

On the Occasion of Publication

Minister of the Environment
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At 2:46 pm on March 11, 2011 an enormous earthquake occurred off the Pacific coast of the Tohoku region. The disaster caused by the earthquake and the tsunami, and a nuclear accident struck eastern Japan, mainly in the Tohoku region.

I would like to pray for those who lost their lives and express my sincere condolences to their bereaved family members. I would also extend my deepest heartfelt sympathies to all the people who have suffered as a result of this disaster.

The Great East Japan Earthquake inflicted massive damages on the region and also had serious effects on all of Japan. I believe that March 11 may become a turning point that our lives, and our society, and even our values and attitude must be changed. With the horrible scene of the disaster before our eyes, I feel the fury of the nature and at the same time I realize that we humans are only a part of nature and that the Earth let us live on it. We must make our utmost efforts toward restoration and recovery coexisting with the Earth.

In order to achieve coexistence with the Earth, it is necessary to achieve wisdom, establish rules, and take actions from all over the world. In October, 2010, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10) was held in the City of Nagoya in Aichi Prefecture. Although difficult negotiations continued until the very end, the each country shared the pain, made compromises, and worked together toward “benefits for the Earth” and “benefits for humans.” We could reach the agreement of the new global adoption (the Aichi Biodiversity Targets) and adopted the Nagoya Protocol.

In December, 2010, the 16th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was held and adopted the Cancun Agreement, which includes the reduction targets and the actions for both developed and developing nations.

It is necessary for us to establish international rules and at the same time to take actions to achieve a sustainable society. I believe that it is important to reconsider the modern lifestyle of mass transportation and mass consumption, to use the natural resources of *satochi-satoyama* sustainably, and to accelerate the introduction of renewable energy.

It is said that we borrow the Earth from our children. It is the duty of our current generation to achieve sustainability and safety in our society, and to take the benefits of the nature over the future children who will lead the next generation. I would like to share the belief with you and undertake this task together. I will be greatly honored if this annual report could be of any use to you.