

NGO International Symposium Environmental NGO Hyogo Declaration

At the G8 Environment Ministers Meeting that will be held from May 24 to 26 in anticipation of the 2008 G8 Summit to be held at Toyako this July, ministers in charge of Environment from G8 nations, Australia, China, India, 19 nations in total, will gather and discuss climate change, biodiversity and the 3Rs from a global perspective.

At the symposium “From Hyogo to Toyako for a Sustainable Future-A Message from Global Civil Society-“ which was held prior to this meeting, environmental NGOs from Japan and other nations around the world, including developing nations, and private citizens gathered together and discuss environmental efforts by individual governments in terms of issues that transcend national interests.

Based on these discussions, we, as private citizens living in developed nations, will take the lead in initiating action, and we strongly urge that the leaders of the G8 nations will take specific actions toward the resolution of the following issues.

Climate change

Climate change is a serious problem, and it is an international security issue that the world leaders must act urgently to resolve. Extreme weather conditions, destruction of biodiversity, and other damages are occurring to the greatest degree in the developing nations that are the most vulnerable, exacerbating the problem of poverty and accelerating human rights abuses and consequently engendering conflicts.

In order to resolve the problem of climate change, the G8 nations that bear a major responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions must take the lead in initiating effective action, based on a recognition that world emissions, which are expected to peak during the next ten to fifteen years, must be cut by more than half by 2050, and that developed nations overall must reduce emissions by at least 25 - 40% by 2020 as compared to 1990 levels.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity was raised as a crucial issue at the 2007 G8 Summit, and there was a renewed recognition that biodiversity is the foundation of life as well as the economy. Phase 2 of the Millennium Assessment that views the relationship between human beings and nature in comprehensive terms from a global perspective must be promoted and, based on scientific knowledge and the principle of prevention, we must take a fresh look at the ways in which natural resources are utilized, and provide new impetus for

the preservation and restoration of biodiversity. We must also realize that preserving biodiversity is indispensable for resolving the problem of climate change, particularly the stop of deforestation. To also conserve marine eco-systems, it is essential to strengthen the global governance in the high seas. The G8 nations must recognize their responsibility for the loss of biodiversity including overconsumption of natural resources and must provide leadership to achieve the conservation and restoration of biodiversity.

In order to contribute to poverty alleviation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and biodiversity, the G8 nations must meet their commitment to significantly increase their support.

3R Initiative

In general, developing nations are distrustful when, in the life cycle of products, the developed nations enjoy the benefits and convenience at the stage of manufacture and use but impose upon developing nations the negative aspects of pollution and hazard at the stage of disposal.

In order to eliminate the concerns and distrust of people in developing nations, G8 nations must provide more than verbal assurances that they will not export wastes; they must achieve the principle of domestic processing of the wastes generated in their own country, rather than obliging developing nations to shoulder the burden. At the same time, they must create a new 3R Initiative (reduce, reuse and recycle) that enables the international circulation of resources.

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Executive Committee, NGO International Symposium and NGO Open Plaza
(organizing body)

Environment Unit, 2008 Japan G8 Summit NGO Forum

Kiko Network

Citizen's Alliance for Saving the Atmosphere and the Earth (CASA)

Institute for Sustainable Energy Policies (ISEP)

Hyogo Environmental Advancement Association