

Section 2

Japan's International Cooperation (Development Cooperation and Response to Global Issues)

1 Development Cooperation

(1) Development Cooperation Charter and Japan's ODA Performance

More than 65 years have passed since Japan started its Official Development Assistance (ODA)¹ in 1954. Japan's development cooperation policy including ODA has greatly contributed to securing peace, stability and prosperity of the international community and consequently the national interests of Japan for many years.

In recent years, the situation surrounding development is transforming, as indicated by the growing diversity and complexity of the issues facing developing countries and the growing roles of non-ODA funds and support. In response to the transformation, in February 2015, the Development Cooperation Charter was decided by the Cabinet to replace its previous ODA Charter. Under the Development Cooperation Charter, taking into account its philosophy toward development cooperation cultivated over many years and from

the perspective of further evolving this philosophy, Japan has established the basic policies of (1) contributing to peace and prosperity through cooperation for non-military purposes; (2) promoting human security; and (3) cooperation aimed at self-reliant development through assistance for self-help efforts as well as dialogue and collaboration based on Japan's experience and expertise. Japan promotes development cooperation under these basic policies, with (1) "quality growth" and poverty eradication through such growth; (2) sharing universal values and realizing a peaceful and secure society; and (3) building a sustainable and resilient international community through efforts to address global challenges.

Under this Development Cooperation Charter, in 2020, Japan provided approximately 16.26 billion US dollars (+4.3% year on year) in ODA², based on the grant equivalent system (GE system)³. Japan ranks fourth among the member states of the DAC, following the U.S., Germany, and the UK (a provisional value for 2020 is used

1 Official Development Assistance (ODA): For details on Japan's international cooperation, refer to "White Paper on Development Cooperation: Japan's International Cooperation." <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/hakusyo.html>

2 The main modalities of ODA from Japan are: grant aid, loan aid, namely, loan for development in developing regions; technical cooperation; and contributions and subscriptions to multilateral institutions. Of these, loan aid accounts for the largest share. Loan aid is typically repaid with interest.

3 Grant Equivalent System (GE system) was introduced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) in 2018 as the standard method for calculating ODA loans. The grant equivalent of the loan aid is calculated as ODA flows. The grant equivalent is calculated by applying the terms of the loan, such as amount disbursed, interest rate and maturity, to a formula. The softer the terms of the loan are, the larger the amount will be. Compared to the net flow system (the full amount of loan disbursement is included, but the amount repaid is calculated as a negative figure) that has conventionally been used as the standard method of the OECD/DAC, the GE system reflects Japan's loan aid more accurately. (<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/files/100053766.pdf>).



for countries other than Japan). The ODA/GNI ratio based on the GE system was 0.31%, placing Japan in 13th place among member states of the DAC (a provisional value for 2020 is used for countries other than Japan).

(2) Development Cooperation in 2021

In 2021, Japan engaged mainly in the following (A to D below) in order to promote strategic and effective development cooperation, with the Development Cooperation Charter positioned at the core of these actions.

A Countermeasures against COVID-19

First, combating the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has continued to be a major challenge for the international community in 2021. Countermeasures were conducted with the cooperation of the international community to combat the pandemic, which crossed national borders and became a global crisis. Specifically, Japan has provided health and medical equipment as well as vaccine-related assistance. Japan has also offered technical cooperation for reinforcing capacities in the health and medical fields at an unprecedented speed in order to build a resilient medical and health system from a medium-to long-term standpoint in developing countries with vulnerable medical systems, through bilateral cooperation and international organizations. In particular, as part of the efforts to ensure equitable access to vaccines, the Government of Japan co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit in June, in which Prime Minister Suga as a co-chair called for further solidarity and commitments from the international community in the fight against COVID-19. As a result, we were able to secure funding well beyond the target. Furthermore, Japan has been providing the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan up to 700 billion yen over two years to contribute to maintaining and revitalizing economic activities in developing countries. Japan's assistance has been highly appreciated by recipient countries.

Japan will continue to provide vaccines, treatments and diagnostics related assistance for overcoming the current COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, Japan will also offer assistance for health security in a broad range of fields including water and sanitation and for improving health and medical systems in developing countries in preparation for future health crises.

B Achievement of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)

Second, Japan is promoting concrete initiatives utilizing ODA strategically in order to achieve a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) in the Indo-Pacific region which is a focal point of the world's vitality.

Over the years, Japan has developed “quality infrastructure” for building regional connectivity, assisted in legal system development, offered training on public debt and risk management for ensuring debt sustainability, and capacity building for debt management and macroeconomic policy, and for maritime law enforcement agencies for securing safety at sea (provision of patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars as well as human resources development, etc.). Japan will continue to offer these in the future.

The development of quality infrastructure is an important foundation for achieving FOIP and is particularly necessary in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. From this standpoint, it is important to continue to disseminate and implement the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment, endorsed at the G20 Osaka Summit of 2019 as an international standard, including such principles as openness, transparency, economic efficiency in view of life-cycle costs, and debt sustainability.

C Addressing Global Issues

Third, Japan is working to address global challenges such as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including combating COVID-19, based on the concept of human security.

Japan will continue to actively promote development cooperation in fields such as health, food, nutrition, women (gender), education, disaster risk reduction, water and hygiene, climate change and global environmental issues. In doing so, Japan will promote visible development cooperation while utilizing collaboration with NGOs working on international cooperation. In addition, Japan will continue to promote humanitarian assistance including support for refugees, peace building and nation building assistance based on the concept of “humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus” to reinforce responses to fundamental causes of conflict, in addition to humanitarian assistance and development.

D Diplomatic Efforts in Support of Japan’s Economy

Fourth, Japan seeks to revitalize its own economy through the development of developing countries and Japan is promoting initiatives for achieving the growth of both. The “Infrastructure System Overseas Promotion Strategy 2025” approved in December 2020 and “Follow-up on the Growth Strategy” approved in July 2021 call for utilizing ODA strategically to further encourage the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

Specifically, in order to have Japan’s leading technologies utilized for development in developing countries, Japan will promote the acquisition of business rights and operation rights of Japanese corporations through means such as the provision of grant aid for public projects implemented through public-private partnership and offer technical cooperation that contributes to quality infrastructure investment, such as trade facilitation and securing debt sustainability. Additionally, to encourage the overseas expansion of private companies including SMEs and local governments, Japan will increase the visibility of products and equipment that can help resolve issues in developing countries through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)’s private sector partnership in conducting surveys and verification

on business models as well as continuously generate demand for these, and promote overseas expansion assistance for micro-, small-and medium-sized enterprises in the construction industry, including in local regions. Through human resource development, Japan will also contribute to advancing the improvement of the business environment, thereby promoting investment and overseas expansion by corporations.

(3) Safety Measures for Personnel Engaged in International Cooperation Projects

In March 2020, many of the personnel engaged in international cooperation projects were temporarily returned home due to the spread of COVID-19. However, since mid-July of the same year, JICA-related personnel have been resuming their travel in order from countries where conditions were met. As of March 2022, the number of JICA-related personnel staying overseas had recovered to 70% of that before the repatriation (except JICA Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers).

Japan will continue to strengthen safety measures for personnel engaged in international cooperation projects to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infections. Japan will also further strengthen safety measures for international cooperation projects while implementing measures based on the final report of the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects (August 2016) which have been done against terrorism.

(4) Initiatives in Major Regions

A East and Southeast Asia

The achievement of peace, stability, and prosperity in the East and Southeast Asia regions is important to Japan, which has a close relationship with the region. Through development cooperation, Japan has helped these regions to resolve various development issues including poverty reduction, by promoting economic growth and human security and contributed to the development of these regions.

Above all, as member states of the Association

of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are keys to achieving a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. Japan not only provides support for overcoming the issues faced by ASEAN and to further promote integration, but also places a strong emphasis on cooperation on development of quality infrastructure and training of industrial human resources to strengthen regional connectivity and develop industrial foundation. Since there is the large number of Japanese companies doing business and a large resident population of Japanese nationals in the East and Southeast Asian regions, Japan has provided intensive support against COVID-19 in the region. Specifically, Japan provided a total of approximately 38 billion yen in health- and medical-related equipment to 11 countries and provided support for improving health and medical systems in these countries through technical cooperation. Additionally, Japan has provided COVID-19 emergency financial support yen loans totaling approximately 220 billion yen to five countries to offset the economic impacts of the pandemic. Furthermore, as part of its support to ASEAN during the pandemic, Japan is also conducting training for public health officers of ASEAN countries geared toward the operation of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases, which Japan is fully supporting.

Furthermore, Japan is actively providing support for capacity building for maritime law enforcement to ASEAN countries positioned along Japan's sea lanes such as the Philippines and Viet Nam, with the aim of building the free and open international order. Such efforts include providing equipment such as patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars, as well as human resource development through the dispatch of experts. In addition, Japan is providing consistent support to eradicate domestic and regional disparity, and support for the creation of a sustainable society in areas such as disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, and energy. At the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in November 2020,



"Last One Mile Support" Handover Ceremony in collaboration with UNICEF (November, Philippines)

the Joint Statement of the ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) was announced. Based on the fact that it was confirmed that the principles of the AOIP and FOIP match one another, Japan plans to continue strengthening Japan-ASEAN cooperation going forward in terms of maritime cooperation, connectivity, the SDGs and economy, which are priority fields of the AOIP. In 2021, Japan has conducted countermeasures against infectious diseases, as well as training on topics such as logistics, marine waste, and treatment of offenders based on the Japan-ASEAN Technical Cooperation Agreement concluded in 2019.

With regard to Myanmar, in response to the worsened humanitarian condition following the coup d'état in February, Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance (food, medical supplies, etc.) directly benefitting the people in Myanmar through international organizations.

