

NACS-J Position Paper on Post 2010 Target

“To stop the loss of biodiversity by 2020, minimize the driver which causes of this loss, and maximize all efforts to maintain and restore biodiversity”

2009.10.10

Foreword

The Nature Conservation Society of Japan (NACS-J), established in 1951, has been devoted to the cause of biodiversity conservation in Japan. We perform advocacy work on public development that causes loss of biodiversity, train people to be leaders in local conservation strategies, and establish citizen-led research programs and monitoring schemes for local nature conservation.

The 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD-COP10) will be held in October 2010, review the Strategic Plan of CBD, and set a new target, the so called “post-2010 Biodiversity Target.” This target will be discussed in several international meetings, such as the 14th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body of Technical and Technological Assistance and the 3rd Meeting of the Working Group on the Review of Implementation (WGRI) for the COP10 decision. Biodiversity Indicator Partnership (BIP) led by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)-World Conservation Monitoring Center and the 3rd Global Biodiversity Outlook are also involved in the prevention of biodiversity loss.

This position paper describes the principle direction and point of view of the NACS-J prior to this reviewing process. We will continue to present our position in a timely manner.

Summary

1. Review of efforts to achieve the 2010 target in Japan
 - The main threats to biodiversity, namely, invasion by alien species and human activities such as public development, have not been controlled in Japan. Basic conservation laws and a framework to enable this control have been established, but concrete action for achieving the 2010 target remains insufficient in all sectors.
2. Ideal direction for the post-2010 Biodiversity Target
 - We recognize that biodiversity is unique and specific to a given location. It is irreplaceable and cannot be achieved through economic measures such as marketing. To stop the further loss of biodiversity by 2020, we need to minimize or remove the causes of this loss and maximize all efforts to maintain and restore biodiversity.
 - Biodiversity conservation requires the engagement of all global citizens. Governments, private sectors, citizens, NGOs, and experts should understand biodiversity and be actively involved in the achievement of the new strategic plan and target.
3. NACS-J action plan to achieve the post-2010 target
 - NACS-J will promote a community-based biodiversity conservation program to achieve the post-2010 target.

1. Evaluation of the implementation of the 2010 target

(1) State of Japan We, the NACS-J, recognize that the 4 crises summarized by the 3rd National Biodiversity Strategy of Japan are more serious than was indicated in the Fourth National Report of Japan.

(i) Crisis caused by human activities and public development

Large-scale public development, which destroys wildlife habitats, is currently underway in Japan and has gained national importance as an impediment to conservation activities. Examples of such development are reclamation of wetlands and coral reefs (construction of a US military base at Oura Bay in Okinawa Islands, reclamation of Awase tidal flat), river modifications (Sanru dam in Hokkaido, Yoshino River estuary), and construction of roads. The rate of loss and segmentation of natural forests has decreased but remains a matter of concern because the remaining natural forests cannot withstand decades of human interference. Illegal hunting of rare species such as the Yanbaru long-armed scarab beetle (*Cheirotonus jambar*) and *Cymbidium dayanum* also remains a serious threat

(ii) Crisis caused by the lack of appropriate human intervention

In satoyama, biodiversity continues to be threatened by the activities related to human livelihood. We discovered that 40% of a satoyama site had a shortage of actor and successor. Maintaining a healthy primary industry is the key to maintaining biodiversity, especially in an environment like satoyama.

(iii) Crisis caused by foreign organisms introduced in the environment by humans

The introduction of foreign organisms greatly impacts biodiversity. For example, in the past, biodiversity has been reduced by the introduction of turtles, the spread of chytridiomycosis, and ecosystem disturbances caused by the introduction of raccoons. In the Ogasawara Islands and Ryukyu Islands, which are the habitat of many endemic species, the effects of foreign organisms has been especially great. Invasive alien species such as the green anole (*Anolis carolinensis*) and java mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus*) have severe adverse effects on the environment.

