

## Foreword

It is a pleasure for me to introduce the fifth issue of the Technical Reports of the Institute of Cetacean Research (TEREP-ICR-5). Consistent with its stated objectives, TEREP-ICR describes and reports on the process, progress, and results of technical or scientific research, as well as the state of technical or scientific research programs conducted by the ICR, including those commenced recently as is the case of the Japanese Abundance and Stock structure Surveys in the Antarctic (JASS-A).

The Covid-19 pandemic has markedly affected the ways of conducting scientific research at the ICR. Such consequences include field surveys, physical assistance to the office and laboratories, and the necessity for online domestic and international meetings. Despite such difficulties and inconveniences, and despite some limitations regarding international sighting surveys, the ICR has been able to safely and successfully conduct field surveys that were scheduled for 2021. In line with safety measures adopted by the government, ICR scientists combined working remotely from home and physically assisting laboratories, while engaging in online meetings with colleagues domestically and internationally. These efforts enabled the ICR to make progress on some priority and urgent works as well as advancing several research works during 2021 as shown in this issue of TEREP-ICR.

Similar to previous TEREP-ICR issues, TEREP-ICR-4 was widely distributed in Japan. However, distribution of the issue to foreign colleagues and institutions has not been possible due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. We do, however, plan to distribute TEREP-ICR-4 together with this issue (TEREP-ICR-5) to our international colleagues and institutions, if conditions allow for it. Notwithstanding the challenges imposed by the pandemic, TEREP-ICR is on course towards achieving its objectives. At the same time, it has been a good opportunity for our scientists to compile and summarize their research conducted over the years, as a precursor to submitting their works for peer review and publications.

I sincerely hope that this fifth issue of the TEREP-ICR will contribute further to an increased understanding among national and international scientific communities of the technical and research activities conducted by the ICR.

Dr. Yoshihiro Fujise  
Director General  
Institute of Cetacean Research  
Tokyo, December 2021