

## Tribute to Professor Shinsuke Tanabe



On June 30, 2025, Professor Shinsuke Tanabe, Professor Emeritus of Distinction at Ehime University, passed away. We express our deepest respect and extend our sincere condolences.

Professor Tanabe graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture at Ehime University in March 1973 and completed his Master's degree in the Graduate School of Agriculture at the same university in March 1975. He was awarded the Doctor of Agriculture from Nagoya University in February 1985. He began his academic career as a Research Associate at Ehime University's Faculty of Agriculture in September 1977, was appointed Professor in October 1996, Professor at the Center for Marine Environmental Studies (CMES) in April 1999, and served as Director of CMES from April 2015. Throughout his distinguished career, he made outstanding contributions to environmental chemistry, higher education, and academic leadership, leaving an enduring legacy in the advancement of science and culture in Japan.

Professor Tanabe was a pioneer in environmental chemistry at a time when the field was still in its formative stage. He played a leading role in advancing it into a discipline of global significance. His pioneering research revealed, among many achievements, that sources of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and heavy metals are not limited to industrialized countries but also exist in developing regions, and that contamination has reached as far as the polar areas. He demonstrated that marine mammals accumulate high levels of POPs, whereas terrestrial mammals accumulate their metabolites. He also pioneered the use of preserved biological and environmental specimens to reconstruct past chemical pollution and to predict the long-term persistence of contamination in the open oceans.

By building a global scientific foundation for monitoring chemical pollution, he provided indispensable knowledge to international organizations and national governments. His findings were widely disseminated through scientific papers, lectures, outreach publications, and the media, thereby contributing to environmental policy and conservation worldwide. His scholarly record is remarkable: 177 books (authored and co-authored), 604 original and review papers, and 567 reports and related publications. His achievements earned him six international awards, including the Founders Award from the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC), as well as numerous national honors. His exceptional contributions were recognized by the Medal with Purple Ribbon from the Government of Japan, and he was conferred the title of Professor Emeritus of Distinction at Ehime University.

In recognition of his accomplishments, Professor Tanabe secured funding from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in 2005 to establish the Environmental Specimen Bank (es-BANK) at Ehime University. He also provided distinguished academic leadership as Director of the 21st Century COE Program "Center of Excellence for Coastal Marine Environmental Research" (2002–2006), Director of the Global COE Program "Education and Research Center for Environmental Science of Chemical Substances" (2007–2011), and Project Leader of the Program for Developing Outstanding Graduate Schools (2012), all funded by the MEXT. He later served as Director of CMES (2015–2019).

Beyond his scholarly achievements, Professor Tanabe was deeply committed to the education and mentorship of young researchers. Under his guidance, 111 undergraduate students, 114 master's students, and 53 doctoral students, including 35 international students, successfully completed their studies. His dedication to fostering future generations of scientists remains one of his most enduring legacies.

The intellectual and institutional foundation that Professor Tanabe established in the field of chemical pollution and ecotoxicology at CMES—particularly within the Iwata and Kunisue laboratories—will be carried forward and further developed. His distinguished legacy will continue to shape our scholarship and guide future generations.

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Hisato Iwata

Tatsuya Kunisue

Professors, CMES, Ehime University

