

Outline of the Marine Biodiversity Conservation Strategy in Japan

Chapter 1 Background

This Strategy is formulated by the Ministry of the Environment in Japan on the basis of the “National Biodiversity Strategy (2010)” under the “Basic Act on Biodiversity”, in line with the “Basic Act on Ocean Policy” and “Basic Plan on Ocean Policy”, in response to increasing public awareness on marine biodiversity.

Chapter 2 Objectives

The Strategy aims to protect the biodiversity to support the sound structure and function of marine ecosystems, and to use ecological services of the ocean, or its blessings, in a sustainable manner.

The Strategy provides a basic view and direction of measures for conservation and sustainable use of the marine biodiversity.

Chapter 3 Biodiversity in the ocean and its ecosystem services

- Marine biodiversity supports our survival and daily life. -

Extremely rich biodiversity of Japan

•Various climate zones, several warm & cold currents, numerous islands, and complicated coastlines & bottom topography (ex., trenches, sea mounts) create diverse marine environments with a variety of ecosystems (ex., seaweed beds, tidal flats, coral reefs, brackish water).

Rich and sound ecosystems provide “ecosystem services.”

- Food supply (ex., seafood)
- Genetic resources (ex., medicine)
- Recreation (ex., diving and shellfish gathering)
- Spiritual comfort
- Clean water
- Stabilisation of climate
- Circulation of nutrients

Current Status and Challenges : Biodiversity is deteriorated, and ecosystem services are degraded by human activities.

Chapter 4 Fundamentals

- Recognition of the importance of marine biodiversity on the basis of values of the biodiversity and associated ecosystem services.
- Integrated management of the sea with consideration of its integration with the land for organisms and substances and also cooperation with neighbouring countries.
- Measures appropriate to the characteristics of marine areas within jurisdiction of Japan, taking structures & functions of their ecosystems and the factors influencing them into consideration.
- Effective measures to utilise local knowledge and technology (ex., voluntary management through collaboration of various entities).
- Marine Protected Areas as one of the effective means for conservation of the biodiversity.

[Definition] 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.

Chapter 5 Development of Measures

1. Improvement of baseline information

Improvement of scientific information & knowledge to identify high-priority areas for conservation of the biodiversity.

2. Identification of factors influencing the marine biodiversity to implement measures to reduce their impacts

Measures against developments and the pollution loads to marine environment, those for fishery stock management & protection of fishery environment, measures against alien species, and those against climate changes

3. Implementation of measures appropriate to characteristics of individual areas

Implementation of measures for their conservation and sustainable use, considering differences in characteristics between individual areas, such as coastal areas and the open ocean

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

Improvement of management of Marine Protected Areas and consideration of methodologies to assess their performance, additional designations of the Areas, and enhancement of networking among the Areas

5. Facilitation of the public acceptance and involvement of various entities

Publicity campaign, assistance to activities of local communities, and facilitation of collaboration & cooperation by various entities