

Ministerial Dialogue on "Green Economy and Inclusive Growth"
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1. Introduction

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the people of India as well as every nation and region in the world, and the United Nations agencies for your encouragement and support since the unprecedented natural disaster that we experienced on March 11.

2. Philosophy of Green Economy

I would like to begin by asking you one question. **"Which reality should we share when considering sustainable development and green economy? The answer is that the capacity of the earth is limited".**

As the population in the world is expected to reach nine billion by 2050, we need to consider what we should do for sustainable development of human beings on the basis of recognizing 'limitations of the earth.'

To be more precise, there are three limitations of the earth, which are: (1) natural resources for raw materials, (2) resources for energy, and (3) the natural environment capacity. Our aim is to find a pattern of economic growth that can solve all problems simultaneously.

We all agree that the current pattern of economic development needs a significant change, and that the construction of a new growth model predicting the next ten years is necessary, for which we maintain the ability of the future generations to fulfil their needs and also satisfy the needs of the current generations. Although, there is no definition of a green economy, it should be something that is able to deal with the three limitations of the environmental conservation. In other words, with the green economy we should achieve the following three objectives, which are: (1) to attain economic growth, (2) to link economic growth directly to the improvement of the quality of life, and, (3) to strengthen social stability to reduce the gap between the rich and poor.

I believe that the discussion on green economy will provide us with an opportunity to visualise and create practical solutions for achieving these objectives.

3. The Gradations of the International Social Structure

Here I have the second question. **“What is the difference between 20 years ago when the Earth Summit took place in 1992 and today?” This can be explained using the key words, namely, “diversification with a dramatic speed.” The structure of international community is changing significantly.** The current world structure cannot be simply described as a polarization of developed and developing countries. As well as the gap, I can see the gradations, in the current international social structure. Living in such an gradational structure, we need to find a solution for challenges at the global level, such as climate change, bio-diversity, freshwater resources, food security, and energy security. I am sure that Rio+20 will offer a productive opportunity for the international community to recognize the gradation of the international social structure. In Rio+20, when we discuss the two themes, or perhaps the formulation of a post MDGs, we should surely recognize and be based on this current international structure.

4. Time Limit

There is the third question. **By when will we have to achieve these objectives? Of course we should start dealing with any of these objectives as quickly as possible.** There are 365 days a year, meaning that we have only 3,650 days even in 10 years.

I think it is a good idea to promote cooperation at the local government level, and among the municipalities, as a way of facilitating a quick approach. In other words, this is a community-based cooperation. Nowadays, local governments, whether in developed or developing countries, are facing some common issues, including air pollution, waste management, sanitation such as drink-waterworks and sewages, and so on. Each local government is required to set countermeasures against the issues they encounter, and in some cases the approach taken by local governments is more advanced than that of the national effort. Being here today, I would like to appeal this point to the leaders of local governments.

5. Feasibility of a Green Economy

Now, is there a practical solution? Yes, there are many ways. and those will be presented at this meeting by the ministers from each country.

The first to mention is the technological development for achieving the low-carbon society. Since Japan has scarce energy resources, we carried out a thorough energy saving measurement. As a result, we are proud that we have accomplished world-class energy efficiency in the industrial sector. For example, in the steel industry, we developed a new coke making technology that can triple its productivity, save more than 20% of energy consumed in the coke making process, and use low-grade coal in a higher proportion. The first commercial coke oven using this technology was installed in 2008. In addition, at a factory level, more than 20% reduction of CO2 emissions has been attained by shifting energy from kerosene to LNG and utilizing waste heat effectively with the introduction of a cogeneration system. Japan will be committed to the development and deployment of these world-leading, low-carbon technologies.

The Tohoku Earthquake in March caused unimaginable damage, both economically and mentally, to the people of Japan. However, the recovery from the disaster is neither a dream nor an illusion, but a reality that our country is now facing. In fact, the practical measures for the recovery are overlapping with some of the concrete ideas of a green economy. For instance, we will be able to show the world the Japanese idea of a low-carbon society through community development in a practical manner.

The Japanese idea of a low-carbon society does not merely mean the world where greenhouse gas emission has been reduced; but it is a society in which people can feel economy and spiritual wealth, and happiness in their lives. For example, the concept of a compact city where residents can live walkably not only contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emission, but also provides elders with comfortably environment. It will also lead to rebuilding of the residents' communities. A highly-insulated house not only offers a high air-conditioning efficiency and reducing emission, but also has a potential to give a positive effect on health. Furthermore, a view towards the active conservation of rural landscape such as *Satochi*, *Satoyama*, and *Satoumi* and local production for local consumption are important as well. These are "multi-benefit" approaches that stay low-carbon but generate additional values.

It is true that the Japanese economy and energy policies, including the ones on nuclear power plants, are experiencing a huge difficulty caused by the Earthquake. Meanwhile, Japanese citizens are ever more conscious about saving energy, and the momentum is building towards the introduction of renewable energy.

These opportunities are beginning to appear as a concrete plan. One example is a report of recommendations submitted to the Prime Minister in June by the Reconstruction Design Council that was established based on the law framing basic principles for the reconstruction from the Earthquake. The recommendations by the Council include the promotion of renewable energy use and the reconstruction of the devastated areas to become environmentally advanced areas. As it is an urgent task to introduce a large amount of renewable energy that is environmentally friendly and resistant to natural disasters, the Diet passed the feed-in tariffs (FIT) bill in this August. The development of renewable energy generates new employment and industry in the area.

One of the lessons learned from the Tohoku Earthquake is a risk management. As a quick response after the earthquake, the Nuclear Safety and Security Agency (tentative naming) will be established as an affiliated agency of the Ministry of the Environment to ensure further safety.

Lastly, we intend to make the best use of the experience of the earthquake disaster. We are determined to deal with the protection of the environment of the earth, such as climate change, even more seriously, using the experience of the recovery from the earthquake as a driving force for green growth. We are determined to make our best effort to lead the world in environmental dimension.

Thank you.