

**The 16<sup>th</sup> Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific  
(ECO Asia 2008)**

**Nagoya, Japan  
September 13, 2008**

**Chair's Summary**

1. The Sixteenth Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific, ECO Asia 2008, was convened in the city of Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, on September 13, 2008. The Congress was organized by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan and hosted by the city of Nagoya. The Congress was attended by national delegates, including Ministers and senior officials from 11 countries, representatives of 16 international organizations, and a wide range of other participants.
2. Reaffirming the importance of regional cooperation in addressing a wide variety of environmental issues in line with tackling sustainable development challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, the annual Congress aims at exchanging information and views on policies and measures at regional, national, and local levels. ECO Asia 2008 focused on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, considering the increasing importance of this topic, amongst others, in the Asia-Pacific region.
3. In his opening address, H.E. Dr. Tetsuo Saito, Minister of the Environment of Japan thanked the distinguished participants for attending the ECO Asia 2008 meeting and expressed his gratitude to Mr. Matsubara, Mayor of the City of Nagoya, for co-organizing the meeting. Minister Saito pointed out that humankind heavily depends on the roughly estimated 30 million species, which include unidentified ones. At the same time, humans are responsible for increasing the rate of biodiversity loss by 1000 times over the past few hundreds of years. Minister Saito stressed the responsibility of the Asia-Pacific region as the world economy's driving force to seek a sustainable way of development, while reducing the large impact that accelerated development in the region has had on biodiversity.
4. Mr. Takehisa Matsubara, Mayor of the City of Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, welcomed the distinguished participants on behalf of the citizens of Nagoya. In reference to the Fujimae tidal flat, he emphasized the importance of collaboration with the citizens of Nagoya in achieving waste reduction and international youth exchange.
5. The Congress unanimously elected H.E. Dr. Tetsuo Saito, Minister of the Environment of Japan, as the Chair of the meeting. The Congress also adopted the Agenda and designated Dr. Emil Salim, Special Envoy for the President of the Republic of Indonesia, as facilitator of Session 1, on Biodiversity – Road to 2010 and Beyond. Prof. Dr. Kunio Iwatsuki, Director of the Museum of Nature and Human Activities, served as facilitator for Session 2, on Specific Actions for Biodiversity.

6. Following the opening remarks by Minister Saito, Dr. Emil Salim acted as Session Facilitator and invited Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Mr. Daizaburo Kuroda, Director General, Ministry of the Environment, Japan, and Dr. Jeffrey McNeely, Chief Scientist, IUCN to deliver three lead presentations at Session 1, on Biodiversity – Road to 2010 and Beyond.
7. Following the opening remarks made by Minister Saito in Session 2, on Specific Actions for Biodiversity, Prof. Dr. Kunio Iwatsuki, Director of the Museum of Nature and Human Activities acted as Session Facilitator. He invited Prof. A.H. Zakri, Director of the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies, Mr. Masao Yamada, Deputy Mayor of the city of Nagoya, Mr Takashi Inagaki, Vice Governor, Aichi Prefecture, Mr. Jorgen Thomsen, Senior Vice President, Conservation International and Director of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), Mr. Davaadorj Delgertsogt, Vice Minister and Ms. Choikhhand Janchivlamdan, Director for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Nature and Environment, Mongolia, and Korowa Pokeya, First secretary of Minister of Environment and Conservation, Papua New Guinea to deliver presentations on specific actions for biodiversity.
8. Based on the various introductory presentations made at each session, the representatives and participants at ECO Asia 2008 agreed upon the importance of addressing and promoting implementation of policy measures and actions on the following issues at the various levels in Asia and the Pacific. This Chair's Summary is intended to reflect the thrust of discussions and shared views among the representatives who attended ECO Asia 2008. Further detailed key elements of presentations and discussions are attached in the Annex.
9. The following are the key issues highlighted and shared in the discussions on biodiversity issues in Asia and the Pacific.

