



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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ADDRESS BY
H.E. MR. SEIJI MAEHARA
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF JAPAN
AT THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING AS A CONTRIBUTION
TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY
22 SEPTEMBER 2010
NEW YORK

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the occasion of this important conference today, I express my heartfelt appreciation to President Deiss for his leadership. At present, many species on Earth, which has sustained life for over four billion years, are dying out and biodiversity is being lost at an unprecedented rate.

Currently, swathes of forest equivalent to one-third of the area of Japan are vanishing from Earth every year. If the destruction of the ecosystem continues at this pace, mankind could eternally lose most of nature's bounty in the near future. If this should happen, we will not be able to pass on the blessings of nature to future generations.

As this year marks the International Year of Biodiversity, we should understand that the loss of biodiversity has been caused by none other than human activities. We now need to be aware that we must take new action and change our behavior- so as to halt this loss.

Mr. President,

In October, Japan will host COP10 of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya city, Aichi Prefecture, aiming to achieve a global agreement on commencing new actions.

One of the main objectives of the conference is to set global targets up to 2020 and 2050 as common guidelines for formulating national strategies. It is important for us to show a clear picture of the concerted action to be taken over the next ten years so that coming generations will be able to enjoy the blessings of nature.

During the conference, we will also negotiate with a view to reaching agreement on a new international regime in the area of access and benefit-sharing as related to genetic resources (ABS) as well as international rules with regard to living modified organisms. In particular, negotiations on ABS could be affected by the differing interests of users and providers of genetic resources. However, if the parties can agree upon a new regime, this could be an epoch-making agreement to facilitate the flow of funds for habitat conservation and thus contribute to the benefit of the entire Earth.

Japan will do its utmost as the Chair to ensure that agreements are reached on these issues at the conference, and we request the support of all the parties concerned.

Mr. President,

Japan will contribute to global efforts, acting on our own innovative initiative.

First of all, Japan proposes adopting a resolution on the United Nations Decade of Biodiversity at this General Assembly session. This resolution calls for the promotion of concerted action over the next ten years, not only within the framework of the Convention but also throughout the whole United Nations system.

Japan will also strive for the adoption of a resolution on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) at this ordinary session. Once established, the platform is expected to provide a scientific basis for the policies for biodiversity conservation and to lead to a broad understanding of the importance of such policies.

Mr. President,

Japan will also lead international efforts in promoting conservation and the sustainable use of the natural environment in the regions which have been created through such human activities as agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Japan will propose this approach, which we refer to as the 'SATOYAMA Initiative', at COP10, with a view to enabling the experiences and practices developed in different regions of the world to be shared internationally. Japan will put to good use our expertise and experience in supporting other countries.

In addition, Japan intends to propose assistance measures to support developing countries in the steady formulation and implementation of national strategies, if a global common target is agreed upon at COP10. In consultation with other countries, Japan will consider appropriate measures which will utilize its knowledge and technologies.

Mr. President,

Japan has long valued living in harmony with nature through the ingenious utilization of nature's abundant gifts in our daily lives and activities. As the Earth and humankind are in crisis caused by the loss of biodiversity, we are urged to address the root cause by making our lifestyles and behavior more harmonious with nature.

By taking advantage of our experience in living with nature, Japan is committed to be at the forefront of the global action to be initiated at COP10.

I am looking forward to meeting you again and engaging in the discussions in October at COP10, which will be held under the theme of 'Living in Harmony with Nature.'