JICA's Position Paper on SDGs: Goal 14

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

1. Understanding of the present situation

(1) Why are conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources necessary?

- ✓ Marine pollution, such as outbreaks of red tide and proliferation of micro-plastic waste, has been increasing globally.
- ✓ Approx. 20% of global coral reefs were lost in the last several decades of the 20th century, and more than 60% of existing coral reefs are at risk of extinction[1].
- ✓ It is estimated that nearly 30% of fish stocks are used in an unsustainable manner. The volumes of fish catches in the oceans have been in a declining trend[2].
- ✓ Oceans cover 71% of the earth surface and marine resources, as a common property, provide the basis for people's livelihoods. There is an increased recognition that issues pertaining to the oceans and marine resources need to be tackled in a comprehensive and integrated manner by involving all stakeholders concerned so as to effectively address the critical situation above.

(2) Japan's efforts

- ✓ Japan has a long history of prevention of marine pollution, conservation of aquatic ecosystems/biodiversity, preservation of critical habitats of fisheries resources, management of fisheries, and stock enhancement. It is a traditional approach of Japan that societies co-exist with nature and pursue a recycling-oriented society. Fisheries and aquatic resources are co-managed by local communities and authorities. Based on accumulated experiences in these efforts, the oceans surrounding Japan have been developed, used and conserved in a comprehensive and integrated manner.
- ✓ As for marine pollution, a national policy framework was put in place with the enactment of "Prevention of Marine Pollution and Maritime Disaster Act" in 1971, and an international commitment was also made in 2016 at the G7 summit in Japan to address the issue of marine debris. It was noted that efforts on "3R" contribute to the prevention and reduction of land-based pollutants, in particular, plastic waste.
- ✓ In terms of ecosystem conservation, Japan has developed a national strategy for conservation of marine biodiversity in response to adoption of the "Aichi Biodiversity Targets." With the guidance of this strategy, it has promoted integrated management of forests, river basins, and coastal zones. At the same time, Japan's traditional management system of coastal ecosystems, called *Satoumi*, was acknowledged and pro-active efforts by local communities for sustainable use of marine resources are encouraged. Furthermore, marine protected areas are designated for enhanced conservation and management of

[1] National Biodiversity Strategy 2010-2020 (IUCN), Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005), WRI Report (2011), IUCN Red List 2016

[2] The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2016, FAO

biodiversity, and programs for “sea ranching” and protection of spawning/nursery grounds are implemented for fisheries resource enhancement purposes.

- ✓ Fisheries resources in Japan are managed by a licensing and catch quota system for offshore areas and a fishing right system (territorial use right granted to fisheries cooperative associations, FCAs) for inshore areas. Illegal fishing is primarily controlled by fisheries surveillance officers, who maintain close communication with the coast guard and the local police office. FCAs also play an important role in monitoring fishing grounds and reporting suspicious cases to local authorities. In the international domain of fisheries management, Japan plays a leading role in the formulation/implementation of management measures, especially for straddling and highly migratory fish stocks, as well as endangered aquatic species.

(3) JICA’s strength

- ✓ As a maritime nation with the world’s sixth largest marine area (territorial sea and exclusive economic zone) of 4.47 million km^2 under its jurisdiction, also as a fishing country with the world’s sixth largest marine catches and the largest import volume of marine products, and further as an environmentally advanced country which overcame water pollution symbolized by Minamata disease, Japan is in a position to lead international cooperation efforts for conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources.
- ✓ In terms of prevention of marine pollution, JICA has developed its competency to support partner countries’ efforts in the fields of solid waste management and sewerage/water pollution countermeasures from both tangible and intangible aspects. The support is provided in such a manner that integrates technical cooperation and financial assistance, with the aim of strengthening the overall capacity of environmental management in terms of administrative capability, institutional set-up and human resource development. JICA has the strength in its holistic approach that encompasses both upstream and downstream efforts (e.g. from policy support to field activities, from central to local levels, and from infrastructure development to operational capacity building). In this connection, due attention is paid on a partner country’s self-help efforts and ownership toward development efforts. Japan has its own experiences of overcoming serious pollution problems during the rapid economic growth era. All the useful lessons learnt and valuable experiences gained in such process are duly reflected in JICA’s cooperation efforts.
- ✓ With regard to ecosystems conservation, JICA has endeavored to achieve a good balance between conservation of the natural environment and improvement of local communities’ livelihoods, which depend on the benefits of ecosystem services. In doing so, a comprehensive approach has been adopted, which includes advisory services for policy/high-level management, establishment of co-management systems for conservation areas, and capacity enhancement for human resource development. Concerning coastal ecosystems, JICA’s support consists of conservation and sustainable use of mangrove forests, capacity development for restoration of ecosystems through afforestation, adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change on coral ecosystems in small island development states, and integrated conservation and

management of coastal ecosystems.

- ✓ Japan shares some similarities with developing countries in terms of the structure and nature of the fisheries sector; small-scale coastal fisheries are predominant, which are often characterized by a multi-gear and multi-species type of fishing, and numerous fishing villages/landing sites are dispersed along the coastal line. These are, in fact, important factors that determine the directions of fisheries resource management as well as fishing community development. Japan's experiences and knowledge in this field are hence highly applicable in developing countries, and by taking advantage of such intellectual assets, JICA has implemented a number of projects to promote sustainable use of fisheries resources, and applied knowledge is also being accumulated. The network of experts and relevant institutions established in the course of project implementation is another asset of JICA to execute effective technical cooperation in this area

2. Priority targets

Goal 14 has seven targets and three implementation means. From the perspective of the effectiveness and efficiency of cooperation, and the comparative advantages of Japan, JICA will focus on the following fields:

[Prevention of marine pollution]

14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

[Conservation of ecosystems]

14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans

14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information

[Management of fisheries resources]

14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

[Boosting economic benefits and promoting small-scale artisanal fishers]

14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism

14.8 Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

3. Priority efforts to achieve the goals

(1) Prevention of marine pollution

- ✓ In protecting and improving the environment in land areas, preventive measures of water pollution, sewerage system improvement and solid waste management will be strengthened (This will also contribute to Goal 6 and Goal 12).
- ✓ More specifically, the following efforts will be exerted in an integrated manner: improvement of legal frameworks related to enforcement of laws and regulations; institutional capacity strengthening and human resource development; improvement of pollution control facilities (sewage treatment facility, waste treatment facility, and final waste disposal sites, etc.); and support for strengthening the capacity to operate, maintain and manage facilities.
- ✓ In making such efforts, a practical system of mutual check-and-balance and collaboration among public and private sectors, and local residents will be established with due considerations of specific contexts of developing countries and by referring to Japan's experiences in pollution prevention measures.
- ✓ In addition, Japan's technology and know-how on the pollution prevention measures will be utilized through collaboration with Japanese local governments and private enterprises.

(2) Conservation of ecosystems

- ✓ To ensure a balance between conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of ecosystem services in coastal and ocean areas, comprehensive cooperation efforts will be implemented such as: management of marine protected areas; conservation of coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems; provision of advisory service on improvement of the livelihoods of coastal communities through sustainable use of fisheries resources and other ecosystem services; promotion of co-management of marine protected areas; and capacity strengthening for human resource development.
- ✓ Due considerations will be paid on the fact that coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangrove forests have functions to store and isolate blue carbon and hence their restoration and conservation are also important as a measure for mitigation of climate change.

(3) Management of fisheries resources, boosting economic benefits, and promotion of small-scale fisheries

- ✓ The highest priority is given to "Management of coastal fisheries," which directly affects the livelihoods of coastal communities.
- ✓ Stakeholders' (fishers) participation will be encouraged in the efforts to conserve critical habitats of coastal ecosystems such as tidal flats/wetlands, seagrass beds and coral reefs, which serve as important spawning and nursery grounds for fisheries resources.
- ✓ Considering the limited human and financial resources available in developing countries, co-management of fisheries resources will be promoted with proactive engagement of stakeholders (fishers).
- ✓ In consideration of the risk of reduced income as a result of management measures (=reduced catch), alternative livelihood options will be combined with

management efforts in order to ensure continued participation of fishers.

- ✓ Based on the current Japan's policies and international requirements, efforts will be made to develop human resources who can promote "Assessment of important local fisheries resources," "Management of straddling and highly migratory species (e.g. skipjack and tuna)" and "Measures against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing."
- ✓ Concerning the issue of global food security, "Aquaculture promotion" that contributes to the stable supply of fishery products and the reduction of fishing pressure on the aquatic resources will be focused. At the same time, necessary considerations will be paid to reducing the environmental burden caused by aquaculture.
- ✓ To maximize the economic benefits of the fisheries sector without catching more fish, "Value chain development (including reduction of post-harvest losses)" will be promoted by taking advantage of Japan's strength; traditionally utilizing fisheries resources in various ways. Related activities will be conducted in close collaboration with the private sector.
- ✓ At the same time, the role of fisheries in addressing poverty, gender and nutrition issues will be enhanced.