#### Status of biodiversity in Asia and the Pacific

- (1) Biodiversity loss has been being accelerated due to increasing demands for food and fuel. Economic loss caused by the extinction of biodiversity is a growing concern around the world. Climate change further exacerbates the loss of biodiversity as changing temperature and precipitation patterns negatively affect ecosystems and biodiversity.

#### 2010 Biodiversity Target

- (2) It is vital to facilitate policy measures and actions for achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target. Countries need to assess the achievement made in implementing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans that need to be revised over time in order to accelerate policy measures and activities towards achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target. Sub-regional and regional strategies must be also developed and their implementation should be facilitated.

#### Kobe Call for Action for Biodiversity

- (3) The Kobe Call for Action for Biodiversity that was adopted at the Group of 8 Environment Ministers' Meeting in Kobe, Japan in May 2008 and endorsed at the Group of 8 Summit in Toyako, Hokkaido in July 2008 was reaffirmed at ECO Asia 2008. Japan

reiterated its commitments to implementing the Kobe Call for Action, and this was welcomed by the Congress. Further efforts need to be made towards facilitating the implementation of the Call in the region as well as at the global level.

#### Comprehensive approach

- (4) Biodiversity must be assessed from a comprehensive viewpoint to cover various types of ecosystems such as forests, agricultural land, marine and coastal areas, drylands and wetlands. Interdependence of various ecosystems also needs to be well understood, for instance, linkages among rice fields, rivers, and forests. A draft resolution on rice fields that will be considered at the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention is expected to reinforce a policy framework for promoting sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem management in an integrated manner.

#### Nexus of policies to address biodiversity, climate change, and poverty

- (5) The inter-linkages of policies and measures must be strengthened to increase their overall effectiveness to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and poverty eradication.

#### Elevating biodiversity conservation to a new paradigm

- (6) It is important to rethink the entire approach to development, changing the paradigm to consider the environment as an essential element. At all levels from household to national, regional, and global, ideas from biological systems need to be used to help ensure that development is sustainable. Biology can guide appropriate new technologies, new ways of thinking, and a more comprehensive approach to development.

#### CDM and REDD

- (7) To further cultivate the nexus of biodiversity conservation and climate change-related actions, biodiversity components need to be integrated into the Clean Development Mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In addition, mechanisms proposed under the so-called “Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation” (REDD) need to be materialized in order for promoting in an integrated manner forest conservation, biodiversity conservation, and climate change-related actions.

#### Multi-stakeholder involvement

- (8) Biodiversity conservation requires multi-stakeholder involvement. The activities on biodiversity undertaken by NGOs and local governments are important and they need to be bolstered. The private sector needs to play a more proactive role in promoting activities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use as well as for sharing technology and supporting research work.

#### City and Biodiversity

- (9) Biodiversity in cities also deserves due attention and actions. Biodiversity conservation needs to be integrated into city planning as well as natural resource and waste management. In Japan, exemplary initiatives have been undertaken by local governments, such as those of the governments of the city of Nagoya and Aichi Prefecture, and such experiences and lessons should be shared more widely.

#### Capacity development

- (10) Institutional and social capacity must be strengthened to undertake activities for monitoring, conserving, and utilizing biodiversity in a sustainable manner.

#### Monitoring network development

- (11) To promote effective biodiversity policies and actions based on sound scientific observation and analysis, monitoring networks need to be developed and strengthened at the national, regional, and international levels.

#### Post-2010 Target

- (12) It is vital to set an effective post-2010 biodiversity target based on the achievements and lessons learnt from the implementation of the 2010 Biodiversity Target.

#### Asian models

- (13) To develop effective mechanisms for community-based ecosystem management, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable use in symbiosis with nature, it is imperative to develop models suitable to the diverse and significant ecological endowments and distinctive socio-economic conditions of Asia and the Pacific. Rice fields and their cultivation are, for example, prevalent both as an ecosystem and a cultural factor in Asia.

