

JEO

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Nairobi, June 2014

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Ginkgo in Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden, Tokyo

The First UN Environment

The inaugural United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) was held from June 23 to 27, 2014 with the attendance of UN Secretary General Mr. Bang Ki-moon. The high-level segment of UNEA discussed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and post-2015 development agenda. Mr. Tomokatsu Kitagawa,



A scene from UNEA

The first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) was held in Nairobi, Kenya from June 23 to 27, 2014. UNEA is the new governing body of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), after countries agreed to strengthen UNEP and extend its 58-member Governing Council to all the UN countries. 157 countries attended this memorable meeting, and representatives included Mr. Bang Ki-moon, UN Secretary General, Mr. John Ashe, President of the UN General Assembly, and Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, the President of Kenya. Japan was represented by Mr. Tomokatsu Kitagawa, Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister of the Environment. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Oyun Sanjaasuren, Mongolia's Minister of Environment and Green Development. The 10-member bureau of UNEA including Ms. Oyun, the new UNEA

President, was elected at the beginning of the meeting, replacing the former 5-member bureau of which Mr. Ryutaro Yatsu, Japanese Vice-Minister of the Environment, was a member.

The high-level segment of UNEA from June 26 to 27 discussed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and post-2015 development agenda. On this topic, Mr. Kitagawa argued for the importance of transforming the socio-economic system to achieve a low carbon society embracing a sound material cycle and harmony with nature, and of engaging in real actions such as the UN 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production. He further proposed targets and indicators such as resource productivity, recycling rate, and final disposal volume. He also urged the participants to attend the UNESCO World Conference on Education

Assembly, Nairobi, June 2014

Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister of the Environment, called for global efforts towards a low-carbon society embracing a sound material cycle and harmony with nature.



for Sustainable Development, to be held in Nagoya in November 2014. The discussion at this high-level segment was summarized in a ministerial outcome document adopted by UNEA, which called for an ambitious, universal, implementable and realizable post-2015 development agenda that fully integrates the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The message from UNEA will be taken forward to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

The outcome document also included a summary of the high-level dialogue on illegal trade in wildlife and UNEA decisions on specific topics such as air pollution, micro-plastic debris, integrated management of chemicals and waste, and interface between science and policy.

Taking this opportunity, several bilateral talks took place, including the second Japan-UNEP



Bilateral meeting with Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP



Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister Mr. Kitagawa speaking at the high-level segment of UNEA

Policy Dialogue. UNEP Executive Director Mr. Achim Steiner and Mr. Kitagawa discussed the greater role of the UNEP International Environmental Technology Center in Osaka, promotion of UNEP activities on climate change such as the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) and Climate Technology Center and Network (CTCN), and the global and domestic effort to implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

The next session of UNEA will be held from May 23 to 27, 2016.

More Information:

UNEA

<http://www.unep.org/unea/en/>

Eisaku TODA

Director
International Strategy Division
Global Environment Bureau



Efforts in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Towards the UNESCO World Conference on ESD



Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister Mr. Kitagawa delivering an Environmental Education class titled "Diversity"



MOE's
Mascot
for ESD



ESD Photo Communication Project

The "UNESCO World Conference¹ on ESD²" is just around the corner. At the Ministry of the Environment (MOE), we are taking this opportunity to accelerate our efforts in ESD.

The MOE's main efforts in ESD are:

- ✦ The "Challenge Project for ESD Programs in the Tohoku Region" to build upon the earthquake reconstruction efforts in Tohoku to instigate new approaches to ESD and to disseminate these for implementation throughout Japan
- ✦ The "Capacity Building Project for Sustainable Regional Development" to pilot 20 publically chosen model ESD programs at primary and secondary schools in all prefectures, and then to expand them into regional programs
- ✦ Follow-up on the "United Nations Decade of ESD" by holding a round table discussion chaired by Mr. Kitagawa, Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister of the Environment, to formulate a proposal of measures to promote Environmental Education.

MOE is also working on projects such as the "ESD Learning Forum: ESD KIDS FES!!!," the production of an Environmental Education Book by the "Tripartite Environmental Education Network among Japan, China and Korea," and the "ESD Photo Communication Project."

