

Sixteenth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

High Level Round Table

Monday, 26 April 2021 22:00~24:00 (Japan Time)

Remarks from Japan (3 min)

Mr. Takashi Yamazaki

*(Greetings, thanks and impacts of COVID-19)*

Good morning, Good afternoon, Good evening, I am Takashi Yamazaki, Director of the International Forestry Cooperation Office, Forestry Agency of Japan, speaking on behalf of our Director General.

First of all, I would like to thank the UNFF Secretariat for convening a full UNFF 16 session amid the worsening global pandemic.

Japan has been spared from a major hit from the COVID-19 pandemic on sustainable forest management practices, but on the other hand, our wood industry has been affected, particularly from the fall in wood demand, caused by delays in construction work and declining housing orders.

*(Revision of the Forest and Forestry Basic Plan)*

We are reflecting on these recent changes in circumstances, including the ongoing impact from the pandemic, and thus considering to revise Japan's Forest and Forestry Basic Plan for the first time in five years.

Japan's new Forest and Forestry Basic Plan aims to take into account of biodiversity in forest management practices, while driving sustainable growth and development of the forestry and wood industries. In revising this plan, Japan envisions to achieve a more resilient and robust social economy that is geared toward achieving the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, as declared by Prime Minister Suga last October.

As part of this recent effort, Japan is particularly focusing on sustainable management and uses of forest resources, breeding and planting efforts related to fast-growing native tree species, and widening use of wooden material such as cross-laminated timber and fireproof-wood for middle and high-rise buildings.

*(International cooperation)*

Internationally, Japan implements technical, bilateral-cooperation projects through Japan International Cooperation Agency, in an effort to help drive sustainable forest management and REDD+ practices worldwide, and contributes to the International Tropical Timber Organization as its host country.

Japan also provides the Joint Crediting Mechanism to promote private sector involvement in REDD+ activities.

*(Green Food System Strategy)*

Japan thinks that it is increasingly important to focus on the relationship between forest and agriculture, in order to effectively halt deforestation and prevent forest degradation.

Japan is, therefore, developing a strategy to establish new food systems that take into account sustainability issues, including forest conservation, when procuring food commodities.

*(Expectation of the conference)*

On this note, I hope that the Forum will have a fruitful debate this week in helping achieve the goals of UNSPF and SDGs.