#### Satoyama Initiative

- (14) The “Satoyama Initiative” promoted by the Government of Japan provides a useful framework to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in rural areas where sustainable livelihoods are maintained based on traditional and local knowledge regarding, and practices for, living in harmony with nature.

#### Market mechanisms

- (15) Valuation of ecosystems and environmental services must be integrated in national and local development plans. Payment for environmental services, green taxes, and investment and other incentive and disincentive measures need to be incorporated into key policy measures on biodiversity.

#### Political wills and public awareness

- (16) The tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/COP10) scheduled to take place in the city of Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan in October 2010 is an important landmark conference. High-level policy makers, notably heads of state and government and ministerial-level representatives are called to attend COP10 to attest their commitment to biodiversity policies. In light of the United Nations General Assembly designating the year 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity, various public awareness-raising activities must be promoted, including cultural measures such as music and *manga/comics*.

#### Research, development, and technology dissemination

- (17) Research must be undertaken on policies, mechanisms, actions, traditional knowledge, and technology through collaboration among in particular research institutes in Asia

building upon Asia's policy and institutional mechanisms, challenges and ecological and socio-economic conditions.

International and regional collaboration

(18) It is vital to promote international and regional collaboration to advance biodiversity policies, measures, and activities. Regional and international collaboration must be catalyzed and facilitated by various regional and international organizations and fora. In addition, these organizations and fora must further mainstream biodiversity-related components in their portfolios. Financing mechanisms for biodiversity need to be reinforced for effective implementation of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Consideration should also be given to an idea of establishing an Asian regional fund to support specific programmes and activities at local, national, and regional levels.

## **Annex: Summary of introductory presentations and remarks**

### **Session 1: Biodiversity – Road to 2010 and Beyond**

1. Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, delivered a lead speech on “Biodiversity Challenges and Responses: Towards the Nagoya Summit on Biodiversity.” Dr. Djoghlaif warned of a series of environmental challenges leading to the loss of biological diversity at an unprecedented rate, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. As biodiversity extends across international borders, regional cooperation is crucial for promoting sustainable development, of which biodiversity is an integral component. Dr. Djoghlaif presented the results of the 9<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference of the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Bonn in May 2008, and the agreed road map of the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit. He emphasized that the Bonn Biodiversity Summit adopted 37 decisions, with participation by heads of state and government. The Summit and its related events set a new course towards more sustainable living and protection of biodiversity, significantly raised awareness about biodiversity loss, and engaged all stakeholders, with an unprecedented level of participation by private sector entities. Dr. Djoghlaif then reminded the Congress that with less than two years to go before the 2010 biodiversity target deadline, the road ahead poses a great challenge for the global community and requires leadership such as that demonstrated by Japan’s plan of action for the implementation of the “Kobe Call for Action for Biodiversity.” He concluded the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit in 2010 will be key in calling for a new era of coexistence between man and nature and emphasized the importance of participation at the head of state and government level, particularly in light of 2010 being the United Nations International Year on Biodiversity.
2. Mr. Daizaburo Kuroda, Director-General, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment, Japan, delivered a lead presentation on the result of the G8 Environmental Ministers Meeting in Kobe, Japan in May 2008 and action in Asia. Recalling earlier commitments made under the Potsdam Initiative and at the G8 Summit in Heiligendam, Mr Kuroda presented the key points of the Kobe Call for Action for Biodiversity, including the 2010 Biodiversity Target, sustainable use of biodiversity, biodiversity and protected areas, private sector engagement and strengthening scientific capacities for

monitoring biodiversity. He pointed out the progress made by Japan in implementing the Kobe Call for Action, highlighting the Satoyama Initiative, the Coral Reef Marine Protected Area Network in East Asia, the Kobe Biodiversity Dialogue, and the Global Biodiversity Monitoring Networking Initiative.