We look forward to disseminating these efforts of MOE at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD.

More Information:

UNESCO World Conference on ESD 2014

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco-world-conference-on-esd-2014/>

Yuko KIMURA

Deputy Director
Office of Environmental Education
Environmental Policy Bureau



¹ Conference overview: the government of Japan and UNESCO will co-host the ministerial-level UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Nagoya. Stakeholder meetings will be held in Okayama. Both meetings will be held in November 2014.

² Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): Education that aims for transformative behavior change towards a sustainable society based on the understanding that each one of us lives in relationship with people around the world, future generations, and the environment.

MOE's Priority Measures for Fiscal Year 2015

The Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has announced the priorities of its budget request for fiscal year 2015. The basic direction is to construct a society based on decentralized low-carbon energy, harmony with nature and sound material cycle. This will be done not only through environmental conservation measures, but also through measures to vitalize regional economies inspired by those conservation measures according to different natural environments and characteristics of the localities such as their urban- and rural-ness. More specifically, the following four elements comprise the main pillars of MOE's priorities for FY 2015.

The first pillar is **disaster prevention and reduction based on the lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake and subsequent reconstruction**. MOE will work towards the speedy reconstruction and revitalization of areas affected by the 2011 earthquake by addressing environmental contamination by radioactive materials. It will also work on readying the nation for large-scale disasters in the future, assuming the occurrence of events such as earthquakes occurring directly beneath the Tokyo Metropolitan Area and Nankai Trough Mega-Earthquake.

Another pillar consists of **the construction of new-generation local communities embracing a sound material cycle**. MOE will work on the construction of local communities with a sound material-cycle by restoring natural cycles such as material, energy, secondary nature ("Satoyama," "Satoumi," etc.) and ecosystem cycles. Novel methodologies of environmental finance and community investment will be used for this. Simultaneously promoting environmental education, learning, and awareness will support the human development of individuals capable of creating such communities. Basic research on these measures will procure the foundation for the wellbeing of current and future generations.

The third pillar is **the international deployment of Japan's successful environmental policy and technology in accordance with overseas demand**. MOE will

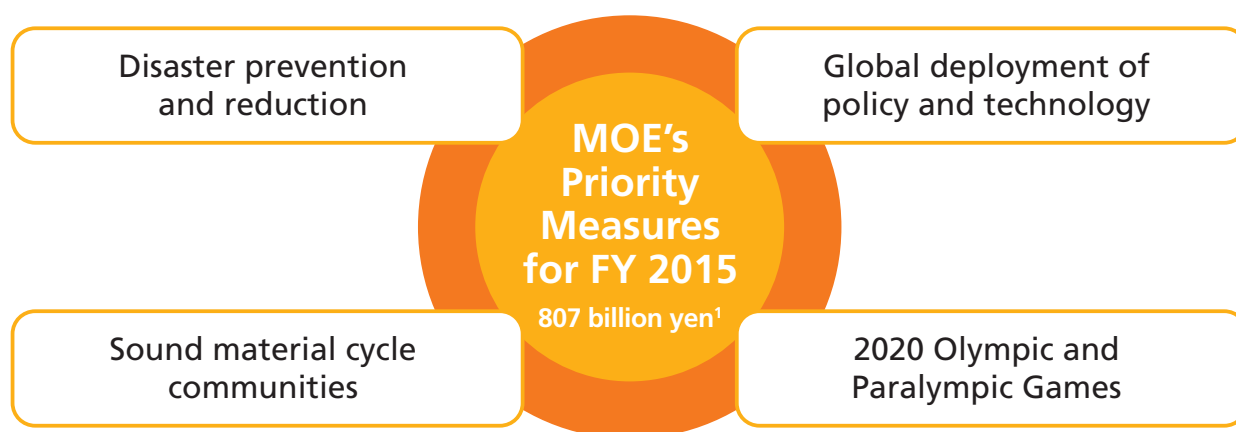
contribute to the construction of a sustainable global society through dialogues with key countries and intergovernmental organizations towards the establishment of a legal framework ensuring the effectiveness and transparency of measures against climate change. Early ratification of the Minamata Convention, through appropriate control of mercury within Japan and the provision of assistance to curb mercury pollution in developing countries, will also contribute to the construction of a sustainable society. We also hope to enable the leapfrog development of developing countries (mainly in the Asia-Pacific region) by transferring our advanced environmental technologies and fostering institutional and human resources development in ways suited to the respective context. Capturing the demand these measures create overseas will also facilitate Japan's economic development.

Efforts towards the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo make up the final pillar of MOE's measures in FY 2015. The environmental impact of these events will be minimized through e.g. introducing renewable energy, implementing the 3Rs, and smooth waste treatment. We will take this opportunity to disseminate our efforts to establish Tokyo as a top-tier "environmental city."



Shuichi MIZUSHIMA

Section Chief
International Strategy Division
Global Environment Bureau



¹Budget request to the Ministry of Finance

Strategy for Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora



Transferring captive Japanese crested ibises to acclimation cages

In April 2014, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) of Japan formulated the "Strategy for Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora." Based on the "National Biodiversity Strategy of Japan 2012-2020," the Strategy lays out Japan's basic approach to conservation and the progression of immediate measures to be taken.

More specifically, this Conservation Strategy clarified the prioritization of endangered species that require conservation measures. Conservation priority is to be determined through an assessment of: 1) the difficulty of the species' survival and 2) the effectiveness of measures. Measures indicated in the Strategy include the development of a "Conservation Catalogue of Endangered Species" to enhance the knowledge base on conservation and the goal to designate an additional 300 Domestic Endangered Species under the Law for the Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora by 2020.

The Aichi Target was adopted as a new set of global targets at the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP10) of the Convention on Biological Diversity that was held in Japan

in 2010. Based on the above Strategy, we will coordinate and cooperate with a wide variety of entities to advance measures for the conservation of endangered species and to achieve the individual targets on endangered species in the Aichi Target. This April, we also established the new Office for Conservation of Endangered Species in the Nature Conservation Bureau to strengthen our organizational structure towards these aims. As such, we are hopeful about the enduring positive impact of the Strategy of Conservation.

More Information:

Living in Harmony with nature; The National Biodiversity strategy of Japan 2012-2020

http://www.biodic.go.jp/biodiversity/about/library/files/nbsap2012-2020/nbsap2012-2020_cop11ver_EN.pdf

Yusuke MIYAKE

Subsection Chief
Office for Conservation of Endangered Species
Nature Conservation Bureau



Endangered wildlife in Japan



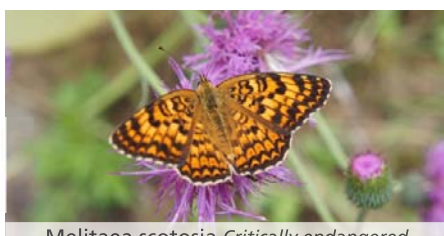
Tsushima leopard cat *Critically endangered*



Short-tailed albatross *Vulnerable*



Deep-bodied bitterling *Critically endangered*



Melitaea scotosia *Critically endangered*



Slipper orchid *Endangered*



Cheirotonus jambar *Endangered*

Rice Husk Gasification Power Generation and the "Tri-benefit" Project

General Environmental Technos Co., Ltd. is a comprehensive engineering company that encompasses the fields of environment, civil engineering, and architecture. Overseas, our endeavors have centered on environmental regeneration and restoration, renewable energy, and measures against global warming.

In Cambodia, we carried out a project to demonstrate an effective usage of the large quantities of husk that is generated by rice mills. Entrusted by the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) in 2011, we jointly carried out the project with Yanmar Green System Co., Ltd. (YGS) for a period of three years. The government of Cambodia, which



Rice husk from rice mills (Pursat Province, Cambodia)

had been plagued by protracted civil warfare, was prioritizing agricultural development and promoting "development of the rice mill business and export of white rice." In our project, YGS introduced energy saving devices to rice mills that were then able to realize the following "tri-benefit," or threefold benefit:

1. decrease in the use of light oil by replacing diesel in non-utility power generation with rice husk gasification ;
2. utilization of a by-product from rice husk gasification, carbonized rice husk, to enhance agricultural soils; and
3. production of high-quality white rice for export with energy efficient rice mills.

We are contemplating utilizing the Joint Crediting Mechanism for the future expansion of this system.



More Information:

KANSO Technos

<http://www.kanso.co.jp/eng/index.html>

Yasuyuki OKIMORI

Chief Manager
Overseas Business Group
Marketing Department
The General Environmental Technos Co., Ltd.



Creating Sustainable Futures through Regional Development

To hand down a society in which future generations can live with a smile on their face, enthusiastic citizens, businesses and municipalities throughout Japan are actively engaged in the earnest challenge to create comfortable communities through collaboration.

We, GENKI Net, have been supporting progressive environmental activities across the country by hosting the "'Genki(Vigor) Award' for Citizen-made Ecological Towns" since 2001.

Looking into the future, we hope to expand mutual learning on ecological community development (e.g. ecotourism exchange programs) into Asia through activities such as those of the Asia 3R Citizens' Network.



National Summit for Citizens' Mutual-Learning and Exchange (Yoron Island, Kagoshima)

Characteristics of vigorous local environmental activities:

1. Voluntary participation of many local citizens and coordination and collaboration with diverse entities
2. Utilization of local resources such as nature, history and culture to solve local environmental issues
3. Integrative activities that take diverse approaches including waste reduction, energy generation, and conservation

Characteristics of activities that endure over time:

1. A focus on practical action and on the environmental learning and engagement of future generations
2. Coordinating with experts (e.g. universities) for quality control
3. Local vitalization through environmental business (e.g. by creating jobs and local products)

More Information:

NPO GENKI Net for Creating a Sustainable Society

<http://www.genki-net.jp/>

Yuko SAKITA

President
Nonprofit "GENKI Net for Creating a Sustainable Society"



Akan National Park: The Fascinating Caldera Lakes



Located in eastern Hokkaido, Akan National Park is blessed with a spectacular landscape of three calderas. The park is also one of Japan's oldest national parks, celebrating its 80th year since designation.

In the west of Akan National Park is Akan Lake, a caldera lake famous as the habitat of wild colonies of a uniquely shaped alga, Marimo.

Although other lakes dot the vicinity of Akan Lake, many remote and mountainous areas remain unexplored due to their inaccessibility. The Ministry of the Environment is therefore working on furthering research on these lakes in cooperation with researchers. Already, research is uncovering the immense academic value of these lakes, as found in the distinctive physical features and biota of lakes even closely adjacent to each other as well as the presence of various rare species in addition to the Marimo.

We would like to continue this undertaking to advance our understanding of the natural environment of this region and to promote science-based conservation.



A colony of Marimo in Akan Lake

More Information:

Akan National Park (Kawayu Area)

<http://www.env.go.jp/en/nature/nps/park/parks/akan.html>

Yoshinori MOGAMI

Ranger
Lake Akan Ranger Office
Kushiro Nature Conservation Office



Voice of MOE Family in the World

Reservoir of Wildlife: Swimming with Piranhas

A key player in multilateral negotiations, Brazil is known not only as the host of the 1992 Earth Summit and Rio+20 (2012), but also for the Amazon rainforest, or "Lungs of the planet." The nation boasts a wealth of biodiversity; aside from the Amazon, Brazil's many biomes include Cerrado, Mata Atlântica, Caatinga and Pantanal. My personal favorite is the Pantanal Wetland, where predators like jaguars and alligators join the myriad birds at the banks of the scarce water that remain in the dry season. Apparently, it is also possible for humans to swim in the water. Anxious, I asked, "Aren't there piranhas in the water?" In response, the local guide handed me a piece of white cloth, adding that I would be fine as long as I covered any wounds with it. Bracing myself, I ventured a swim. I may have been imagining being constantly pecked at by something. Dynamic and spiced with danger, the vast nature of Brazil never ceases to allure me.



A beautiful Jaguar I came across in Pantanal

Yuki NANGO

Second Secretary
Embassy of Japan in Brazil
Political Section
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