In the Mekong region, steady progress has been made with cooperation under the "Tokyo Strategy 2018," a set of guidelines for Japan-Mekong cooperation. At the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August, Foreign Minister Motegi discussed the support Japan has provided thus far against COVID-19, including 5.6 million doses of vaccine, approximately 750 million yen in support of the cold chain, and supply of oxygen concentrator, and stated Japan will support the Mekong region in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. The Mekong region is located at the core of the Indo-Pacific region. Japan will continue its assistance to aid the development of each Mekong

country through the Japan-Mekong cooperation framework.

With regard to China, Japan's ODA to China that first began in 1979 ceased adopting new projects in FY2018, and all current projects are to end in March 2022.

B Southwest Asia

Southwest Asia holds strategic importance as a marine transportation hub that connects East Asia with the Middle East, and is also a region with immense economic potential, such as India, where economic growth and massive infrastructure demand are anticipated in the future. On the other hand, the region still faces many unresolved challenges such as undeveloped infrastructure, poverty and natural disasters. Japan provides a range of assistance through ODA to assist the region in overcoming these challenges, bearing in mind the improvement of the investment environment for Japanese companies, and ensuring human security. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has also had a substantial impact on Southwest Asia due to its social and economic vulnerabilities along with an underdeveloped medical system. As a measure against COVID-19 in Southwest Asian countries, Japan has provided a total of 160 billion yen in fiscal assistance yen loans to three countries, as well as health-and medical-related equipment to seven countries, totaling over 8.6 billion yen. In addition, Japan has provided 2.5 billion yen to six countries in support of the development of a cold chain system as part of the Last One Mile Support, an initiative to establish vaccination system. Japan has also provided support for improving health and medical systems through technical cooperation.

Japan has been providing support to India, which has the largest population in Southwest Asia. As part of its support for the development of economic and social infrastructure including electricity and transportation infrastructure that contribute to enhancing connectivity and strengthening industrial competitiveness, Japan has assisted



Train set for Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line 6 procured from Japan. The cars carry a motif featuring the Japanese and Bangladesh flags. (November 16, Dhaka, Bangladesh)

with the construction of high-speed railways, subways in a number of cities and road construction in India's northeast. In addition, Japan has supported India's sustainable and inclusive growth through such projects as those in the forestry sector including afforestation activities as well as those in the health sector that help strengthen the medical system including measures against infectious diseases. With regard to Bangladesh, Japan, under the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) initiative, is providing support that contributes to strengthening domestic and regional connectivity, developing infrastructure, and improving the investment environment. Since August 2017, a large-scale influx of displaced persons from northern Rakhine State, Myanmar, and prolonged evacuation have resulted in the deterioration of humanitarian situations in camps for displaced persons and has also had a severe impact on the living environment of the surrounding host communities. In response to this situation, Japan provided support through international organizations and NGOs in the areas of water and hygiene, health and medical care, food security, livelihood assistance, etc.

C Pacific Island Countries

Not only being Japan's "neighbors" connected by the Pacific, but also the Pacific Island countries have deep historical connections with Japan. Moreover, as these countries possess a vast

exclusive economic zone (EEZ, or areas where a country's economic right reaches), they are a key region for maritime transportation for Japan, and also provide vital fishing grounds for Japan's distant-water bonito and tuna fisheries. Therefore, the stability and prosperity of the Pacific Island countries are of great importance to Japan.

The Pacific Island countries have common issues that are unique to small island states, such as smaller economies, scattered territories in a wide sea area, difficulty in breaking into the international market, and vulnerability to damages by natural disasters. In light of these circumstances, Japan, as a good partner of the Pacific Island countries, is providing support to boost their autonomous and sustainable development.

At the Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) held via video conference in July, discussions were held focused on the five priority areas, which are, (1) COVID-19 Response and Recovery, (2) Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law, (3) Climate Change and Disaster Resilience, (4) Strengthening Foundation for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development, and (5) People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development. Japan announced its commitment to promote people-to-people exchanges and human resource development for more than 5,500 people and summarized the specific initiatives for the next three years in the annexed document of the "The Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) Leaders Declaration" under the title Joint Action Plan. The Joint Action Plan outlines specific initiatives based on the five priority areas such as provision, management and support for the administration of vaccines, supply of high quality medical equipment and development of medical facilities, provision of quality infrastructure such as ports and airports, surveillance to eradicate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, disaster prevention, waste management that also includes marine plastic waste, and climate change. The Pacific Island countries stated their strong praise to PALM for the role



Port Vila Lapetasi International Wharf constructed with assistance from Japan (Vanuatu)



Hon. Hu'akavameiliku, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga, welcoming the arrival of the Self-Defense Forces transport aircraft carrying emergency relief supplies (January 22, 2022, Tonga)

it has played thus far and deep appreciation to Japan for implementation under the commitment at PALM8 as well as for new commitment based on the five priority areas.

In response to the damages caused by the volcanic eruption and tsunami that occurred on January 15, 2022, Japan has provided emergency relief supplies through JICA for Tonga, which was delivered by the Japan Disaster Relief Team (Self-Defense Forces) in light of humanitarian perspective and its amicable relations with the Kingdom of Tonga. Furthermore, Japan is providing Emergency Grant Aid of approximately 2.44 million US dollars for Tonga.

D Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean is a region with which Japan has enjoyed friendly relations for a long time. The region also has deep historical ties with Japan, as demonstrated by the fact that around 2.13 million Japanese immigrants and



Last One Mile Support Equipment Delivery Ceremony (November 8, Asunción, Paraguay)

their descendants, known as “Nikkei,” reside in the region. The region is a major supplier of resources and food, as well as a potential emerging market with gross regional production of around 5 trillion US dollars. On the other hand, as many countries in the region are facing challenges such as rectification of income inequality within country, response to natural disasters, and achievement of the SDGs, Japan is engaged in various cooperative efforts while also taking into account the circumstances of each country in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Japan has provided fiscal loans to two countries in Latin America, totaling 30 billion yen, and health-and medical-related equipment to 25 countries, totaling 9.1 billion yen, to help combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, Japan has provided approximately 1.5 billion yen to seven countries in support of the development of a cold chain system as part of the Last One Mile Support initiative. Moreover, Japan has also provided assistance to 17 countries through JICA’s technical cooperation for the improvement of health and medical systems in those countries.

Additionally, in response to the hurricane-related damages in November 2020, Japan provided emergency relief supplies (tents, sleeping pads, blankets, etc.) and equipment needed for recovery (excavators, bulldozers, etc.) to Colombia, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. Japan also provided support based on the needs of each country; for example, Japan offered El Salvador

opportunities to send its young public servants to study specialized knowledge and obtain graduate degrees in Japan for the development and growth of their home country. In recent years, there have been concerns over the increase in the number of migrants from Central American countries to the U.S. Japan is providing support to address issues such as poverty, public security and natural disasters in Central America, which are some of the root causes for migration.

In addition, recent deterioration in social and economic conditions in Venezuela has resulted in approximately six million refugees fleeing to neighboring countries, which has affected the whole surrounding region. As stated by Uto Takashi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs at the International Donors’ Conference in Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants in June 2021, Japan has continued its support on civil welfare of Venezuelan citizens, including refugees and migrants, and support for affected neighboring countries. In 2021, Japan provided assistance to Venezuelan refugees and migrants and host communities in Peru and Colombia through international organizations and NGOs.

E Central Asia and Caucasus

Central Asia and Caucasus are surrounded by Russia, China, South Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The stability and development of this region are also important for the development and stability of the whole of Eurasia, including Japan. Japan supports nation building in a free and open Central Asia and the Caucasus region that allows international orders based on the rule of law to take root and improve, and also sustainable development to progress, while also taking into account broad-based views covering neighboring regions including Afghanistan and Iran.

Japan is providing health-and medical-related equipment to eight countries, totaling 3.2 billion yen, as a measure against COVID-19 in Central Asia and Caucasus. In addition, Japan is providing support for enhancing border control capabilities



JICA experts providing instruction on handicrafts to female farmers (July 20, Bishkek, Kyrgyz; Photo: JICA/Suzuki Kaku)

in the region where countries share a border with Afghanistan through international organizations.

F The Middle East and North Africa

Middle East and North Africa regions are geopolitically key areas as the crossroads of Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, and securing peace and stability in those areas is crucial not only for the energy security of Japan but also for the stability of the world. From this point of view, Japan has provided support to achieve peace and stability in the regions.

In 2021, Japan provided COVID-19-related support to the Middle East and North Africa regions by using ODA. Specifically, Japan earmarked a total of around 29.1 billion yen for support through international organizations, and provided health-and medical-related equipment as bilateral assistance.

With regard to Syria, where civil war has been prolonged, Japan has provided more than 2.9 billion US dollars and neighboring countries since 2012 based on the policy of providing humanitarian assistance to all Syrians facing difficulties. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio Eiichiro participated in Supporting the future of Syria and the region, Brussels V Conference, co-organized by the EU and UN in March. He stated that Japan decided to provide an additional contribution of about 200 million US dollars for assistance in 2021 and will continue to fulfill the role in improving the humanitarian situation in Syria. Furthermore,



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki attending the International Ministerial Conference on UNRWA (November 16, Tokyo)

in order to foster human resources who could contribute to Syria's future reconstruction, 111 Syrian students have been accepted in Japan since 2017.

In regard to Palestine, based on the Corridor for Peace and Prosperity initiative with the aim of promoting economic and social development for Palestine promoted through cooperation between Japan, Israel, Palestine and Jordan, Japan assists the development of Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP). On the visit to Palestine by Foreign Minister Motegi in August, the opening ceremonies of the Palestinian Business Prosperity Center at JAIP and Protective Shelter of the Great Bath at Hisham's Palace were held. Furthermore, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki Takako attended the International Ministerial Conference on UNRWA in November, where she stated the importance of support activities for Palestinian refugees and their fiscal stabilization, and Japan's consistent support.