3. Dr. Jeffrey McNeely, Chief Scientist at the IUCN, overviewed why biodiversity is important and how to engage the public in biodiversity issues. He argued that key ecological problems, notably loss of biodiversity and biological homogenization, required the world to adopt a new approach. He noted that in addressing the challenge of climate change, adaptation is required, and the ability to adapt is affected significantly by our ability to conserve biodiversity. He stressed that biodiversity can help address many challenges to sustainability. He pointed at alternatives to oil, while reminding participants of the consequences that biomass production has had on food supply and natural forests, and highlighted the importance of biomimicry in enabling humankind to coexist better with the natural world. Finally he presented indicators of successful conservation, including growing knowledge and capacity, effective international conservation law and establishment of local institutions for conservation, the application of the best available technology to conservation, improved funding for conservation action, protected area management, and increasing support among citizens in both urban and rural areas for biodiversity conservation.
4. In the discussion, calls were made for integrating valuation of environmental services, mainstreaming environmental services into national action plans, providing continuous support for APFED and focusing on international cooperation on the linkage between climate change and ecosystems, providing incentive measures for conserving biodiversity, placing value on ecosystem services, creating market mechanisms of cost efficient policies, better integrate biodiversity concerns in national resource possible, extending marine protected areas and building better understanding of biodiversity at genetic and ecosystem level. Specific regional or country specific programmes and the establishment of an environmental fund were also suggested. The importance of pro-poor initiatives was also stressed.

5. It was also emphasized that there is also a need for low cost, low seized energy projects. In view of achieving the 2010 biodiversity target, it is necessary to raise the awareness on biodiversity and developing National Strategic Action Plans by 2010 as not all countries have done so. It is also important to integrate biodiversity into the development sector and to make biodiversity relevant at all policy-making levels.
6. Regarding policies and measures in the host country Japan, it was noted that the third revision of the National Strategy identifies responsible agencies and other owners. The strategy is implemented and progress will be evaluated. Japan now has a Basic Act on Biodiversity. Japan is working on the 4<sup>th</sup> revision of its National Strategy. Local initiatives are equally important, and municipalities and prefectures are encouraged to devise and implement plans. Japan is currently focusing on the effective use of biomass through conversion of waste into usable resources.
7. Emphasis was made on the need for further integration of biodiversity into different sectors and areas, such as climate change, development, initiatives to have REDD incorporated into the post-2012 climate regime and providing people with appropriate tools and incentives in order for them to act in their self-interest, conserving ecosystems and biodiversity.
8. In wrapping up discussions, Dr. Salim reiterated the fact that a loss of biodiversity is accelerating, which also leads to economic losses. In the years to come, extinction of species will increase. Efforts should be enhanced in order to reduce this loss. It is necessary to take a comprehensive approach that incorporates biodiversity into ecosystem conservation, such as biomarine and forest ecosystems. There is clear linkage between biodiversity, climate change, and poverty. We should explore an Asian model that is more suitable to regional circumstances. The way to look at development should not focus on resource exploitation but on resource enrichment. Conventional development should be reevaluated, with due attention given to learning from nature, particularly biological ecosystems. In this sense, further development of biomimicry is of particular importance.

## Session 2: Specific Actions for Biodiversity

9. Prof. A.H. Zakri, Director of the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies delivered a lead speech on the 2010 Biodiversity Target and Asia-Pacific Response. He predicted that COP10 of the CBD will be a critically important event and that it therefore provides a unique opportunity for Japan to demonstrate international leadership in biodiversity. With respect to the Asia-Pacific region, he warned that the ability to produce rice, the region's most important food crop, is under threat in light of the increasing degradation of ecosystems in the region, including agroecosystems. Prof. Zakri stressed that in terms of leadership on the 2010 target, it is important for ECO Asia to work towards raising awareness and developing a robust, simple and clear biodiversity target. The models of *satoyama* and *satoumi* should provide examples to be discussed at COP 10. In this context, Prof. Zakri congratulated the "*Satoyama Initiative*" by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan and proposed that more efforts be put into this timely project to ensure its success. The initiative is not only constructive for Japan but may also be used as a model for the coexistence of human and nature for the whole region. He also noted that a Japan Sub-global Assessment of *Satoyama* and *Satoumi* initiated by the UNU-IAS will compliment this initiative. On other matters, Prof. Zakri also stressed that it is important that the revised biodiversity target takes into account the developments in the UNFCCC for a post-2012 regime – and the emerging consensus about a 2050 target. Thus, it might be effective to think of the revised biodiversity target in terms of an interim target of 2022, to coincide with the proposed program of work to be considered at COP10 and a long-term target of 2050. Prof. Zakri expressed himself confident that COP10 will mark an important stage in the development of the CBD and the birth of a new biodiversity target for a long-term international engagement.
  
