

② Direction of measures

1. Improvement of baseline information

Methods and systems for the effective and efficient collection and utilisation of information at the national level will be considered for systematic accumulation of information and knowledge regarding marine biodiversity. High-priority areas for conservation of marine biodiversity will be identified on the basis of scientific knowledge.



2. Identification of factors influencing marine biodiversity and implementation of measures to reduce them

To promote conservation of marine biodiversity and its sustainable use appropriately, causes of the problems and those responsible for actions to reduce their impacts will be identified. Measures will be conducted with methods and procedures suitable to solve these problems, under cooperation among relevant parties.



3. Implementation of measures appropriate for characteristics of individual marine areas

Measures for conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity will be implemented in accordance with characteristics of individual marine area, such as differences in the ecosystems and major influencing factors between coastal water and the open ocean.



4. Improvement of Marine Protected Areas and enhancement of their networking

Designation of Marine Protected Areas will be promoted appropriately using the existing systems such as National Parks, and management of Marine Protected Areas will be improved and enhanced. For conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, a concept of effective networking of Marine Protected Areas will be considered, and if required, a new system will be considered as well.



5. Facilitation of public acceptance and involvement of various actors

Scientific information and knowledge regarding the current status of marine biodiversity, various values associated with it, and the necessity for its conservation will be distributed for publicity among the public. To establish a network of Marine Protected Areas, cooperation and coordination among various relevant actors will be enhanced, and awareness of conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in social activities will be raised.



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FOR ALL THE LIFE ON EARTH

Biodiversity



Marine Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

Ocean is an essential component to sustain lives on the Earth.

Humans survive on various blessings from the ocean.

But in recent years, there is an indication that marine biodiversity has been deteriorating at both domestic and international levels.

The Marine Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, introduced in this leaflet, was formulated by the Ministry of the Environment in Japan in March 2011, on the basis of the "National Biodiversity Strategy 2010."

It is in line with international targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and with the "Basic Act on Ocean Policy" and the "Basic Plan on Ocean Policy" in Japan.



What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity could be referred to as "characteristics" and "interrelations" of life created through the long history of evolution. Biodiversity includes not only "species diversity" which is occurrence of various species of fauna and flora, but also "intra-species (genetic) diversity" which is variation in a single species according to localities, etc., and "ecosystem diversity" which refers to the variety of ecosystems such as forests, rivers, tidal flats and coral reefs.



Ministry of the Environment

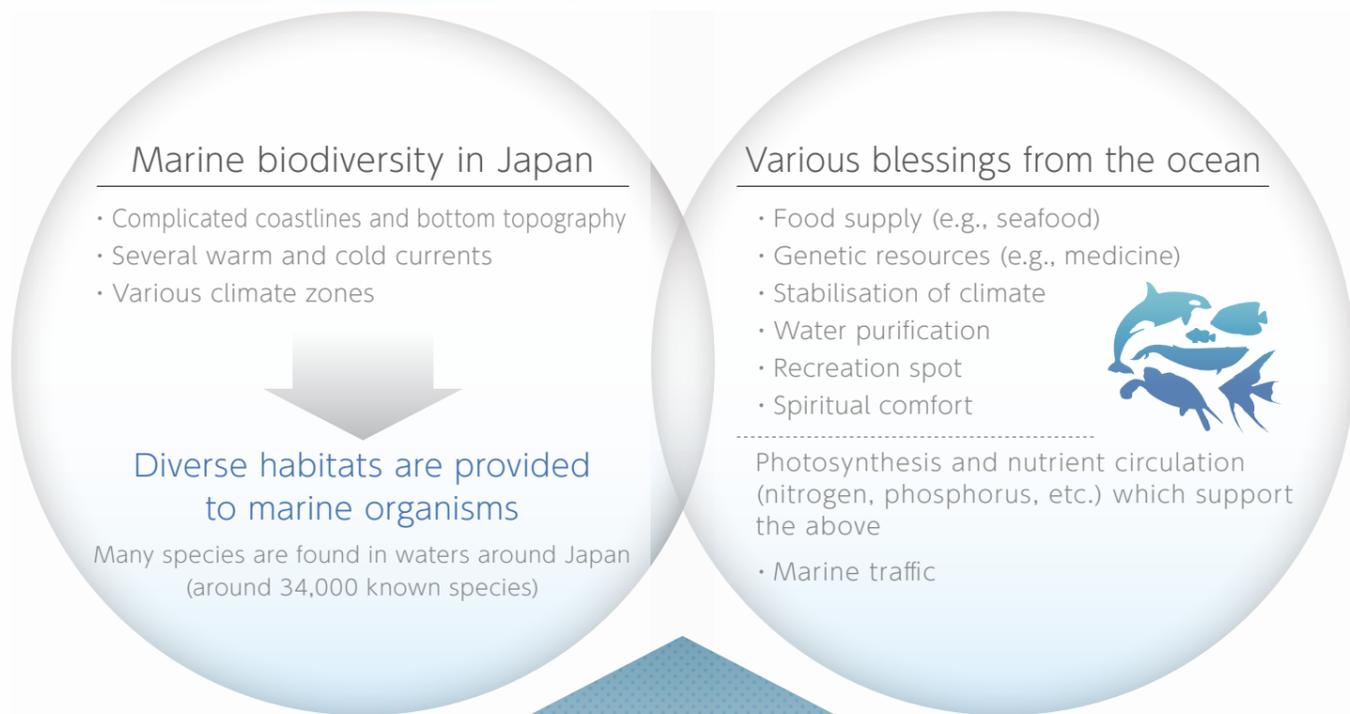


Objectives

This Conservation Strategy aims to conserve the biodiversity which supports the sound structure and function of marine ecosystems, and to utilise ecological services of the ocean, or the blessings from the ocean, in a sustainable manner.

➔ The Strategy, therefore, mainly addresses areas under the jurisdiction of Japan, and provides
① Basic perspectives and ② Direction of measures
for conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity.

Current Status and Challenges



- Marine biodiversity of Japan has been deteriorating
- Physical alterations that reduce habitats for organisms
 - Pollution of marine environment that deteriorates the quality of ecosystems (e.g., discharge of sewage and waste material, oil and chemical spills)
 - Fishery-related problems
 - Introduction of alien species that may disturb ecosystems
 - Impacts of the climate change (e.g., sea temperature rise, sea level rise, habitat change)

① Basic perspectives

1. Recognition of the importance of marine biodiversity

It is important to recognise marine biodiversity and its various blessings. Long-term and continuous utilisation of ecosystems services requires maintenance of sound ecosystems. In addition, for continuous promotion of their conservation and sustainable utilisation, it is essential to properly assess the importance of marine biodiversity for our economic activities and social life, to accept its conservation as worthwhile.



2. Integrated management of the sea

■ Coastal areas

The land and the sea are connected through movement of soil and nutrient salt. Many organisms living in coastal areas move from one habitat to another at different stages of their lives. It is necessary to manage a coastal area considering the linkage between the land and the sea.

■ The open ocean

Considering the continuity of the ocean and the extensive migration of marine organisms, international cooperation, such as cooperation with neighbouring countries, is important for the open ocean.



3. Measures appropriate for the characteristics of marine areas around Japan

Characteristics of ecosystems and the major influencing factors differ between coastal water and the open ocean. Marine environment also varies significantly with latitude, ocean current and bottom topography. It is important to implement measures for their conservation and sustainable utilisation, taking characteristics of individual marine areas into consideration.



4. Effective measures that utilise local knowledge and technology

It is important to respect activities of local communities for conservation and management on the basis of their long history and traditional wisdom. Participation of various local actors and facilitation of coordination among them are also important.



5. Summary of the concept of Marine Protected Areas

■ Marine Protected Areas

Marine areas designated and managed by law or other effective means, in consideration of use modalities, aimed at the conservation of marine biodiversity supporting the sound structure and function of marine ecosystems and ensuring the sustainable use of marine ecosystem services.

→ Existing Marine Protected Areas include Natural Parks, Nature Conservation Areas, Wildlife Protection Areas, Protected Water Areas, etc.

■ Current status of Marine Protected Areas in Japan and their challenges

It is necessary to consider a concept of efficient Marine Protected Areas through their improvement by application of the existing systems and effective combinations of these. Continuous review for appropriate measures or systems is also required, considering accumulation of knowledge and changes of the social situation.