In Yemen, where a severe humanitarian crisis is still ongoing, Japan has provided more than 300 million US dollars in support since 2015. At the High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen held in March, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio stated that Japan decided to provide a total of approximately 49 million US dollars at least for assistance in 2021, and would continuously make efforts to realize peace and stability in Yemen. In 2021, Japan offered humanitarian assistance in the field of mental healthcare, livelihood support for small fishery households,



Lecture on safety and risk management at E-JUST (January, Egypt; Photo: JICA)

capacity building, and education in collaboration with international organizations.

Since the Taliban took over Kabul in August, the humanitarian conditions have worsened in Afghanistan, where nearly half of the population are in need of humanitarian assistance such as food items, and new refugee influx to its neighboring countries is concerned. Given this situation, Foreign Minister Motegi announced at the virtual Foreign Minister's Meeting on Afghanistan in September that Japan is prepared to provide a total of approximately 200 million US dollars (around 22 billion yen) in 2021, including 65 million US dollars (about 7.1 billion yen) in new assistance in areas such as shelter, health care, water and sanitation, food, agriculture, and education through international organizations.

Human resource development is vital to realize stability in the Middle East in the medium-to long-term. As an example, through the technical cooperation project "Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) Project Phase 3," Japan is providing support for the human resource development in the field of industry, science and technology in Egypt, the Middle East and the Africa region. In addition, Japan has supported school management and teaching staff's capacity building by providing the yen loan "Egypt-Japan School Support Program (Egypt-Japan Education Partnership)." As of October 2021, 48 schools following the Japanese education model opened.

G Africa

Africa has been gradually recovering from the economic depression caused by the rapid drop in natural resource prices around 2014, and continues to attract the attention and anticipation from the international community for its potential, backed by its abundant natural resources and a rapidly growing population. On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on Africa's fragilities in various areas including healthcare and medical sectors. In these circumstances, Japan has provided healthcare and medical equipment totaling 6.8 billion yen to African countries through bilateral arrangements and collaborations with international organizations. Japan has also conducted technical cooperation to strengthen the healthcare and medical systems in Africa. Through the longstanding process of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), Japan has actively implemented programs to support the healthcare and medical system in Africa from medium-and long-term perspectives. These efforts have been recognized anew amidst the spread of COVID-19 in Africa. For example, the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research in Ghana for which Japan has supported the establishment and the development of laboratory technicians, plays a major role in carrying out the PCR tests in the country. Likewise, other healthcare and medical research institutes that Japan has supported such as the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), play the role of the centers for countermeasures against COVID-19 throughout Africa.

COVID-19 also has a widespread impact on the African society and economy. Japan is implementing measures under each of the three pillars of TICAD 7 held in August 2019: economy, society, and peace and stability, making contributions to respond to the various social and economic issues in Africa.

In the pillar of Economy, Japan has promoted industrial human resource development through the African Business Education Initiative for



Ceremony of PCR Test Kits Donation to Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) (June, Kenya)



The Third Country Training Program at KEMRI (November, Kenya; Photo: JICA)

Youth (ABE initiative) 3.0 and other means, in order to promote African businesses. Since TICAD V (2013), JICA has provided opportunities to study at graduate schools in Japan, to take part in internships at Japanese companies, Japanese language training and business programs including entrepreneur cultivation training for 1,600 youths under the initiative. Furthermore, with a view to strengthening connectivity, Japan will also promote investment in quality infrastructure with a focus on the three priority regions (Northern Corridor (East Africa), Nacala Corridor and West Africa Growth Ring). In September, Exchange of Notes on the Project for Improvement of the Tema Motorway Roundabout (Phase 2) and The Project for Rehabilitation of National Trunk Road N8 (Phase 2) was conducted in Ghana.

Under the pillar of Society, Japan is further promoting initiatives toward promoting universal health coverage (UHC). In addition, Japan

is providing assistance for developing science and mathematics education and improving the learning environment, in order to help provide high-quality education.

Under the pillar of Peace and Stability, Japan is providing support to Africa-led efforts aimed at establishing peace and stability via support for provision of security equipment and human resource development, under the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA) (see Chapter 3, Section 1 3 (6) (b) b on page 210).

(5) Approaches to Appropriate and Effective Implementation of ODA

A Approaches to Appropriate Implementation of ODA

In the implementation of ODA, efforts are made to enhance transparency and quality by listening to the views of external experts at each phase and formulating projects based on these opinions. In the phase prior to preliminary studies for the implementation of ODA, MOFA holds the Development Project Accountability Committee in public, exchanges views with independent committee members that have knowledge of the relevant field, and affirms the validity of the project. Furthermore, JICA publishes ex-post evaluation results for all projects valued at 200 million yen or more (2,795 projects published as of the end of December 2021) on the “ODA Mieru-ka Site” after the implementation of the projects in view of enhancing the transparency of the projects. Ex-post evaluations for projects valued at 1 billion yen or more are conducted by third parties. MOFA conducts third party evaluations at the policy level (such as country assistance evaluations, thematic evaluations and aid modality evaluations) and ex-post evaluations on grant aid projects implemented by MOFA to improve ODA management and ensure accountability. Efforts are made to utilize the lessons drawn from the evaluation results for the policy formulation and project implementation of future ODA. MOFA also publishes the evaluation results on its website.

As part of its effort to ensure the appropriateness of development cooperation, JICA has adopted the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations and strives to implement ODA projects with due consideration for human rights, the environment and social impacts.

B Approaches to Effective Implementation of ODA

ODA is implemented through three frameworks corresponding to the needs of the partner country and the scale of the project: grant aid, loan aid and technical cooperation. In order to utilize the limited budget efficiently and achieve a high level of development effectiveness, MOFA formulates a development cooperation policy for each country that defines the priority areas and policies of ODA, taking into account comprehensively the development plans and development challenges of respective partner countries. Moreover, the Rolling Plan is formulated as an appendix to the Country Development Cooperation Policy, with a summary for quick reference on how each individual ODA project is associated with a specific priority area. Through these efforts, the policy of development cooperation in each country is clearly identified, enabling more strategic projects to be formed across the confines of each framework.

C Efforts with regard to International Discussions on ODA

Japan also contributes actively to international discussions on ODA. At OECD/DAC, discussions are underway on the revision of measurement methods for the appropriate assessment of each country's ODA disbursement, approaches to utilize ODA as a catalyst for mobilization of development finance from the private sector, responses to COVID-19, and assistance for climate change related issues. In addition, OECD/DAC is working to provide opportunities for mutual learning such that development assistance provided by emerging donors will be accountable and transparent in

a manner consistent with international standards and practices.

D Efforts toward Promoting Understanding of ODA

It is vital to have the understanding and support of the people in implementing development cooperation. To that end, efforts are made to promote understanding among the citizens through the effective dissemination of information. MOFA has enhanced the ODA website contents with brand new information, as well as aims to disseminate information on Japan's development cooperation activities among a wider range of targets in an easy-to-understand manner through the ODA Twitter account, e-mail subscriptions, and other tools. In addition, MOFA has expanded on the short animation series "Go! ODA-Man" based on the popular anime "Eagle Talon," and created new videos on the introduction of ODA, a documentary on development cooperation, etc. It also hosted the international cooperation event, Earth Camp, which welcomes general participation, virtually for the first time. Furthermore, with this year marking the 30th anniversary of the event, Global Festa Japan was held both online and in person as a hybrid event, which attracted more than 10,000 participants in person and online in two days. In FY2021, MOFA has continued actively to conduct "ODA Delivery Lectures" by ministry officials as a part of its efforts to promote understanding of development cooperation via virtual lectures



Videos featuring famous and highly influential persons have been published.



online. In addition, MOFA makes active efforts in overseas publicity, including site-visit tours with the aim of developing local media coverage of Japan's development cooperation, and issues PR pamphlets and materials in English and local languages.

2 Response to Global Issues

(1) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda)” is a set of international development goals to be achieved by 2030, which was adopted at the UN Summit in September 2015 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) formulated in 2001. The 2030 Agenda sets out international development goals for realizing a society that is sustainable, diverse and inclusive, and where “no one is left behind,” by 2030.

The 2030 Agenda lists the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets that are interrelated and closely linked to each other, and which serve as development goals for the whole of the international community including developed countries.

After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Japan first built a foundation for the implementation of the SDGs by establishing the SDGs Promotion Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister, with the Chief Cabinet Secretary and Foreign Minister as the Deputy Chiefs and composed of all cabinet ministers as members, and formulating the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles that set out Japan's medium-to long-term strategy toward the achievement of the SDGs and eight priority areas that Japan will place particular focus on. Furthermore, Japan puts great importance on public-private partnership for the implementation of the SDGs, and established the SDGs Promotion Round Table Meeting, bringing together stakeholders from a wide range of fields including the private sector, civil society, experts, and international organizations. It also engages in

the exchange of views on initiatives by local governments and businesses toward the promotion of the SDGs, measures for the empowerment of women and the next generation, and strengthening cooperation with the international community among others.

At the 11th meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in December 2021, key initiatives of relevant ministries and agencies toward the achievement of the SDGs were decided as the “SDGs Action Plan 2022.” This Action Plan sets out the intent to further promote efforts toward the achievement of the SDGs in both the aspects of domestic implementation and international cooperation based on the 5Ps described in the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership as well as the eight priority areas listed in the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles.