10. Mr. Masao Yamada, Deputy Mayor of the city of Nagoya, Japan, stressed the importance of the city's natural areas, such as tidelands and mountains, and mentioned the fact that Nagoya is both a habitat for species and a consumer of biological resources. In view of this, he underlined that the city of Nagoya is currently developing a "Biodiversity Nagoya Strategy" and plans to adopt it by 2010 to fulfil the important role of the city in biodiversity conservation. He introduced various initiatives taken by the city government

for nature and water conservation, such as wetland preservation, nature restoration, and tree planting, particularly for *Fujimae Tidal Flat* that has harnessed citizens' cooperation. Examples of these local initiatives include the rehabilitation of a 410-hectare forest area, increasing the percentage of greening area from the current 25% to 40% by 2050 and the planned doubling of the ground seepage from the present level, i.e. from 12% to 20%, by 2050. The city's target is to become the "environment capital Nagoya" taking advantage of the opportunity to host COP 10 in 2010.

11. Mr. Takashi Inagaki, Vice-Governor, Aichi Prefecture, presented prefectural initiatives for "community-building based on biodiversity in Aichi, Global Center for Manufacturing." He provided a profile of the prefecture and its natural environment. In the prefecture, a number of plans to promote momentum towards an "environmentally advanced Aichi" have been established, amongst them 2010 Milestone Projects concerning the EXPO 2005 Aichi, COP10 of the CBD, and the Aichi Arts Festival. Current initiatives for biodiversity conservation focus on wetlands for migratory birds, *satoyama* preservation, establishment of interchange systems between urban and rural areas and the involvement of private businesses in biodiversity conservation, afforestation and environmental education. Future initiatives aim at designing an Aichi Natural Environment Conservation Strategy that includes the establishment of a biological network. Aichi Prefecture plans to combine an ecosystem approach with an adaptive management approach to face the challenges for balancing economic development and the conservation of biodiversity.
12. Mr. Jorgen Thomsen, Senior Vice President, Conservation International and Executive Director of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) pointed out the benefits of harnessing and nurturing the potential of civil society organizations in conserving biodiversity. Expressing sincere appreciation to the Government of Japan, in particular the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Environment, for its continuous support to CEPF, he emphasized the importance of civil society organizations in implementing biodiversity conservation, and the important role of intermediary organizations such as the CEPF in assisting civil society organizations too small to have access to the resources available from large donor organizations but yet very effective on the ground. Support from the CEPF has facilitated the conservation of biodiversity in not only protected areas

but also secondary landscapes, which are home to many critical species as well as a source of livelihoods for local communities. Mr. Thomsen also brought attention to the substantial amount of financing now available, such as climate change funding, but also urged needs for improvements in financing delivery mechanisms. He called for capacity building to enable civil society organizations to access this financing, adding that organizations receiving proper training have been very successful in accessing funds. He also urged the establishment of targets for partnerships between civil society organizations and government entities, as such partnerships have been very productive.

