

12 .International Cooperation

Efforts toward biodiversity conservation, such as protection of threatened wildlife and conservation of important ecosystems, should not be confined to domestic affairs, but should be promoted through international cooperation as a shared concern of all humans. The Ministry of the Environment takes an active part in international activities.

12.1 International Conventions

The Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity aims to conserve diverse living organisms and their habitats comprehensively, and to ensure the sustainable use of these resources. One hundred fifty-seven nations signed the Convention at the Earth Summit in 1992, and it came into force in December 1993. There were 191 contracting parties as of August 2009.

For facilitating domestic implementation of this convention, the liaison council, consisting of nine ministries with the Director-General of the Nature Conservation Bureau as the chair, was formed. The National Biodiversity Strategy of Japan was developed in accordance with Article 6 of the Convention.

At an extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties in January 2000, the parties adopted the "Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety", which outlines procedures for the import and export of living modified organisms from a biodiversity perspective based on the Convention.

In light of this protocol, the Ministry of the Environment, in collaboration with other ministries concerned, examines preliminary environmental impact assessment before giving approval of use of living modified organisms, to secure biological diversity.



A Ramsar site
(Kushiro Shitsugen)



A Ramsar site
(Akiyoshidai Groundwater System)



A Ramsar site (Oze)



CBD COP9



Eco Asia 2008

The Ramsar Convention

Japan became a Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention (the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat) in 1980. The convention aims to promote the designation and conservation of internationally important wetlands and the Flora and Fauna living there, and the wise use of such wetlands. Japan designated 37 Ramsar sites such as Kushiro-shitsugen, Izu-numa/Uchi-numa, Yatsu-higata, Fujimae-higata, as of March, 2009.

CITES

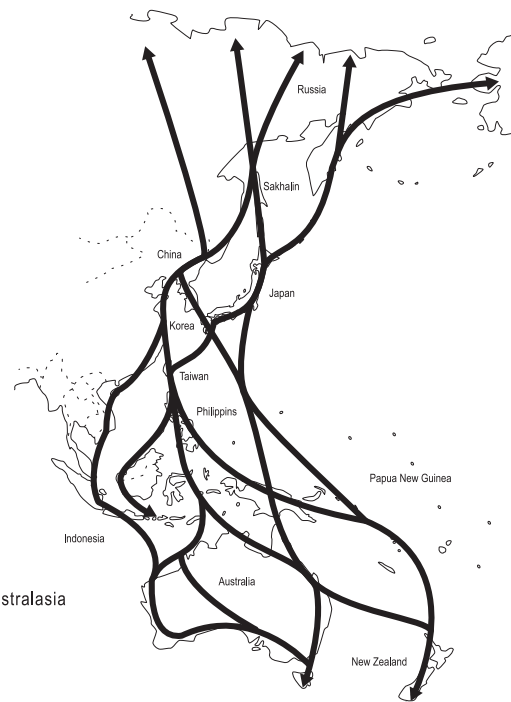
Japan ratified the "Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora" (CITES) in 1980. The Convention classifies threatened species of wild fauna and flora into three categories published in CITES Appendix I - III, based on their need for protection, and regulates international trade accordingly.

CITES-based regulations for import and export in Japan are applied through enforcement of the "Customs Law" and the "Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Control Law". To increase effectiveness, the Government designates the species listed in the CITES Appendix I as International Endangered Species under the "Law for Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (The Species Conservation Law)" and regulates the transfer of species within the country.

Conventions and Agreements for the Protection of Migratory Birds

Japan maintains bilateral conventions and agreements for the protection of migratory birds with the U.S. (since 1974), Australia (since 1981), China (since 1981), and Russia (since 1988), to protect migratory birds, endangered bird species, and their environments (with China, protection of migratory birds and their environments only). Each convention or agreement calls for a meeting approximately every two years to exchange information on measures taken in each country and to discuss the need and possibilities for joint research.

In November, 2006, East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership" was launched under the leadership of Japan and Australia. This partnership aims to promote the conservation of migratory water birds including cranes, anatines, shorebirds, and to exchange information on measures against avian influenza with other countries.



Flyways of migratory shorebirds in East Asia and Australasia

International Cooperation on Coral Reef Conservation

International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)

Japan actively promotes the "International Coral Reef Initiative(ICRI)" in collaboration with USA, Australia and other countries. ICRI is aimed for the conservation of coral reef ecosystems and the sustainable use of them. There are 44 countries and some 40 organizations including international organizations and NGOs in this international framework, where members can discuss the issue on equal terms with one another and promote mutual cooperation. ICRI is coordinated by the Secretariat which is voluntarily hosted in turn by member countries, and Japan and Republic of Palau had been jointly hosting the Secretariat from July, 2005 to June, 2007. In April, 2007, the general meeting of ICRI was held in Tokyo, and "Recommendation on Developing MPA Networks" and "ICRI resolution on coral reefs & climate change" etc. were adopted.



Sekisei coral-reef lagoon, Iriomote-Ishigaki National Park

Formation of Marine Protected Area Network

In accordance with "Recommendation on Developing MPA Networks", etc. adopted in the ICRI Tokyo General Meeting Assembly in April, 2007, the Ministry of the Environment is making efforts to establish the coral reef reserve network (which is) centered in East Asia. In November, 2008, the ministry organized The International Coral Reef Marine Protected Area Network Meeting / 4th ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop in Tokyo, and began to design strategies to build up networks of ecological marine protected areas, (networks) of human resources for a better management of the marine protected areas and of information exchange. In 2010, the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is to be held in Nagoya. So, the ministry is working with relevant countries and NGOs working on the conservation of coral reef to examine the draft of the strategies so that it can propose the strategies to the world at COP 10 in Nagoya.



The International Coral Reef Marine Protected Area Network Meeting /
4th ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop

■ The World Heritage Convention

Japan ratified the Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1992. As of July 2009, there are 186 States Parties to the Convention, and a total of 890 properties: 689 cultural properties, 176 natural properties, and 25 mixed properties are inscribed on the World Heritage List. Japan served as a member of the World Heritage Committee from 2004 to 2007.



World Natural Heritage(Shiretoko)

■ Bilateral Agreements

Japan has concluded Environmental Conservation Cooperation Agreements and Science and Technology Agreements with the U.S., Russia, Korea, China, Australia and other countries, to take part in international cooperation in the environmental field.

With Korea, information exchange and joint surveys are taking place through collaborative projects for the protection of migratory birds, under the auspices of the Japan-Korea Environmental Conservation Cooperation Agreement.

■ Others

Besides conventions and agreements, Japan is promoting international cooperation in the environmental sphere with the U.S., the E.U. and other countries. With the U.S. in particular, cooperation activities are undertaken based on the Common Agenda and the United States-Japan Cooperative Program on Natural Resources (UJNR).

The Ministry of the Environment participates as a government member in the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and Wetlands International (WI), both of which are international organizations for nature conservation.

■ 12.2 International Cooperation for Developing Countries



The activity in the biology research center

■ Japan's Contribution to International Cooperation for Developing Countries

Biodiversity conservation, a concern common to all humanity, including the conservation of important ecosystems and the protection of threatened species, requires internationally coordinated efforts. Many developing countries, however, experience difficulties in tackling these problems appropriately due to lack of funds, technology and human resources; for this reason, developed countries and international organizations provide assistance. Japan assists these countries by providing "technical cooperation" and "grant aid cooperation" as a part of Official Development Assistance (ODA) through the

Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, and others. Japan also contributes to global nature conservation through contributions to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). In Japan's ODA Charter adopted in June 1992 (revised in August 2003), environmental ODA is considered important, and "approach to global problems" such as global warming is described as one of the four issues that Japan should intensively tackle. In recent years international cooperation by NGOs has also taken root.

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) was established as a joint initiative of NGOs and international organizations. CEPF provides assistance to NGOs and community groups for activities related to conservation of biodiversity hotspots (areas characterized both by exceptional levels of species endemism, which means rich biodiversity, and by serious levels of habitat loss) in developing countries. The Government of Japan has been participating in this initiative as a donor since 2002. It is expected that the natural blessings gained from hotspots conservation activities will contribute to realize economically sustainable development.

■ International Cooperation by the Ministry of the Environment

The Ministry of the Environment provides a budget for ODA expenses, and actively promotes international cooperation. The Nature Conservation Bureau, with its main focus on the Asia-Pacific region, assists countries in developing their administrative ability to implement Agenda 21, including conservation of coral reef ecosystems, and supports necessary activities from the viewpoint of global environment conservation such as "wetland conservation and management".

■ Cooperation through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

For the promotion of nature conservation in developing countries, an important subject is development of human resources, such as administrators and technicians with expert knowledge and experience. The Nature Conservation Bureau carries out Technical Cooperation Projects, such as training programs and the dispatch of experts, with the cooperation of local governments and NGOs through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The aim of training programs is to provide administrators and technicians in developing countries with opportunities to learn the skills and experience of nature conservation possessed in Japan. Currently, courses designed to meet the needs of many developing countries, such as a Group Training Course in Conservation and Sustainable Management of Coral Reefs and one in Biodiversity Information Systems, are held every year, as well as individual training courses at the request of developing countries.

Experienced experts are dispatched to transfer technology for nature conservation to administrative organizations and research institutes in developing countries. In response to a request from a developing country, experts in various fields, including national park management, wildlife conservation and natural environment education, are dispatched either individually or as a team. In the field of the natural environment alone, from 10 to 20 experts are dispatched to the countries of Asia, Africa, Central and South America etc. every year. Grant aid cooperation provides developing countries with funds for the development of facilities and purchase of equipment; the Ministry of the Environment cooperates through providing advice at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JICA. An example is the advice for the construction of the Research and Development Center for Biology (Cibinong, Indonesia) related to the Biodiversity Conservation Project in Indonesia.

■ International Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

A variety of NGOs have been playing an active part in international cooperation for environmental conservation in developing countries in recent years. Various support systems for such NGOs activities are being prepared, such as the Japan Fund for the Global Environment Grant Program of the Environment Restoration and Conservation Agency of Japan, and funding from the private sector. NGOs are expected to play a vital role in international cooperation for nature conservation as well; therefore, to encourage the success of NGOs and funding organizations in international cooperation, the Ministry of the Environment provides information and advice.



The habits investigation of the Javan Leopard
(Gunung Halimun Saruku National Park)



A research center constructed with Japan's grant aid
(Indonesia Biodiversity Information Center, Cibinong, Indonesia)