On the same day as the 11th meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, a conferment ceremony for the fifth Japan SDGs Award was held to commend companies and organizations that have put in place outstanding efforts toward the realization of the SDGs. This year, Euglena Co., Ltd. (Minato Ward, Tokyo Prefecture) received the SDGs Promotion Headquarters Chief's (Prime Minister's) Award for its efforts to deliver impact through its sustainable management, create employment and achieve increased income for farmers living in poverty, and provide food support to refugees in Bangladesh.

In terms of international activities, at the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July, Japan's Voluntary National Review (VNR), which reports on Japan's implementation of the SDGs was presented for the second time in four years, and Foreign Minister Motegi participated via a video message. In the message, he stated that in deciding the VNR, the discussion has deepened between ministers on what efforts Japan needs to make within the Decade of Action, in particular to realize the vision of “building back better”

from COVID-19. In addition, he also stated that Japan will be placing particular emphasis on initiatives in the healthcare and medical field to achieve universal health coverage (UHC), as well as realization of a green society and responding to climate change issues through digital transformation. Moreover, Prime Minister Suga attended the SDG Moment 2021 held in conjunction with the UN General Assembly High Level Week in September via a video message. In the message, he made statements based on Japan's VNR compiled by taking into account the valuable opinions of various organizations, associations and civil society. Prime Minister Suga acknowledged that the SDGs are an important compass to overcome unprecedented crises and lead the world to a better future. He stated that Japan will do its utmost toward achieving the SDGs by 2030 and creating a hopeful future through international conferences to be held within the year, such as the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021.

A Human Security

Human security is a concept that pursues the right of individuals to live happily and in dignity, free from fear and want, through their protection and empowerment. Japan positions human security as a guiding principle that lies at the roots of Japan's development cooperation in the Development Cooperation Charter approved in 2015. Japan has led discussions on human security in the UN, and supported the dissemination and implementation of the concept of human security by UN organizations through the contribution of a cumulative total of about 48.4 billion yen by the end of 2020 to the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, established in 1999 by Japan's initiative. Furthermore, in the area of bilateral cooperation, Japan has also put effort into the dissemination and implementation of this concept through support for Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human

Security Projects. The SDGs, which advocate a people-centered approach and the vision of leaving no one behind, also position human security at its core. At the General Debate of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly held in September 2020, in response to the proposal made by Prime Minister Suga, Japan cooperated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in conducting discussions toward compiling a special report on human security, which was published in February 2022. In addition, proactive efforts are being made toward revitalizing human security, such as the first meeting of the Group of Friends of Human Security held online in June 2021 with UN Secretary-General António Guterres in attendance, and the second meeting held again virtually in December of the same year.

B Approaches in the Area of Disaster Risk Reduction

200 million people around the world are affected by disasters every year (90% of the victims are citizens of developing countries) and the annual average loss incurred by natural hazards extends to approximately 140 billion US dollars according to estimates by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). As natural disasters have become more frequent and intensified due to climate change, disaster risk reduction is essential for realizing poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Japan makes the most of its expertise in disaster risk reduction, built up through numerous experiences with disasters, to actively promote international cooperation. At the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai in March 2015, Japan took the lead in the adoption of the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," a guideline for efforts by the international community. Japan also announced the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction" as its independent contribution, which includes provision of 4 billion US dollars toward cooperation and training

of 40,000 people in the four years from 2015 to 2018. With the achievement of these goals, Japan has been providing ongoing support for disaster risk reduction, including launching the Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction Phase 2 in June 2019, under which Japan plans to provide support to at least 5 million people from 2019 to 2022, in areas such as flood measures.

Coinciding with World Tsunami Awareness Day (November 5), proposed by Japan and enacted unanimously at the 70th UN General Assembly held in December 2015, Japan has hosted the High School Students Summit on “World Tsunami Awareness Day” four times since 2016. High school students from countries around the world are invited to this event, and through practical learning about Japan’s history of tsunami, recovery from earthquake disasters, and preparations for a possible Nankai Trough earthquake, the participants make proposals for future challenges and implementation in their home countries. In 2021, in light of the spread of COVID-19, Japan co-hosted the event online, with the aim of improving awareness of tsunami preparedness with UNDRR, as well as a tsunami-related training program for female administrative officers and tsunami evacuation drills for schools in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan will continue to share the experiences and lessons drawn from past disasters with the world, and to promote the “mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction” that incorporates the perspectives of disaster risk reduction in the policies of every country.

C Education

In the area of education, Japan is engaged in various forms of educational support around the world under the “Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth,” announced by Japan in line with the timing for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. At the World Assembly for Women (WAW!) held in March 2019, Japan announced that it will continue its efforts to provide opportunities for quality education and training to at least 4 million women

in developing countries by 2020. Furthermore, at the meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in June of the same year, Japan announced its commitment to the “Education × Innovation” initiative, which aims to provide education for innovation, and education through innovation to at least 9 million children and youths. At the G20 Osaka Summit (2019) chaired by Japan, an agreement was reached on the “G20 Initiative on Human Capital Investment for Sustainable Development,” which places the focus on education, and the commitment to invest in human capital and promote access to inclusive, equitable and quality education for all people was affirmed in the Initiative.

Since the beginning of 2020, schools were shut down due to the spread of COVID-19, resulting in the rapid increase of children in various parts of the world whose education opportunities were taken away. In light of this situation, Japan has committed to support education and human resource development for 7.5 million girls in developing countries, in addition to providing assistance worth over 1.5 billion US dollars to the education sector over the next five years at the Global Education Summit held in July 2021.

D Approaches in Agricultural Areas

In coordination with the relevant countries, such as G7 or G20 member states and international organizations, Japan has delivered assistance for agriculture and rural development in developing countries. The G20 Niigata Agriculture Ministers’ Meeting was held in May 2019, during which the participants affirmed the importance of sharing knowledge among countries on various issues related to agriculture and food, such as human resources development and new technology, food value chains, and the SDGs. The “G20 Niigata Agriculture Ministers’ Declaration 2019” was also adopted. Since 2020, through the support via international organizations and others, Japan has been addressing issues of deterioration of the food system due to the stagnation of

distribution of agricultural products as a result of travel restrictions due to the spread of COVID-19.

In terms of global initiatives, Prime Minister Suga delivered a video message at the UN Food Systems Summit, which was held in a virtual format in September 2021. In his video message, Prime Minister Suga stated that Japan will work toward establishing better global “food systems,” focusing on the following three points: (1) to achieve both productivity improvement and sustainability by driving innovation, digitalization and the utilization of science and technology; (2) to maintain and strengthen free and fair trade, including the restraint of import and export restrictions based on arbitrary measures without scientific evidence; and (3) to take an approach considering each country and region’s climate and nature, as well as their food culture.

E Approaches in the Area of Water and Sanitation

Japan has continuously been the largest donor country in the area of water and sanitation since the 1990s and has implemented high quality assistance utilizing Japan’s experiences, expertise, and technologies. Japan proactively participates in discussions in the international community, and tackles global issues in the area building upon its contributions to date. In particular, since the outbreak of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020, Japan has been providing support through coordination with international organizations and agencies on the promotion of hand washing among other measures from the standpoint of preventing the further spread of COVID-19. The 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit, which had been originally scheduled to be held in Kumamoto in October 2020, was postponed until April 2022 due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

(2) Global Health

Japan advocates human security, which is the basis of its Development Cooperation Charter, while promoting various activities in support of that principle. Japan emphasizes cooperation in the area of health as a priority issue. Even amidst the global fight against COVID-19, Japan is promoting international cooperation focusing on the three pillars of 1) Overcoming the current pandemic, 2) Strengthening health systems to prepare for future health crises, and 3) Generating an enabling international environment for health security across broader sectors based on the idea of human security and its conviction of “leaving no one’s health behind,” while also keeping in mind the goal of achieving UHC⁴.

As Covid-19 vaccines have become more available in 2021, Japan is working with the COVAX facility and through cooperation and collaboration with multinational initiatives, including the Quad Vaccine Partnership to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for countries around the world, including developing countries. In June, Japan co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit⁵ with the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), and secured more than enough funding necessary (8.3 billion US dollars) to ensure 1.8 billion doses of vaccine are available for 30% of the population in developing countries by the end of 2021. On this occasion, Japan announced its plan to provide a financial contribution of 1 billion US dollars to the COVAX facility’s Advance Market Commitment (AMC) as well as its commitment to donate 30 million doses of vaccine including through COVAX. In addition, Prime Minister Suga announced at the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly held in September that Japan will provide up to 60 million vaccine doses in total to each country and region. Since June and until the end of February, Japan has provided 26 countries and regions with

⁴ Universal health coverage (UHC) refers to everyone receiving quality health services at an affordable cost and being protected from financial risks.

⁵ COVAX AMC Summit: Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment Summit

approximately 42 million doses of vaccines. At the same time, Japan has steadily implemented the “Last One Mile Support” to ensure the delivery of vaccines to vaccination centers in each country and region. Japan has earmarked and provided a total of 13.7 billion yen in support to 59 countries and regions.

In addition to addressing current COVID-19, in order to strengthen preparedness and response for future health crises, Japan is promoting cooperation among health and financial authorities keeping in mind the goal of achieving UHC, while contributing to discussions at international conferences, including G7/G20 and WHO, given its conviction that it is important to strengthen the global health architecture including WHO. In May, the World Health Assembly decided to establish a Member States Working Group on Strengthening WHO Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies. Japan actively engaged in the Working Group, which examined recommendations to strengthen WHO’s preparedness and response to health emergencies, as well as considered the benefits of developing a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response during the months from July to November. The Working Group’s work was presented to the Special Session of the World Health Assembly held in December, and the establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating body to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness and response was unanimously decided.

From the standpoint of developing an environment that ensures health and safety in a wide range of fields, Japan regards “nutrition,” which forms the foundation of human health, as indispensable for the achievement of the SDGs and an issue related to human security. As such, Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 in a hybrid format in December. With endorsement received from 215 different stakeholders at the Summit, the Tokyo Compact on Global Nutrition for Growth, which indicates a concrete direction



COVAX AMC Summit co-hosted by the Government of Japan and Gavi (June, Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

for international society to improve nutrition was issued, while commitments from as many as 181 stakeholders for nutrition improvement were submitted and a financial contribution amounting to over 27 billion US dollars was announced. This achievement exceeds the outcome from the previous Nutrition for Growth Summits. Appreciation for Japan’s active contribution to address the issue of global nutrition was shown.

To further contribute to global health with the private and public sectors working together, given the experience with the COVID-19 pandemic, four sessions of the global health strategy promotion council have been held since July. The council is conducting deliberations with the goal of formulating a new strategy at the earliest stage possible by June 2022. (See the Special Feature at the beginning of page 2 for initiatives related to COVID-19).

(3) Labor and Employment

It is important to raise income levels through employment, in order to raise the living standards of those living in poverty. Against the background of an expanding supply-chain worldwide, it is necessary to put effort into developing the labor environment, and to realize “decent work” (work that is of an acceptable quality for motivated human beings) around the world. The realization of “decent work” has been positioned as a primary objective of the activities of the International

Labour Organization (ILO), which marks its centenary year in 2019.

In view of this, Japan is also engaged in sustainable development cooperation in the field of labor. In 2021, Japan provided development assistance to developing countries in the Asia Pacific region, including Southeast Asia, South Asia and the African region (Sudan and Ethiopia), which includes assistance for urgent employment creation to address the impacts of natural disasters and COVID-19, the development of labor laws and social insurance systems, and improvement of the standards of occupational safety and health, by providing voluntary contributions to the ILO and support to networks of international workers' and employers' organizations.

(4) Environmental Issues and Climate Change

A Global Environmental Issues

Awareness is building worldwide on the importance of addressing global environmental issues, as exemplified by the 2030 Agenda, which embeds environmental goals. Japan is actively involved in conserving the natural environment and realizing sustainable development through negotiations and engagements in various multilateral environmental conventions and relevant international organizations. As the largest donor to the World Bank Group's Global Environment Facility, a financing mechanism for the major environmental conventions, Japan also contributes to projects that address global environmental issues such as biodiversity and chemical pollution, etc.

(A) Conservation of the Marine Environment

Addressing the problem of marine plastic litter is growing in importance in recent years, given its potential adverse impact on marine ecology, tourism, fisheries, and human health. The problem is caused by factors such as the illegal dumping of waste and incomplete waste disposal. In order to achieve "the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision" that was launched at the G20 Osaka Summit in

2019, which aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050, Japan is working with international organizations, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in areas such as compiling scientific knowledge and providing assistance on building models necessary for measures against marine plastic litter contamination, in providing environmentally appropriate plastic waste management and disposal support in the Asian region.

In recent years, there has been a growing momentum for formulating a new international legally binding instrument to address marine plastic pollution. Taking into account the establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating committee at the Resumed Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly held from February to March in 2022, Japan will be playing a leading role in supporting rule formulation.

The Third Leaders Meeting of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy was held on November 2. The Panel is composed of leaders of maritime nations and was established to discuss matters such as conservation of marine environments, fisheries and utilization of marine resources. A message from Prime Minister Kishida was read at the meeting that discussed Japan's initiatives to tackle climate change and marine plastic litter, indicating Japan's intent to advance efforts toward realizing a sustainable ocean economy. Leaders of 15 member countries, including the U.S., which newly announced its participation in the Panel, issued a joint statement to urge all actors to join the efforts of the six ocean-based climate actions, and achieve a sustainable ocean economy.

(B) Conservation of Biodiversity

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held in two parts, with the first part being held both online and in person in Kunming, China from October 11 to 15. Approximately 2,500 participants representing

Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021

Nutrition is vital to human life. Undernutrition such as hunger, caused by poverty and the impact of climate change continues to pose significant challenges. Currently, more than 140 million children around the world suffer from stunted growth as a result of undernutrition, while nutritional deficiency causes about half the deaths of children under five. At the same time, the number of people who are overweight and obese reaches record levels regardless of high-income or resource-limited countries, and it is said that approximately 2 billion people in the world suffer from diseases related to their dietary habits, such as diabetes.

On December 7 and 8, the Government of Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021.^(Note) This Summit was attended by a wide range of participants including from governments, international organizations, private sectors, civil society, and the academia. The Summit covered the subject of “the double burden of malnutrition” whereby undernutrition coexists with overnutrition, and discussions were held with a focus on five thematic areas such as (1) Health; (2) Food; (3) Resilience; (4) Accountability; and, (5) Financing, to address the deterioration of nutrition worldwide as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the Summit, “the Tokyo Compact on Global Nutrition for Growth” was issued as the outcome document endorsed by more than 210 stakeholders including governments, international organizations, private sectors, and civil society, indicating a direction for the international society to improve nutrition. Moreover, more than 180 stakeholders, including 66 countries and 26 companies, submitted over 390 commitments, and over 27 billion US dollars of financial commitment were announced. These results exceeded the outcomes of past Nutrition for Growth Summits. Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan will provide nutrition-related assistance that will amount to over 300 billion yen (2.8 billion US dollars) over the next three years, to contribute to achieving universal health coverage (UHC) among others. He also stated that Japan would improve domestic nutritional status by promoting nutritional and environment-friendly dietary life, balanced diets, and health and productivity management.

In the preparatory process, Japan worked closely with non-governmental international civil society and experts, and their engagement and cooperation contributed greatly to the success of the Summit.

Improving nutrition is related not only to the second goal of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but also to a wide range of sectors such as health, agriculture, logistics, water, sanitation and hygiene, and gender equality. Therefore, advancing initiatives through cooperation between the various sectors can bring us closer toward achieving the SDGs.

Based on the concept of human security, the Government of Japan is determined to promote initiatives to ensure that no one's health is left behind. This includes the achievement of UHC. Going forward, it will continue to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, including improving nutrition worldwide.

Note: The first Nutrition for Growth Summit was held in London in 2013, and the second Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.



Prime Minister Kishida listening to the speech by UN Secretary-General António Guterres (December 7, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a speech at the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (December 7, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Foreign Minister Hayashi delivering a speech at the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (December 7, Tokyo)

Parties/regions, related organizations, citizen groups, and others joined online, while 2,900 attended in person. The Government of Japan was represented by a delegation consisting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and Ministry of the Environment.

A high-level segment was held from October 12 to 13, which was attended by the leaders and ministers of each country. Minister of the Environment Yamaguchi Michael Tsuyoshi represented the Government of Japan through online attendance. During the high-level segment, each country presented its initiative toward the 2050 Vision of “Living in harmony with nature,” while Japan pledged to provide a total of 17 million US dollars of international support through the Japan Biodiversity Fund (JBF 2). The Kunming Declaration was adopted to enhance the momentum for the adoption of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework during the second part of COP15 (scheduled to be held in Kunming, China from April 25 to May 8, 2022).

In recent years, the illegal wildlife trade has been exacerbated, drawing international attention as one of the key sources of funding for international terrorist organizations. As a follow-up to its provision of elephant anti-poaching operation facilities in Uganda and Mozambique in 2019, Japan decided to provide the same monitoring facilities in Zambia in 2020, and in Rwanda in 2021, underscoring Japan’s intention to seriously address this issue.

Japan is also contributing to international discussions on the strategy to mobilize funds for promoting conservation and sustainable uses of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, with a view to enhancing sustainable agriculture and food security. At the 3rd and 4th meetings of the Standing Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture held in February and September 2021,

Japan, as a regional representative, provided advice on funding strategy and resource mobilization dealing with support and monitoring to monetary and non-monetary benefit sharing and access to genetic resources. At the 57th Session of the Council of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), held online in November, Japan participated in discussions on the formulation of a new strategic plan and enhancing cooperation with other relevant organizations to enable efficient implementation of sustainable forest management and trading of legally harvested timber in the Tropics.

(C) International Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Waste

The 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer Part II and the 33rd Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer were held online in October. At the meetings, matters such as the efficient and effective operation of the protocol were discussed.

The Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, which regulates the movement of hazardous waste across national borders, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade were held, in which the 2022 activity plan and provisional budget were approved, and a review on external funding related to the support for development countries was discussed.

The 4th meeting of the Conference of the Parties for the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held online in November, in which matters such as the budget and activity plan for 2022 were discussed. Furthermore, the second part of the Conference was held in Indonesia in March 2022, in which matters such as a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of the Convention were decided. Japan is playing an active role in

its contribution to the Convention's implementation, including representing a member of the Implementation and Compliance Committee to conduct the implementation of the Convention and verify the status of compliance by the Parties to the Convention even during the intersessional periods.

B Climate Change

(A) Initiatives to Achieve Net-zero Emissions by 2050

In October 2020, Prime Minister Suga declared that Japan would aim to realize carbon neutrality with net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. At the Leaders Summit on Climate, hosted by the U.S. in April 2021, Prime Minister Suga declared that Japan aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels, setting an ambitious target which is aligned with the long-term goal of net-zero by 2050. Furthermore, he stressed that Japan would continue strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emission by 50%. In October, the Cabinet decided the updated Plan for the Global Warming Countermeasures and the Strategic Energy Plan. In addition, Japan has submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that reflects the new reduction target and the Long-term Strategy under the Paris Agreement that reflects initiatives aimed at achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 to the UNFCCC Secretariat.

(B) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Paris Agreement

Global efforts are essential in reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change; however, the Kyoto Protocol adopted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) in 1997 required only developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21 held in Paris in December 2015. The Paris Agreement is a fair and effective framework that requires the

Parties to submit their nationally determined contributions NDCs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and undertake efforts toward the achievement of such goals regardless of whether they are developed or developing countries. The Agreement entered into force in November 2016, and has been ratified by more than 190 countries including Japan (as of November 2021).

Upon the adoption of the Paris Agreement, negotiations commenced on the implementation guidelines of the Agreement toward its full implementation after 2020, and except for the implementation guidelines for market mechanisms, they were adopted at COP24 held in Katowice, Poland in December 2018. At COP26, which was postponed from November 2020 to October 31 to November 13, 2021 due to the impact of the spread of COVID-19, significant progress was made in the steady implementation of the Paris Agreement and the promotion of climate change countermeasures worldwide, including a decision on the implementation guidelines for market mechanisms, which had been negotiated at COP24 and COP25 without a decision, based on the breakthrough proposal made by Japan.

(C) Efforts in Supporting Developing Countries

Developed countries including Japan have provided various supports including financial support, capacity building, and technology transfer for developing countries to implement sufficient climate change countermeasures. Japan announced in June 2021 at the G7 Cornwall Summit that it would provide climate finance, both private and public, totaling 6.5 trillion yen over the 5 years from 2021 to 2025. In the Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communiqué, the leaders of the G7 committed to an end to new direct government support for unabated international thermal coal power generation by the end of 2021. At the World Leaders Summit held during COP26 on November 1 and 2, Prime Minister Kishida announced in his statement that Japan would make an additional contribution of up to 10 billion US dollars, both public

and private in the coming 5 years, as well as doubling its support for adaptation from the previous commitment made (ACE2.0) to 1.6 trillion yen, in the coming five years, both in public and private finance.

From such perspectives, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) also plays an important role as a multilateral fund that provides support for developing countries to address climate change. In addition to its initial contribution of 1.5 billion US dollars (2015 to 2018), Japan committed that it would contribute up to 1.5 billion US dollars for the first replenishment (2020 to 2030). Moreover, Japan has actively participated in its management as well as policy-making as a member of the GCF Board. By December, the GCF Board had approved 190 projects, which are projected to prevent 2 billion tons of CO₂ emissions and increase the resilience of 600 million people.

(D) Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

The JCM is a mechanism for quantitatively evaluating the contributions of Japan to greenhouse gas emission reductions and removals which are achieved through the diffusion of, among others, leading decarbonizing technologies as well as through the implementation of measures in developing countries and others, and for using such contributions to achieve Japan's NDC.

As of November 2021, Japan has established the JCM with 17 partner countries, and implemented more than 200 projects related to the reduction or removal of greenhouse gases. In 2021, the initiative has steadily produced results, such as through the issuance of credits from projects in Kenya.

(E) Japan's efforts in Climate Change and Fragility Risk

In response to suggestions at the Roundtable Seminar on "Climate Change and Fragility Implications on International Security" held by

MOFA in January 2017 and other fora, that Japan will focus on the Asia Pacific and conduct studies and engage in discussions on climate change and fragility, Japan has been convening the International Conference on Climate Change and Fragility in the Asia-Pacific Region since FY2018. In FY2021, in response to the publication of the second part of the IPCC 6th Assessment Report, Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, the Working Group II contribution, in February 2022, a conference for discussing the theme of the impact on animals due to climate change was held in March 2022.

(F) Climate Change Measures by Non-State Actors

Measures by non-state actors such as private corporations, local governments, and NGOs are also important in tackling climate change. In Japan as well, non-state actors have made further progress in their efforts, as demonstrated by keen activities of the network of non-state actors, including Zero Carbon Cities in Japan, comprising local municipalities that have declared the goal to reach Net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, Japan Climate Initiative (JCI), which aims to take proactive action in the area of climate change, the Japan Climate Leaders' Partnership (JCLP), a corporate group with the same goal, and "RE Action-Declaring 100% Renewable," a corporate group whose members have established the goal of procuring 100% renewable energy for the electricity required in the operation of their businesses, as well as the increase in the number of Japanese corporations participating in the international initiative "RE100" and the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)⁶. Japan intends to promote diplomacy in the area of climate change while collaborating with such non-state actor driven initiatives.

⁶ The TCFD was established by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) as a task force on the disclosure of financial information related to climate change, led by the private sector. In its final report, it presented a framework on voluntary information disclosure by corporations pertaining to climate-related risks and opportunities.

Japan's Initiatives to Contribute to Global Decarbonization

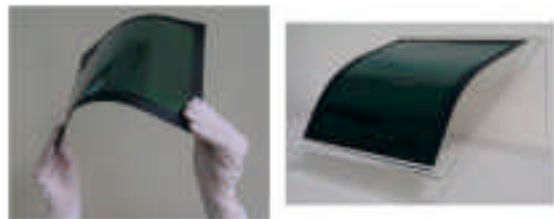
Maeda Yudai, Decarbonization Consultant

There is growing interest in climate change in Japan, as damages from heavy rains and floods, extreme heat in summer, and other phenomena related to climate change have increased in frequency in recent years. Today, climate change is one of the most frequently discussed agenda in international fora. From the past to the present, Japan has consistently played a leading part in these international debates and development of countermeasures to climate change at various levels in both public and private sectors. It was in 1992 that a treaty on climate change was signed under the United Nations' framework, based on the recognition that climate change is a global issue that needs to be discussed on a global scale. However, Japan had already unveiled its Action Program to Arrest Global Warming ahead of the treaty in 1990. This Action Plan clearly sets out Japan's responsibilities in the global community in the context of addressing climate change, as stated that Japan must actively fulfill a role commensurate to its international status, by harnessing its economic and technological prowess to provide support and assistance to developing countries. In fact, Japan has continuously and proactively provided support in various ways to date through its official development assistance (ODA) programs, broadly contributing to global climate change actions. This includes support for "mitigation" to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as support toward "adaptation" to the effects of climate change already happening. Japan has also led global discussions on climate change from an early stage, as exemplified by its initiative in leading discussions on the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, which sets out the specific numerical targets for greenhouse gas reductions by developed countries with the schedule to achieve the targets. Japan has continued its role by leading the discussions on the current global trend toward decarbonization based on the Paris Agreement. Today, even after the Paris Agreement has come into effect and global efforts toward decarbonization have taken a great leap forward, Japan has continued to make responsible commitments toward decarbonization. For example, Japan has announced a goal to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in FY2030 from its FY2013 levels, which followed the announcement of the long-term target to realize net-zero by 2050.



Declaration of carbon neutrality in the Prime Minister's Policy Speech (October 26, 2020, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Not surprisingly, Japan's contributions are not limited to the aspect of policy making and diplomacy. While solar power has now become a driving force toward global decarbonization, it is Japanese companies that had played a key role in improving the performance of solar cells and contributing to their practical deployment in a way that reconciles cost aspects as well. This took place at about the same time that international discussions on climate change countermeasures began to move forward. In 1999, Japan came first place in the production amount of solar cells. Even though China makes up the largest share of solar cell production today, Japan is still expected to make great contributions in the field. For example, Japanese researchers were the ones who had developed thin-film solar cells, rooftop solar cells, and mega solar cells, as well as perovskite solar cells that can be applied to surfaces such as walls. Japanese manufacturers such as Toshiba are the global leaders in the development of such products. In addition to renewable energy, efforts in the fields of storage batteries and hydrogen are also important toward decarbonization. Companies such as Panasonic and Toyota possess world-class technologies in these fields and are working on accelerating decarbonization initiatives. We look forward to such initiatives from Japan, and their future contributions to climate action on a global scale.



Thin-film perovskite solar cell (Photo: Toshiba Corporation)
(Note) This achievement is the fruit of work commissioned by the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO).

(5) Arctic and Antarctic

A Arctic

(A) Current State of the Arctic

There is a risk that rapid changes in the Arctic environment caused by global warming will have a drastic and irreversible impact on the ecology and the lives of the residents. At the same time, as the decreasing amount of sea ice is expected to expand the navigable area, there have been growing economic opportunities such as the use of the Northern Sea Route and the development of resources.

Alongside this, Russia announced the Basic Principles of Russian Federation State Policy in the Arctic to 2035 and the Strategy for Developing the Russian Arctic Zone and Ensuring National Security until 2035 in 2020. It is also promoting military facility maintenance, resource exploitation and freight shipping on the Northern Sea Route. At the Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council (AC)⁷ held in May, Russia took over the chairmanship of the Council from Iceland (two-year term).

China, in recent years, has positioned itself as an “important stakeholder in Arctic affairs” and is observed to be proactively advancing into the Arctic with its participation in resource development, commercial use of shipping routes, governance development, and scientific research.

Against this backdrop, the U.S. is also enhancing its engagement in light of changes in the situation of the Arctic, including announcing an over 12 million US dollar economic aid policy for Greenland (Denmark) in 2020, and reopening the U.S. Consulate in Nuuk in June after nearly seven decades. The U.S. announced new Arctic strategies from each of the Department of Defense, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard between 2019

and 2021 in response to changes in the security situation.

In the meanwhile, the European External Action Service and the European Commission issued a joint communication to announce a new Arctic strategy plan in October. This includes, for example, a policy of seeking to encourage multilateral legal obligations that would prohibit further hydrocarbon reserve development in the Arctic and contiguous regions and the purchase of resources produced by these deposits, which shows the growing interest in balancing climate change and environmental protection measures with economic activity in the Arctic.

(B) Japan’s Arctic Policy and International Activities

As for Japan, it is aiming to contribute to the global society as a major player in addressing the Arctic issues with an emphasis on the three areas of research and development, international cooperation, and sustainable use, based on the “Japan’s Arctic Policy” approved in 2015.

Taking the opportunity of the AC Ministerial Meeting held in Iceland in May, Japan’s ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs made a statement on Japan’s international contribution. At the 8th Arctic Circle Assembly⁸ held in October, the Ambassador to Iceland shared the results from the 3rd Arctic Science Ministerial (ASM3) meeting. At ASM3 co-hosted by Japan and Iceland (AC Chair at the time) in May, which was the one to be held for the first time in Asia, the ministers concurred that international cooperation and data-sharing in observational research, collaboration with indigenous peoples and capacity building, and education for the youth in the field of international scientific cooperation and so on should

⁷ An intergovernmental forum established in 1996 with the aim of promoting cooperation, coordination, and interaction among the eight Arctic countries (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the U.S.), while gaining the involvement of indigenous communities on common issues related to the Arctic region (in particular, sustainable development, environmental protection, etc.). (It does not address military and security issues.) Japan acquired an observer status in 2013.

⁸ An international conference established by Mr. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, former President of Iceland and others in 2013, and attended by about 2,000 participants including government representatives, researchers, and business people. Japan has been participating in it since the first assembly with the attendance of the Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs and other delegates.

be promoted. In addition, Japan also declared its intent to further promote international cooperation such as through the operation of the Arctic research vessel as an international platform.

Through the Arctic Challenge for Sustainability II (ArCSII) launched in FY2020, Japan promotes international cooperation for research and human resource development at research and observation stations in the U.S., Canada, Russia, Norway, and Greenland (Denmark) among other locations. Japan has also sent its researchers to the AC working groups. As for the Arctic research vessel proposed in ASM3 for use as an international platform, it has been under construction since 2021.

Moreover, Japanese experts from various fields and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials attended the International Symposium on Plastics in the Arctic and the Sub-Arctic Region hosted by Iceland as AC chair (March), the Icelandic Chairmanship's Observer online event on Arctic Governance (April), and the Second meeting on the Implementation of the Arctic Science Agreement (April), where they presented Japan's initiatives, research results and cooperation policy

B Antarctic

(A) Japan and the Antarctic

Japan has been conducting Antarctic observation surveys utilizing its advanced technology at Syowa Station established in 1957, thereby contributing to global environment conservation and international development of science and technology. Moreover, as one of the original signatories of the Antarctic Treaty adopted in 1959, Japan strives to maintain and strengthen the Antarctic Treaty System, which is essential to the peaceful use of the Antarctic, while contributing to the promotion of environmental preservation and international cooperation in the Antarctic.

(B) The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Protection of Antarctic Environment

At the 43rd Antarctic Treaty Consultative

Meeting (ATCM 43) held virtually in June, discussions were held on issues such as response to the rapid increase in the number of visitors to the Antarctic environment for tourism and other purposes, as well as response to climate change issues in the Antarctic.

(C) Japan's Antarctic Observation

As for Japan's Antarctic observation activities, based on the ninth six-year plan of the Japanese Antarctic Research program (2016 to 2021), Japan is undertaking efforts to elucidate the role and impact of the Antarctic region on the global system, and in particular, to elucidate the actual conditions of global warming and its mechanisms. To that end, in addition to long-term continuous observation, it is also implementing various research and observation activities, including observations using a large aperture atmospheric radar, which is the only one of its kind in the Antarctic.

3 Science and Technology Diplomacy

Science and technology constitute the foundational elements for peace and prosperity that support socioeconomic development, and play a vital role in ensuring safety and security. By harnessing its own advanced science and technology, Japan promotes Science and Technology Diplomacy, thereby contributing to the development of science and technology at home and abroad, the promotion of relations with other countries, the peace and stability of the international community, and the resolution of global challenges. As part of this effort, Japan places emphasis on initiatives implemented through the activities of the Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In September 2015, MOFA established the post of Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and appointed Prof. Kishi Teruo, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, as the first Science and Technology

Advisor. Following the end of his term, Prof. Kishi was replaced by Prof. Matsumoto Yoichiro, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo as the new advisor in April. Moreover, since April 2019, Prof. Kano Mitsunobu has assumed the post of the Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to support the work of the Science and Technology Advisor. Prof. Matsumoto supports the activities of the Foreign Minister from the perspective of science and technology, and provides advice on the utilization of science, technology and innovation (STI) in the planning and coordination of various foreign policies to the Minister and relevant divisions.

In 2021, meetings of the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy, chaired by Prof. Matsumoto were held in January and July. In the July meeting, recommendations for the Food Systems Summit (held from September 23 to September 25) and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (held on December 7 and 8) as well as the STI Showcase on food systems transformation and nutrition improvement were summarized, which were submitted to State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio by Prof. Matsumoto and Prof. Kano in September.

Prof. Matsumoto and Prof. Kano endeavor to exchange views with other countries' government science and technology advisors, such as the U.S., UK, and New Zealand in developing and strengthening a network. Online meetings of the Foreign Ministries Science and Technology Advisors Network (FMSTAN) were held, in which in-depth discussion was conducted, including response to COVID-19. On the occasion of the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 held in December, Japan took the lead with like-minded international Science and Technology Advisors in releasing a joint statement on "Promoting Global Utilization of Science, Technology and Innovation



Prof. Matsumoto, Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, participated in the panel discussion at the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference (September, Tokyo)

for Food Systems Transformation to Ensure the Health of People and the Planet (STEPP)" in enhancing cooperation.

At the 24th Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) held in May, Prof. Matsumoto emphasized the importance of conducting research and development in non-medical fields including technologies of deactivating viruses through Deep-UV LEDs as a role of STI against the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, at the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference held in September, Prof. Matsumoto introduced Japan's efforts and examples including activities on disaster prevention and environmental protection utilizing satellite data by JAXA, and joint research programs between Japan and developing countries called SATREPS that aim to find solutions to global issues.

Furthermore, Prof. Matsumoto regularly hosts science and technology diplomacy seminars to raise the level of knowledge within MOFA.

Japan has concluded 32 science and technology cooperation agreements, and these are now in force with 46 countries and the EU.⁹ Based on these agreements, regular joint committee meetings are organized with these countries to engage in intergovernmental dialogue. In 2021,

⁹ For the breakdown, see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/technology/nikoku/framework.html>



joint committee meetings were held with the U.S., Spain, the UK, Norway, and the EU, respectively. Attended by delegates from the relevant ministries and agencies, consultations were held on the current status of cooperation in diverse sectors, and on the future direction of cooperation.

With regard to multilateral cooperation, as a member of the Board of the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), which was established to support research for peaceful purposes

conducted by researchers on weapons of mass destruction from the former Soviet Union, and now involved in a wide range of research and development such as chemistry, biology, radioactive materials and nuclear power, Japan works to provide support mainly to countries of Central Asia. Japan also participates in the ITER project to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of nuclear fusion energy.

Responding to the Largest Postwar Humanitarian Crisis

Currently, the number of refugees and internally displaced persons has risen to the highest level since World War II, to approximately 82.4 million, and the humanitarian crisis that is arising as a result of conflicts and natural disasters is becoming increasingly complex and prolonged. Moreover, the spread of COVID-19 has further exacerbated the difficulty of providing humanitarian aid. Under such circumstances, Japan, in cooperation with international organizations, has been providing efficient and sustainable assistance to meet the growing needs for humanitarian aid.

■ Continued support for the health of displaced persons and local residents

– Supporting displaced persons in Bangladesh

Sugawara Naoko, Health Officer, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Bangladesh Country Office

August 2021 marks four years since the mass influx of displaced persons from Myanmar's Rakhine State into neighboring Bangladesh reached its peak in August 2017. Today, the number of displaced persons exceeds 900,000 (of whom 51% are children), and they continue to have to depend on assistance for most aspects of their lives. This is putting pressure on the lives of the local residents in Bangladesh where poverty rates are high.

The IFRC, along with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of 11 countries around the world including Japan, is providing various forms of support to 34 camps for displaced persons as well as to local residents through the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS). This support includes ensuring the hygiene of water supplies, provision of shelter, and health and medical care.

Among these, with regard to support for health and medical care, five Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, including IFRC, are providing assistance to establish and operate 14 BDRCS health and medical facilities at 13 camps for displaced persons. In addition, they have also been engaging in activities to promote health and hygiene, and to train health volunteers among displaced persons and local residents who have undergone training in maternal and child health, infectious disease response, nutrition, first-aid, and psychological first aid. Through cooperation between the health and medical facilities and health volunteers, they are contributing to disease prevention as well as early detection and treatment. Furthermore, IFRC is also providing support to BDRCS in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by setting up a COVID-19 isolation



Door-to-door visits by health volunteers (July, Photo: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society)



Activities for the Global Handwashing Day campaign (October, Photo: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society)



Emergency outpatient service at a Bangladesh Red Crescent Society field hospital (September, Photo: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society)

and treatment center equipped with 50 beds. Health volunteers serve as a bridge between the displaced persons and the health and medical facilities by visiting each household they are in charge of in the camp and conveying accurate information, thereby ensuring that residents with COVID-19 symptoms undergo testing and receive treatment.

Although the issue of displaced persons is becoming a protracted problem with no solutions in sight, global interest in the issue is fading and it is becoming increasingly difficult to secure funding. Regardless of this, IFRC is providing support to BDRCS with other Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in establishing one new in-camp health and medical facility and two facilities in areas where local residents live, and expanding the regions where health volunteers conduct activities. Through these efforts, IFRC will continue to support health and medical needs within and outside camps for displaced persons in the future.