13. Mr. Davaadorjiin Delgertsogt, Vice Minister, Ministry of Nature and Environment, Mongolia, and Ms. Janchivlamdan Choikhand, Director of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Nature and Environment, Mongolia, addressed the Congress, presenting actions for Mongolian biological diversity. A party to the Convention on Biological Diversity since September 1993, Mongolia has established three Biodiversity Conservation Projects covering the main ecosystems, and developed a National Programme on biological diversity. The programme has 21 target or focal areas, including strengthening the legal framework for reducing the loss of biological diversity, enhancing sustainable management of biological diversity and expanding the network of State Special Protected Areas. Ms. Choikhand described existing biodiversity in Mongolia and the environmental challenges the country faces. She also elaborated on action for endangered species and touched upon forest policies and eco-friendly tourism and mining. Mongolia plans the introduction of various incentives for biodiversity conservation.

14. Mr. Korowa Pokeya, the First Secretary of the Minister of Environment and Conservation, Papua New Guinea (PNG), delivered a presentation on behalf of Minister Benny Allan on biodiversity conservation in Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea, home to 5% of the world's biodiversity, has signed a host of international conventions, regional programmes, and agreements relating to biodiversity. Based on a mandate for biodiversity conservation vested in its constitution, Papua New Guinea has adopted a series of policies and laws on biodiversity, as well as key biodiversity programmes such as eco-tourism development, research and development, and wildlife trade. Efforts to protect biodiversity have resulted

in 44 protected areas using IUCN categories, and local conservation through wildlife management.

15. Participants discussed challenges and lessons learnt from local, national and international initiatives, the creation of an enabling environment for further promoting concrete actions, such as information exchange, cooperation, capacity development and financial arrangements at all levels, as well as opportunities for further regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific for achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target and beyond. The Republic of Korea announced a joint submission with Japan of a draft resolution on “enhancing biodiversity in rice paddies as wetland systems,” prepared as provisional Resolution X.31 of The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands COP10 to be convened in Changwon, Republic of Korea, October 28 - November 4, 2008, which was supported by participants.
16. Participants emphasized the importance of finding solutions to the environmental degradation that small island states face as a consequence of sea level rise, of poverty, of bolstering public awareness, and of the Satoyama Initiative as an example of traditional local wisdom regarding sustainable ecosystem management practices. The Congress considered how to give value to the function of biodiversity and how to combine efforts on climate change with biodiversity conservation, and regarded the positive reaction of markets to adding premiums for products with added environmental and/or social benefits as a potential positive example for biodiversity. Participants expressed support for incorporating biodiversity in resource mobilization and into training courses for government officials, for a project in the South Pacific looking into biodiversity changes as a consequence of climate change, and for establishing partnerships on mutually beneficial projects that incorporate biodiversity in the agenda.
17. In wrapping up discussions, Dr. Kunio Iwatsuki first stressed the importance of further raising public awareness on biodiversity. Although the importance has been increasingly recognized among people concerned, the general perception among citizens has not yet reached such a level that it has become a mainstream view. To this end, he pointed out that further promotion of public awareness raising activities is vital for enabling conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the future. Secondly, some discussants called for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity with an Asian concept in an Asian context. With regard to the “*Satoyama initiative*” proposed by Japan, Dr. Iwatsuki expressed his

anticipation in the concept of *Satoyama*, where nature and mankind coexist in harmony, and which would be widely adopted and would contribute to the global sustainability.

### **Wrap-up and concluding Session**

18. Minister Saito and the Secretariat presented a draft of the Chairman's Summary highlighting key points of discussions. Suggestions were made that the concept of biodiversity be upgraded to include biomimicry and other forms of biology-inspired innovation. Other suggestions include supporting a paradigm shift towards effective biological resource use, as well as towards proactive local initiatives, such as those currently undertaken in the city of Nagoya and in Aichi Prefecture.
19. Minister Saito thanked all the participants for their constructive contributions to discussions. Mr. Djoghlafl complimented Minister Saito for steering useful deliberations at this meeting and demonstrating firm leadership on biodiversity policies and actions, and expressed appreciation to the sponsors and organisers of this meeting speaking on behalf of all the participants.
20. Minister Saito announced the adjournment of the meeting.