

International Day for Biological Diversity 2020 “Our solutions are in nature”
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- The current coronavirus crisis has confronted us with the fact that we have been making a serious miscalculation in the way we deal with and relate to nature. It has also demanded that we reconsider how best to live in harmony with nature going forward.
- We should recognize this crisis as a serious message from our ecosystems demanding our behavioral change. After we contain the pandemic, we must make our economic and social systems compatible with conservation of biodiversity and measures against climate change.
- In our efforts to build a society truly living in harmony with nature after the COVID-19 outbreak, we can look into our history and learn from our ancestors. We may find a good model in the prehistorical Jomon period in Japan. The society in this period was circular and ecological. It was a compact society. We can find another model in the Edo period, the Shogunate which lasted about 250 years until the Meiji Restoration. Peoples’ livelihood was sustained, by decentralized societies in this period. Japanese people traditionally think “human beings are a part of nature”, as ecosystems have an indispensable function that provide us with clean air, water and abundant food resources, while maintaining a stable biosphere.
By combining wisdom of those societies from the past with modern technologies and renewable energy, Japan can build a self-reliant, circular and ecological society.
- The Satoyama Initiative, which Japan advocated, and has been advancing with many partners, aims to reorganize those systems from the past, and could be a world-leading example in doing so. Japan will advance the Satoyama Initiative further, as we believe, in the course of the recovery from the coronavirus crisis, it can also make a contribution to solving local issues as well as to achieving the SDGs.

- Moreover, in climate change adaptation, making use of solutions in nature is also important. In the long history of struggling with flood disasters, people in Japan have used a centuries-old flood control technology. In this system, we utilize the water-retention capacity of forests and integrate rivers with farmlands. This technology has also contributed to the conservation of wildlife habitats. We will further push ahead with integration of climate change measures and the conservation of biodiversity, in such ways as protecting forests as so-called “green reservoir.”
- We should take a lesson from this coronavirus outbreak to rethink the way human beings deal with ecosystems and what living in harmony with nature means.
- Our humanity is now tested as to whether we could behave for the benefit of others such as future generations and ecosystems and whether we could redesign our economic and social systems into green and resilient ones.
- 2020 is a significant year when the “post-2020” global biodiversity framework which takes over the Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted in Japan will be developed. Now is the time for us to act in concert with people in the world to achieve the 2050 Vision, “living in harmony with nature” shared in Aichi.
- To this end, what can we do as individuals? The first step is “local production for local consumption.” So let’s get started with the first step from your own community toward a circular and ecological economy. “Save lives, save biodiversity, save our planet.”

Arigato (Thank you.)

国際生物多様性の日“Our solutions are in nature”（日本語）

- 今回のコロナ危機は、我々人類の自然との向き合い方・関わり方に大きな誤りがあったこと、そしてこれからの自然共生のあり方を考え直す必要性も突きつけている。
- この危機を、人間に行動変容を求める生態系からの重大なメッセージと受け取め、コロナ収束後の経済社会を、生物多様性保全や気候変動対策と両立したものとしていかなければならない。
- コロナ後の真の自然共生社会のヒントは、我々日本人の祖先たちが築き上げてきた歴史の中に、例えば循環型コンパクト社会が実現していた先史時代の縄文時代や、約250年続いた江戸時代の人々の暮らしを支えた地域分散社会にある。日本には、「人間も自然の一部」という思想がある。生態系は、美しい空気や水、豊富な食料資源を供給し、安定した生物圏を維持してくれるという、人間社会にとって、なくてはならない機能を生み出すシステムである。これらのシステムに現代社会のテクノロジーと再生可能エネルギーを組み合わせることで、日本は自立型・循環型社会を構築することができる。
- 日本が提唱し、多くのパートナーとともに進めている「SATOYAMA イニシアティブ」はこうしたシステムの再構築を進めるものであり、世界の指針にもなるであろう。我が国は、今後、世界がコロナから復興する道の上においても、「SATOYAMA イニシアティブ」が地域の課題解決に貢献し、SDGs 達成にも資するよう、取組をさらに発展させていく。
- また、気候危機への適応において、自然の中にある解決策を活用することも重要。古来、水害に苦しんできた日本では、森林による保水力を活用し、河川と農地の一体性を確保する伝統的な治水技術(霞堤)が用いられ、これは生物の生息地確保にも貢献した。いわゆる「自然のダム」など、気候変動対策と生物多様性保全の統合的

な取組も進めていく。

- 今回のコロナ危機を、人類の生態系への向き合い方や、自然共生のあり方を見直す教訓としよう。
- 我々は、未来世代や生態系という「他者」に対して「利他的」な行動をし、グリーンでレジリエントな経済社会の再構築ができるか、人類の humanity が問われている。
- 2020 年は日本で採択された愛知目標に代わる次の世界目標を検討する重要な年。今こそ国際社会が協調して、愛知で共有された2050年ビジョン「自然と共生する世界」の構築へ行動しよう。
- そのために、我々一人ひとりに何ができるのか。その一歩は「地産地消」。一人一人の地元から循環型経済の一歩を踏み出そう。「save lives, save biodiversity, save our planet.」
- ありがとう。