Hospital ward of the COVID-19 isolation and treatment center (July. Photo: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society)

■ Support activities to protect people from the COVID-19 pandemic and the adverse impact of climate change

Tsumura Yasuhiro, World Food Programme (WFP)^(Note)
Representative and Country Director in the Republic of The Gambia

In the Republic of The Gambia, located on the western end of the African Continent, poverty and food security have been exacerbated since COVID-19 reached its shores in March 2020, due to restrictions imposed on social and economic activities to contain the virus, and the stagnation of domestic and foreign logistics activities. Furthermore, the prohibition of travel into the country from Europe has greatly impacted the lives of those working in the tourism industry, which makes up 20% of The Gambia's gross national product (GNP), and of those engaged in other industries that are reliant on the tourism industry. Adding to these problems, the prices of main food products rose further year-on-year in 2021.

The Gambia is also experiencing a growing incidence of various adverse effects of climate change every year. In addition to an increasing number of disasters in recent years such as fires, storms, and droughts accompanying temperature rise and decline in rainfall, such disasters are also growing in scale. As much of the country's territory is on lowlands along The Gambia River and there is very little difference in elevation, the land becomes inundated by salt water for more than 200 km up from the estuary, causing extensive salt damage to well water, cultivated fields, and crops. This situation not only leads to a decline in agricultural productivity, but also results in an outflow of people from farming villages and social instability due to conflicts over water and land. In 2021, a storm with a level of intensity not seen in recent years swept across a large part of The Gambia, and many of the people who had already experienced social and economic losses from the COVID-19 pandemic saw their houses destroyed and suffered crop and livestock losses.



The author (left) guiding the Ambassador of Japan to Senegal around the WFP warehouse (Photo: WFP)



A storm victim who has received emergency food rations, and the author (right) (Photo: WFP)

(Note) WFP: United Nations World Food Programme

Under these circumstances, a survey on the food situation and vulnerability conducted in 2021 revealed that The Gambia is going through its worst food situation in the past 10 years, based on the results of the same survey conducted in 2011, 2016, 2021.

In view of this situation, in the first half of 2021, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided food assistance to approximately 340,000 people living in a serious state of poverty. In the event of storms, which occur during the rainy season, the WFP acted as the leader of the UN Disaster Management Team to coordinate support activities undertaken by various UN organizations, while cooperating and collaborating with the government's disaster management agency to distribute food and cash to 31,000 disaster victims. Furthermore, thanks to the FY2020 supplementary budget contribution from the Government of Japan, we were able to provide support for improving nutrition for 40,000 of the most vulnerable and malnourished expectant mothers and young children.

The WFP not only offers swift humanitarian assistance, but also provides support to strengthen resilience and sustainability at the community, municipal, and national levels for addressing disaster risks arising from climate change. Some examples of such support include building dams and waterways to prevent salt damage, supporting farming groups to prevent the loss of harvested food and secure sales channels, and developing disaster readiness plans and early warning systems within municipal governments and disaster management agencies.



A mother and child who have received support to improve nutrition, through Japan's ODA contribution (Photo: WFP)

Protecting the Global Environment Now, More than Ever, in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic

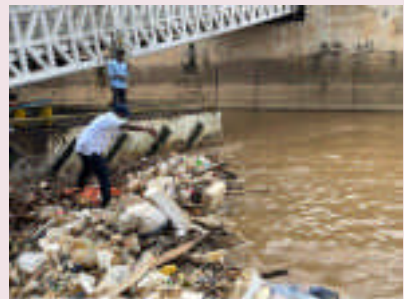
Yoshida Kakuko, Global Chemicals and Pollution Action Coordinator, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

The COVID-19 pandemic left marked changes on our lifestyles, but no change is in sight about the crisis of environmental degradation. Although movement restrictions during the lockdowns led to some recoveries in the natural ecosystem, other positive signs on the environment, such as reduction in air pollutants such as PM2.5, were short-lived. Meanwhile, some progress made prior to the COVID-19 pandemic on issues, such as waste management and plastic pollution reduction, suffered a setback during the pandemic, making it a challenging period for us who are in the field of environmental protection.

For the past 20 years, I have worked on environmental assessment and pollution control in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean as part of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). UNEP is the UN organization that sets the global environmental agenda, provides support for policymakers, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the conservation of the global environment. As the “global environment authority,” UNEP also promotes environmental measures within the UN system.

According to UNEP, Asia has nine of the ten countries that top the ranking for plastic pollution, along with 43 of the 50 rivers with the highest estimated plastic waste discharge. Although plastic pollution has captured public attention as a household but global issue, few are aware about the causes of the problem, with some voicing skepticism about the effectiveness of the measures being proposed. Due to widespread perceptions that plastic pollution was a subset of marine pollution, networking among experts and information exchange to counter plastic leakage through rivers had been quite limited until recently. With the support of the Government of Japan, UNEP is implementing a project (CounterMEASURE II project^(Note1)) that seeks to monitor/analyze the volume and types of plastics flowing into the rivers via images using artificial intelligence (AI), in collaboration with Google and other partners such as the Asian Institute of Technology. According to a survey conducted in the Mekong River basin in November, large quantities of products related to COVID-19 were found^(Note2), including disposable masks, gloves, and rapid used test kits. This latest information from Japanese partner organizations and experts from other parts of Asia has helped inform the Government of India's drafting of the *Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules* (amended in August 2021)^(Note3) as well as the *Regulations on the Long-term and Cost-Effective Monitoring of Plastic Waste* of the Mekong River Commission.

On combatting air pollution in Asia, a science and policy dialogue and a ceremony were held to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Acid Deposition



Large quantities of waste, including plastics, reaching the Mekong River basin (in the northern part of Thailand)



Since 2020, there has been a dramatic increase in the quantity of waste believed to have been used in the fight against COVID-19



CCTV camera installed with Japan's assistance and the cooperation of the local government. Images are analyzed using artificial intelligence (AI).

Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET), an intergovernmental initiative supported by UNEP and countries including Japan. At the Twenty-third Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting (IG23) convened in November, EANET's operating regulations (Annex) in its Instrument were amended, with a view to expanding the scope of cooperation on air pollution.^(Note4) Air pollution, among all pollution types, causes the greatest and most direct damage to human health, particularly for children. On the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies (September 7), UNEP called on each country to take further actions to protect our rights to clean air.^(Note5)

The core of UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (2022–2025) is to tackle the three planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. To avoid a global environmental catastrophe, there is no other way than for all households, and all regions - including developing countries - to work together in their own capacities to achieve the SDGs and to build financial and investment incentive systems to reduce pressures on the environment, prompting transformative changes in the economy and society. To ensure that “no one is left behind,” we are all pressed to contribute to the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), while reflecting the views of youth and strengthening the use of digital technologies.

Note1 Official project website: <https://countermeasure.asia> (English only)

Note2 See below for details on surveys conducted using monitoring cameras
<https://countermeasure.asia/tackling-the-plastic-pandemic-by-closed-circuit-television-monitoring/>(English only)

Note3 Announcement of the amendment on the Government of India's official website: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1745433> (English and local languages only)

Note4 Official website of the network: <https://www.eanet.asia/> (English only)

Note5 Official event website: <https://cleanairweek.org/> (English only)



Note1



Note2



Note3



Note4



Note5

Recommendations toward Realizing Food Systems Transformation and Improvement in Nutrition through Science and Technology – STEP Initiative by STI^(Note) (Systems Transformation to Ensure Planetary health)

Kano Mitsunobu, Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

After being appointed as Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in 2019, I have been advising on diplomacy activities alongside Professor Matsumoto Yoichiro, Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and members of the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy.

We are currently confronted by various global issues, such as hunger and malnutrition, climate change, and the deterioration of the environment. These problems cannot be resolved by any one country alone; instead, the world needs to work as one to address the issues. In 2021, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), UN Food Systems Summit, and Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 were convened, highlighting the urgent nature of these issues.

In September, the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs its recommendations on the utilization of science, technology and innovation (STI) to contribute to improving hunger and malnutrition as well as to food systems transformation that pays good attention to the Earth's natural systems. These recommendations were presented in a document titled "STEP Initiative by STI" (Systems Transformation to Ensure Planetary health). The Advisory Board has also compiled an STI showcase (collection of case studies) that feature the strengths of Japan's STI.

The utilization of STI proposed in the STEP recommendations should be promoted on a global scale. In December, based on the recommendations, Professor Matsumoto and I presented a joint statement, "Promoting Global Utilization of Science, Technology and Innovation for Food Systems Transformation to Ensure the Health of People and the Planet" (STEPP), along with science and technology advisors from various countries and regions on the occasion of the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021. This joint statement sets out the following scientific advice activities to be carried out by foreign ministries and diplomatic agencies as well as governmental science and technology advisors from countries and regions around the world, taking the opportunity of the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021: (1) Promoting the active utilization of STI in international cooperation programs by each government on food security and nutrition for all, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and inclusive and equitable food systems that address the needs of vulnerable communities;

(2) Promoting bilateral and multilateral STI cooperation while examining and integrating traditional and indigenous knowledge and while utilizing STI to meet economic and social conditions of each country/region, through close dialogues, with a view to leveraging STI in relevant sectors; and (3)



The author
(Photo: Okayama University)



Joint Statement on Promoting Global Utilization of Science, Technology and Innovation for Food Systems Transformation to Ensure the Health of People and the Planet (STEPP)

Promoting interdisciplinary human resources development and personnel exchange for utilizing STI effectively and efficiently. It also sets out the expectation for all stakeholders to take steps forward together for food systems transformation to ensure the health of people and the planet.

Going forward, there is a need for each country to put these recommendations into practice in concrete projects. It is our hope that our recommendations and joint statement will be beneficial for advancing international cooperation.

(Note) STI: Science, Technology and Innovation