

Response to the results of the investigation into the STAP publications

I take the committee's finding of misconduct in a pair of scientific reports co-authored by a number of members of staff at the RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology (CDB) extremely seriously, and as Center Director, I apologize sincerely for this situation, and view the committee's findings with a sense of profound responsibility.

At the RIKEN CDB, it has been our firm belief that providing an environment that encourages creative exploration by early-career scientists is crucial for driving scientific progress, and we have promoted the appointment of young research leaders as part of that vision. Our Center has enjoyed the opportunity of seeing young scientists at the CDB publish a number of internationally recognized scientific findings, and we look forward to maintaining our policy in this regard. However, as has been made clear by the recent events, our systems for supporting the young scientists we have appointed into leadership positions were not effective in this case; this has been a painful, but important, lesson for us all.

Going forward, the CDB plans to look into the circumstance that permitted these problems to develop, so as to contribute to the efforts of the Reform Promotion Division led by RIKEN President Noyori. In particular, we plan to examine measures for supporting young scientists, the management of publication data, and the dissemination of research results.

Additionally, at the direction of President Noyori, a research group led by CDB scientists will engage in a rigorous scientific re-evaluation of the reported STAP reprogramming phenomenon, and report the results of those efforts as well as provide a foundation for other groups that may seek to conduct their own independent evaluations. We anticipate that this re-evaluation will require approximately one year until its completion, and plan to make periodic public announcements of interim results. At the CDB, we will exert our utmost efforts to conduct this endeavor at the highest standards of rigor and integrity.

At the CDB, we recognize that the most effective means of restoring trust will be for us to pursue excellence in research and publish high-quality scientific results, and we pledge to make every effort to earn that trust once again.

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RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology