

The Government of Japan

Japan's contribution to the development of the COP30 Presidency Roadmap on Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030

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0. Introduction

- Japan welcomes the fact that the “Roadmap on Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030” (hereinafter referred to as “the forest roadmap”) is being prepared under the responsibility of the COP30 President in an inclusive, participatory, and transparent manner. Japan also welcomes the opportunity provided to all stakeholders, including Parties, to submit views on the forest roadmap.
- Japan understands that the forest roadmap will not become any negotiated outcomes of the COP, namely COP decisions, but an action-oriented document to be prepared by the COP30 President with a view to implementing paragraphs 33 and 34 of the outcome of the first global stocktake (GST1), offering guidance for the achievement of these efforts, identifying solutions being accelerated through the Action Agenda, and highlighting obstacles and gaps to be addressed.
- Japan also considers that the forest roadmap should not be mandatory, but should support countries' efforts toward achieving the objective in a manner that takes into account their respective national circumstances, and should neither impose nor rule out particular approaches. Japan further considers that, in its elaboration and implementation, it is important that the forest roadmap be aligned with, and generate synergies with, existing initiatives, including the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030, the Global Forest Goals 2030, and the FAO Forestry Roadmap 2024–2031, and that it should not entail additional financial burdens on Parties.
- Taking the above into account, Japan hereby submits the following views and experiences in response to the questions raised by the COP30 Presidency.

1. Barriers

- The following barriers are particularly relevant in countries where deforestation and forest degradation are ongoing:
- The role of forests as carbon sinks and reservoirs is not fully recognized. In addition, non-carbon benefits such as water resources conservation, soil protection and biodiversity conservation are undervalued or hardly recognized. As a result,

governments and local communities often lack adequate understanding of the importance of forests and sufficient incentives to conserve and restore them.

- Robust legal, policy and institutional frameworks, as well as arrangements for their implementation and enforcement, including monitoring, have not been sufficiently secured for forest conservation and sustainable management and for coordination and harmonization with other land uses, including agricultural production as a driver of deforestation. This includes frameworks and arrangements related to the participation, protection of rights and benefit-sharing of forest-dependent residents and local communities.
- In the countries concerned, adequate human and financial resources are not allocated to the forest and forestry sector. Even globally, forests absorb approximately 7.6 billion tonnes of CO₂ each year, equivalent to about one fifth of global emissions, yet less than 2 per cent of total climate finance is directed to forests.
- In order to improve access to public and private finance in this field and to attract human resources and investment, it is necessary to ensure the transparency and credibility of forest conservation efforts and their results, including through improving understanding of forest conservation and strengthening law enforcement and monitoring arrangements as noted above.

2. Acceleration measures

- It should be noted that there is no single solution that fits all contexts, and that the measures to be prioritized should differ depending on national circumstances.
- The establishment of legal and institutional frameworks for forest conservation, as well as the formulation of policies and strategies tailored to national circumstances and strengthened implementation and enforcement, are indispensable. In particular, coordination and harmonization between forest conservation measures and policies on agricultural production and other land uses are important. With support from Japan and UN-REDD, FAO launched last December a toolkit, the “Solutions-Tree”,¹ to assist policymakers in considering measures to reduce deforestation through sustainable agrifood systems. Japan expects that this toolkit will be widely utilized and support considering policies and measures relevant to tackle deforestation in many countries.
- It is also important to raise awareness and promote understanding among the public, policymakers, leaders and investors of both the carbon benefits and the diverse non-

¹ [The Solutions-tree: halting deforestation through sustainable agrifood systems transformation](#)

carbon benefits of forests. To this end, the development and dissemination of methodologies to visualize those benefits will be key.

- In order not only to halt but also to reverse deforestation and forest degradation, the establishment of planted forests through afforestation and reforestation is necessary. The sustainable and circular use of planted forests can also help reduce logging pressure on valuable forest ecosystems such as primary and natural forests. When carrying out afforestation and reforestation, the land's original ecosystem should be properly considered and respected in order to minimize any adverse impacts, including the use of native species.
- In addition, the use of sustainably sourced wood, including timber harvested from properly managed planted forests, in buildings that store carbon over long periods can also contribute to material substitution benefits. It is also beneficial to promote substitution effects by replacing fossil-based products with forest-based products through technological development and innovation. Sustainable forest management and wood use form the basis of a forest bioeconomy that can also contribute to local economic growth and improved livelihoods for local communities.

3. Japan's experience, best practices and lessons learned

- After the World War II, Japan promoted a nationwide afforestation and reforestation programme as a national movement with public participation from the 1950s onward, and has experience in restoring degraded forests. Today, Japan has 25 million hectares of forests, covering approximately 70 per cent of its land area, of which 10 million hectares are planted forests.
- Through the proper administration and enforcement of the Forest Planning System, the Protection Forest System, and the Forest Land Development Control System under the Forest Act, Japan has maintained its forest cover at approximately 70 per cent over the past 70 years. Over the same period, the growing stock of planted forests has increased sixfold.
- Japan has promoted the circular use of forest resources on these planted forests under the concept of "harvest, use, plant and tend." Through such sustainable forest management and wood use, the functions of forests as carbon sinks and reservoirs have been strengthened, while carbon storage in wood products and material substitution benefits have been continuously realized. These approaches are positioned as forest carbon sink measures in Japan's national climate strategy, the Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures.
- In addition, through nationwide movements such as the National Tree-planting Festival, the National Tree Tending Festival, the National Movement for Beautiful

Forests, and the “Kizukai” movement to promote wood use, Japan has worked to foster public understanding of the multiple functions of forests, including carbon benefits and synergistic non-carbon benefits such as water resources conservation, soil protection and biodiversity conservation.

- Given public understanding of the multiple functions of forests including Japan’s 10 million hectares of planted forests, and of the need for proper management to ensure that the multiple functions continue to be delivered, Japan introduced the Forest Environment Tax and the Forest Environment Transfer Tax in 2019. Under this system, JPY 1,000 per year is collected from taxable individuals, and approximately JPY 60 billion per year is allocated through the Forest Environment Transfer Tax to implement forest management and related measures.
- With regard to promoting wood use, Japan has in recent years enacted the Act for Promotion of Use of Wood in Buildings to Contribute to the Realization of a Decarbonized Society, while also advancing technological development to improve the earthquake resistance and fire resistance of wood-based building materials, together with the rationalization of building standards. Japan has also enacted the Act on Promoting the Distribution and Use of Legally Harvested Wood and Wood Products. Japan participates in the Forest and Climate Leaders’ Partnership (FCLP), and in particular engages in the working group on Greening Construction with Sustainable Wood, thereby sharing Japan’s initiatives and experience.
- Japan has also implemented measures against forest pests and diseases, such as pine wilt disease, as well as measures against damage caused by wild animals such as deer, in order to prevent forest loss and degradation. For forests damaged by disasters such as typhoons, heavy rainfall and fire, Japan has also worked for prompt recovery and has implemented forest management practices to foster diverse forests with resilience to such disasters.
- In order to attract private investment into forest conservation activities and to expand the contribution of forests to climate change mitigation and adaptation, Japan is promoting projects under its domestic, government-operated carbon crediting mechanism, “the J-Credit Scheme”, covering forest management and reforestation. Internationally, under the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM), a carbon crediting mechanism consistent with Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement, Japan is currently promoting project development for afforestation/reforestation and REDD+. Project-based REDD+ through the JCM is an effective means of advancing concrete mitigation actions at the project level through the introduction of private finance and technology, while complementing national and subnational REDD+ approaches.

4. Reflecting different national circumstances and contexts

- Climatic conditions, forest types, current land-use patterns, legal frameworks related to forests and land use, customs, and historical backgrounds differ significantly across countries and regions. Therefore, pathways toward halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 cannot be uniform. It is important that each country and region, taking into account its own circumstances and, where appropriate, drawing on best practices from other countries, select and implement effective and efficient measures.
- The forest roadmap can serve as useful guidance for that purpose, and it is also important to note that it should neither impose nor rule out particular approaches. At the same time, Japan considers it beneficial, with a view to achieving the objective, for countries and regions to ensure transparency regarding the content and progress of their efforts and, where appropriate, to share information by making use of existing frameworks.
- For example, in countries where the conversion of primary and natural forests to agricultural land, residential land or other uses is ongoing, the conservation of those forests and coordination with other land uses are key issues. On the other hand, in countries where the rate of deforestation has slowed and forests are moving toward recovery, afforestation and reforestation as well as the circular use of resources through sustainable forest management and wood use, become important issues. Planted forests could perform a wide range of functions at a high level, like natural forests, including not only serving as carbon sinks and carbon reservoirs but also contributing to soil conservation and biodiversity conservation.