, as a research chemist and spent some time as visiting researcher in the US and Japan. His habilitation he earned back at the University of Cologne. In 1998 he became professor for analytical and environmental chemistry at the Humboldt-University Berlin. Since 1998 he has been a member of the DFG's Committee on Scientific Instrumentation, since 2001 reviewer for analytical chemistry, and since 2004 speaker of the review board "Analytical Chemistry and Method Development".

In 2005, he was awarded the DGMS' (German Association for Mass Spectrometry) Applied Biosystems Life Science Prize for his outstanding research in mass spectrometry in the biosciences. From 2002 to 2004, he was dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the Humboldt University Berlin and since then has been affiliated with the Humboldt University.

From 1993 until 1995, he was a STA Fellow at the Institute for Environmental Studies in Tsukuba, Japan. Since then, his bonds to Japan became stronger and stronger.

Dear Professor Erker, dear Professor Tatsumi,

After the laudation given by Professor Linscheid let me also add some words with regard to the power you both have.

The close ties in research and the deep feeling of friendship between Germany and Japan becomes very obvious through you. As it is often the case with good friends, there are many parallels and many differences in your lives. You are both top scientists in your profession, well known and highly respected in the international scientific community. You received your basic chemical education in your respective countries, were postdocs in the United States, and started independent careers by doing research in organometallic chemistry. For some time, you worked on rather related topics, and in your theoretical studies nicely complementary.

Later your research developed into different directions. However, quite recently only, your research fields have begun to conceptually merge again.

You have received a number of important awards and have served your communities in various important roles. Professor Erker, you have been the president of the German Chemical Society (GDCh) and a member of the DFG-Senate for two consecutive periods. I would like to thank you for your dedication to the DFG.

Professor Tatsumi, your contributions go way beyond scientific research only and also extend to education and scientific diplomacy. You are a member of the Science Council in Japan and Vice-President of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), and you will become IUPAC President for the term 2012–2013.

Dear Professor Erker, dear Professor Tatsumi,

thanks to your reputation, commitment, long-standing cooperation and friendship the first Japanese-German Research Training Group – which I already mentioned before – could be established in 2006. The IRTG was recently reviewed for grant renewal on the German side and earned highest respect.

I would like to refer to some passages from the documents we received for your nomination for the Seibold Prize. I quote:

“With both charm and energy, Professor Erker and Professor Tatsumi have founded a programme. They have filled it with life and rapidly brought it to a truly high level of international scientific performance.”

“It is largely due to their successful activities that the IRTG have become an increasingly important instrument for international collaboration between research groups in Germany and Japan. Through these efforts, the future oriented scientific education for doctoral students in both countries has been brightened. The positive effects of this development, for which Erker’s / Tatsumi’s activity has created a benchmark, are immensely valuable for increasing close and trustful cooperation between the scientific systems of our countries.”

I was also able to get a very lively impression of the high value of your IRTG and the wonderful work you do. At the opening of our DFG Office in Tokyo two years ago in the framework of a symposium on “*Promoting Young Researchers*”, the existing Japanese-German IRTGs were also presented. Two young scientists from your IRTG, Kirsten Spannhoff from Münster University and Mazakazu Nambo of Nagoya University, gave short presentations and attracted the attention of the approximately 170 participants.

Kirsten Spannhoff – at that time in Japan for 4 months – reported about her personal learning experiences with contagious enthusiasm. I quote: “Carrying out scientific research in a completely different environment gives you a whole new perspective on your own subject and research field.” One could tell that she felt very much at ease in Professor Kazuyuki Tatsumi’s working group in Nagoya.

The doctoral student Mazakazu Nambo has just returned from a three month placement at the University of Münster. He also said that he has benefited greatly from his time in Germany, both professionally and personally and was very taken with the German culture.

Dear Mr. Erker, dear Mr. Tatsumi,

you are both saying that you have learned a lot from your experiences with your IRTG over the past years. From DFGs perspective – and I believe also from the perspective of JSPS –, I could say, we have learned a lot from you. Your IRTG is one example of how successful international science and humanities projects can be and that this is the way how lifelong friendships are shaped through science. Your commitment and dedication to support Japanese-German collaboration and friendship cannot be honored highly enough.

Dear Professor Erker, dear Professor Tatsumi,

It is with great joy that I am now handing over the award with congratulations.

**Omedetou Gozaimasu!**

In closing, I would like to once again congratulate this year's awardees and thank all those who have worked hard to make this year's event a success.