(iv) Crisis caused by climate change

Climate changes affect sensitive and vulnerable populations such as the coral reef and highland plants. Such climate changes are a matter of great concern.

(v) Relationship with biodiversity in other countries

Many developed countries like Japan import foods and natural resources from all over the world. Countries that export such goods have reduced biodiversity and have utilized their natural resources in an unsustainable manner. This has resulted in damage to the ecosystem and worsened poverty. Moreover, the import of foods and forest resources has resulted in the degradation of the primary industry in developed countries. Such international material flow results in continuous biodiversity loss.

(2) Efforts to achieve the 2010 target

The 2010 target has not been met because human activities that result in a loss biodiversity were not regulated. In Japan, awareness and recognition of CBD and its 2010 target is insufficient in the government as well as other sectors. Nevertheless, the 2010 target and strategic plan were adopted in 2002, and in November 2007, the

Japanese government included the 2010 target among its national strategic goals.

Although much progress has been made at the institutional level, several problems remain. Building legislative framework

· Since 2002, threatened species in all taxonomic groups have been assessed (Red Data Book). New biodiversity-related laws like the Act on the Regulation of Invasive Alien Species (2004) and the Basic Act on Biodiversity (2008) were passed. Further, the national

biodiversity strategy has been periodically reviewed (2002 and 2007). Good progress has been made in the maintenance of a basic legislative framework for biodiversity conservation.

·On the other hand, human activities and public development that result in the destruction and degradation of biodiversity have not been reconsidered, and thus, the effort to address biodiversity loss remains incomplete.

Policy issues

(i) The current environment impact assessment (EIA) scheme has many flaws that prevent it from ensuring that there is no or minimal net loss of biodiversity from development activities. The screening process of EIA should include not only the type of activities and scale of development but also the degree of impact of these events on biodiversity. Further, legislation should be passed to make strategic environment assessment (SEA), which is the initial step of the EIA process, mandatory during the planning of public development.

(ii) Designation of “protected areas” is important for biodiversity conservation. The NACS-J Plant Community Red Data Book has revealed that many aquatic plant populations are endangered. Protected area planning in wetlands, rivers, coastal lines, and coastal zones is insufficient.

(iii) The negative impact of invasive alien species and climate changes on the ecosystem should be eliminated or nullified.

Increasing awareness and participation of the general public

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NGOs and citizens participate in research and conservation activities in areas such as satoyama, wetlands, and sea coast. Some private and local government workers are involved in biodiversity conservation or local conservation strategies.

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However, the 2009 National Census showed that 61.5% of people had not heard of the term “biodiversity.” Thus, little progress has been made in increasing the awareness of the general public.

Utilization of scientific information

Scientific information for biodiversity conservation is being collected by various scientists and civil networks. However, their findings have not been fully utilized for making policy decisions. Public-sector organizations like the Biodiversity Center of Japan should attempt to introduce scientific information regarding biodiversity into ministerial decision making.

The biggest problem for biodiversity conservation in Japan is that such conservation policies are not mainstream, and the government does not adequately address this issue because of various political reasons and because the efforts and findings of scientists, citizens, NGOs, and private-sector workers are not fully utilized during policy development.

2. Ideal direction for the post-2010 Biodiversity Target

(1) Target

- The new target should be “To stop the loss of biodiversity by 2020, minimize the causes of biodiversity loss, and maximize all efforts to maintain and restore biodiversity.”
- All sectors should recognize the essential role of biodiversity and the ecosystem for human survival and well-being, maintain biodiversity at the level it is in 2010 or increase it further, and ensure a sustainable relationship between people and nature.

(2) Basic policy for the achievement of the new target

- Recognize that biodiversity is unique and specific to a given location. It is irreplaceable and cannot be achieved through economic measures such as marketing. Therefore, the prevention of further loss of biodiversity is imperative to achieve the new target.
- Biodiversity conservation as well as measures to adapt to climate changes should be undertaken by all global citizens. Greater public awareness of biodiversity, which supports the safety and health of all living organisms, is required.
- Citizen participation will facilitate not only the central government but also the local government, private sectors, NGOs, and scientists to implement the strategic plan by promoting information sharing and transparency of process.

