

Statement by Mr. SUGIURA Masatoshi, Director-General
for Global Issues on High-Level Meeting on addressing
the existential threats posed by sea level rise
24 September 2026, Plenary Segment

- Japan recognizes that, for countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, such as SIDS and LDCs, sea-level rise and intensifying natural disasters pose serious and urgent threats, potentially to their very existence.
- The threats posed by sea level rise, such as loss of territory and submergence, floods, and loss of agricultural land, are national security issues and human security issues, as they threaten people's daily lives.
- In June 2026, during the Island States Ocean Summit in Tokyo, Prime Minister TAKAICHI stressed the importance of supporting countries suffering from extreme weather events and sea level rise, enhancing cooperation for achieving sustainable oceans under the rule of law. The "Sea Level Rise and International Law" session provided an opportunity for productive discussion on legal issues related to sea-level rise.
- Japan finds it permissible to preserve the existing baselines and maritime zones established in accordance with the UNCLOS, notwithstanding the regression of coastlines caused by climate change.
- In this context, the discussion on the continuity of statehood is increasingly becoming important. Japan is committed to engaging sincerely in discussions on this issue and encouraging States to use wisdom and diplomatic efforts for development of State practice and

opinio juris.

- It is also important to strengthen support for SIDS and other vulnerable countries. Besides bilateral assistance and assistance through international organizations, Japan contributes to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD), placing high priority on supporting climate actions in island nations. In addition to contributions from developed countries, it will be essential to leverage finance from developing countries in a position to do so and the private sector to further enhance assistance.
- In Latin America and Asia-Pacific, we contribute to capacity building in coastal ecosystem management, advancement of meteorological information, and utilization of innovative solutions. For Pacific Island countries, Japan is mobilizing its technology, know-how and financial resources to strengthen its cooperation in climate change and natural disasters under the Pacific Climate Resilience Initiative.
- By implementing these commitments, Japan will continue to stand by countries vulnerable to the sea level rise and work with the international community to enhance mid-to-long-term resilience and support energy transition and decarbonization.

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