



**Dr. Mariko Kondo**

**Research Areas:**

- Developmental biology of echinoderms, mainly focusing on the establishment of pentamerous symmetry.
- Regeneration
- Genome evolution

**Biodiversity – Which main changes do you see now and which challenges do we have to face in the future?**

I am currently working at the marine biological station of the University of Tokyo, about 80 km south from central Tokyo. The station is one of the oldest marine stations in the world, and well known for the richness of the fauna. Many marine species have been collected here and described in the past. These couple of decades, there are some species that we cannot encounter or have less chances of encountering. Although biodiversity has not been lost yet, we might face a larger change in the future.

**Which changes affect your scientific area in particular and how do you deal with this challenge in terms of operationalizing changes and predict future developments?**

Though I do not engage myself in taxonomy or phylogenetical research, I work in a station that is often visited by researcher in these areas. Decrease in biodiversity affect our collaborators who investigate different species. Global warming and other environmental changes may be reasons that there is a change in biodiversity. We cannot change our situation by ourselves, but there is a possibility that our research may raise an alert. To predict how our fauna / flora may change over a period of time, we must find a way to estimate our current status, since it is difficult to obtain a broad overview, not only focusing on a limited group of organisms. We basic biologists will have to figure this out.