(3) Requirements for achieving the new target

(i) Strengthening of legislative measures and program

- A systematic legislative framework should be established to promote conservation and eliminate the causes of biodiversity loss.
- A buildup target should be set prior to the post-2010 target
- Large-scale public development should be reconsidered by the central and local government, since this development is the main threat to biodiversity in Japan.

(ii) Utilization of scientific information and development of biodiversity indicators.

- Scientific indicators should be developed after taking into consideration not only the components of biodiversity (area of forest, number of protected species) but also connectivity between mountains, rivers, and the sea along with the ecosystem.
- The outcomes of biodiversity monitoring by citizens and NGOs at a local level should be utilized for the development of scientific biodiversity indicators.
- Ensure that land use and development are preceded by adequate planning with the involvement of local communities, utilization of scientific and sociological knowledge, and evaluation of the cultural value of biodiversity.

(iii) Promotion of biodiversity-friendly primary industry

- Strengthen and promote the current certification of products and encourage further efforts on certification in order to promote sustainable agriculture, forestry, and fishery and avoid loss of biodiversity.

(4) Framework for ensuring implementation and review of the post-2010 target

- Increasing the capacity for implementation of biodiversity-conservation strategies
- Increase education and the capacity for biodiversity conservation in each administrative, private, and civil sector.
- Promote guidelines on the development of biodiversity-conservation strategies for the local and private sectors.
- Ensure adequate funding for the maintenance of biodiversity after taking into consideration the findings of NGOs in various countries.
- The secretariats of the CBD and NGOs should cooperate with each other, promote the participation of citizens, and establish a framework whereby NGOs can be actively involved in the achievement of the CBD target in various countries.

Promoting implementation

- The WGRF should continue its efforts, and each country should set up such working groups with the participation of their scientists, NGOs, and citizens.
- A national report on progress in the achievement of the post-2010 target should be submitted to the COP11, with an obligatory public announcement for citizens and NGOs.

3. Action plan to achieve the post-2010 target

NACS-J will take the following action to achieve the post-2010 target and ensure biodiversity conservation.

Site-level protection from public development

- Biodiversity-degrading developments like reclamation of coastal lines and dam constructions are ongoing. We intend to eliminate these causes of biodiversity loss by monitoring development activities, implementing EIA, and performing advocacy work.
- Establishment of good practice/model of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use with multi-stakeholder involvement
- We promote pioneer practice for sustainable community development based on local ecosystem management and cooperation with the local community and governmental agency by the AKAYA and AYA projects.
- Monitoring of local biodiversity conservation by scientists and citizens
- We facilitate the evaluation and conservation of endemic biodiversity by monitoring world heritage sites and nature conservation areas and by promoting citizen-based monitoring of areas like satoyama, wetlands, and the coastal line.
- We interface between the government and scientists/citizens for the utilization of scientific information.

“Way to Biodiversity” linking biodiversity and citizen

To promote public awareness of the value of biodiversity and the ecosystem, we will

- 1) identify an “ecosystem monitoring map,”
- 2) publish biodiversity conservationist guides,
- 3) conduct “field biodiversity training seminars,”
- 4) promote citizen-led research,
- 5) match civil activities to corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, and
- 6) study and ensure biodiversity conservation

Biodiversity conservation education

- We train people to be leaders in local conservation by educating them regarding the grass-roots of conservation through the NACS-J Nature Conservation Educator program, which has trained 20,000 people since 1978.

Dr. Sadatoshi Tabata,
Chair of the Board of Directors,
Nature Conservation Society of Japan
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For more information(English), please contact
Teppei Dohke(Mr), Nature Conservation Research division

Mitoyo Bldg.2F 1-16-10 Shinkawa, Chuo-ku,
Tokyo 104-0033, Japan
TEI +81 3 3553 4109(Direct)
Email: iucnj@nacsj.or.jp