

Agenda Item 3: FACILITATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020 AND THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS THROUGH SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL MEANS

Strategic Goal A

Thank you Mr./Madam. Chair,

Japan considers that the Strategic Goal A is a key challenge for achieving the Aichi Targets because it tries to address underlying fundamental cause of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across society, and therefore it could have substantial impact on the achievement of other Targets, but limited progress has been made compared to other issues such as climate change. In this regard, we have set the Goal A as one of our 5 challenges and one of our 13 national targets in our National Biodiversity Strategy 2012-2020.

Regarding Target 1, Japan would like to emphasize the importance of translating biodiversity awareness to behavioural change since it would be ultimately required to address the direct and underlying drivers of biodiversity loss. In this regard, we agree with the summary conclusion of the document saying the further development of methods for translating biodiversity awareness to behavioural change may be needed.

To tackle this issue, the Japan Committee for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity was established in September 2011 as a body to promote activities related to the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, which was proposed by the Japanese government and civil societies, through which the members will work in partnership such as CEPA activities, collaborations among different sectors. The members made up of various stakeholders including academic societies, economic communities, media, local governments as well as civil societies and NGOs. The Committee has established the certification scheme for the activities tackling each Aichi Target and disseminated the activities. It also developed the "Declaration on 5 actions to conserve biodiversity in daily life", aiming for changing the behavior of ordinary citizens. Through these activities, the behavioural change has been promoted. (And we believe this scheme could be useful in other countries as well.)

On Target 4, as is written in the meeting document, Japan considers a major challenge lies in translating general global guidance into policies which are tailored to national circumstances partly due to limited resources.

Our experience of business sectors showed that it could be promoted with limited resources through voluntary contribution of the business sector itself. In Japan, business sectors are becoming more aware that the biodiversity issue could cause business risks and provide business opportunities, and numbers of businesses that are voluntarily conducting business activities which contribute to the biodiversity conservation are increasing.

To disseminate such activities, we have drafted "Guidelines for Private Sector Engagement in Biodiversity" with reference to global guidance, and introduced the best practices. In response to the government efforts and international initiative such as B&B, major business communities established the voluntary program named the "Japan Business and Biodiversity Partnership" in collaboration with the Japanese government and NGOs, which comprises of more than 400 private companies, aiming for sharing the guidelines, action plans and best practices. (We have also carried out a questionnaire survey on these activities recently for monitoring the status of business sector involvement in biodiversity conservation.)

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General Comment

Thank you Mr./Madam. Chair,

First of all, (we would like to share our view on the role of SBSTTA, more specifically on the agenda item 3 and 4.) Japan fully agrees on the idea that SBSTTA should focus on the scientific and technical issues related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as is decided in X/12 and XI/13, because it would facilitate the implementation of them in an effective and efficient way, (and would be compatible with the primary role of SBSTTA in Article 25.) We really appreciate the excellent work of the Secretariat for the preparation of this meeting.

To fill in the scientific and technical gap, Japan has improved scientific tools, observation and monitoring data, and has initiated the regional level activities in Asia together with partners and stakeholders.

For example, we have been funding to the “Comprehensive study on biodiversity monitoring, assessment and prediction in Asia”, which has been conducted by leading scientists to assess the trends of biodiversity and ecosystem services including through the development of scientific and technical tools.

(In addition, we have initiated the Asia Pacific Biodiversity Observation Network, which aims for sharing information on remote sensing data and ecological /species and gene level researches).

The Japan Biodiversity Funds has also supported the development of new tools and guidelines as well as the capacity building activities to developing countries for the effective use of the existing tools (such as the development of national CHM or the identification of the areas meeting EBSAs criteria).

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On the other hand, Japan believes that the lack of existing tools and data should not be the reason for stopping and slowing the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Aichi Targets in each country.

We also believe that the information sharing of existing country-level tools among parties could be one of the solutions for the issue, which might be more efficient than the development of country-level tools from global-level tools, as is proposed in the meeting document 3.

We would like to continue to develop scientific and technical means, and continue our support for developing countries to improve the means for the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the achievement of the Aichi Targets.