

**OECD Joint High-Level Meeting of the OECD Development Assistance Committee
(DAC) and the Environment Policy Committee (EPOC)
28-29 May 2009**

Session 1: Sustainable Financing of Water Supply and Sanitation

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Japan recognizes the extreme importance of this meeting for which policy makers from both development and environment fields have assembled.

As you are all aware, there are various major risks from global warming related to water issues including, “severe water scarcity”, “increase in floods and storms”, “impact on agriculture”, and “land loss due to the sea level rise.” Namely, most of the damage caused by climate change is, to a large extent, closely related to water. These water associated impacts are projected to be greater in the least developed countries, and thus, are deemed serious development problems as well.

It is my great honor and pleasure to have an opportunity to make a speech on this important subject, “water,” which will present a great challenge for human beings during this century.

Mr. Co-Chair, most OECD countries have used the current economic and financial crisis as an opportunity to introduce environment-friendly policies. In the field of development aid as well, it is increasingly important to introduce policies to support long-term sustainable development in partner countries.

With regard to the question, “How can we maintain the development aid flow?” Japan believes that all countries should make their best efforts to implement already pledged commitments, and that it is also important to enhance effectiveness and efficiency on development aid. In this context, I believe that the OECD’s suggestion, that long-term strategic financial planning is vital, is gaining weight.

In the light of the formulation and implementation of a realistic Strategic Financial Planning for water and sanitation and for reforming water governance, I would like to introduce some of our efforts and experiences.

To support developing countries in Asia, Japan advocates the “Clean Asia Initiative.” Under this initiative, we have developed a Water Environment Partnership in Asia with 11 countries, to promote good governance in water environment management. To this end, we are working on the establishment of a database on water environment and developing capacity with this database. Under such efforts, we perceive that efficient systems suitable for developing countries are needed.

Several decades ago, Japanese farmers were collecting excrement to be utilized as fertilizer; consequently we experienced sanitation and water pollution problems. Japan then developed a combination of water treatment systems to satisfy the needs. Recently, in addition to large-scale centralized water treatment systems mainly installed in cities, we are promoting small scale on-site systems, in order to diffuse proper sanitation systems throughout the nation, particularly in rural areas. A good example of these small-scale systems is called “JOHKASO,” which is a compacted high-performance on-site waste water treatment system with bio-functions. As the system is quite small, JOHKASO has a significant advantage in installation cost. We believe that transferring these technologies and associated know-how would be extremely effective for our partners throughout the world and would contribute to realistic planning.

Japan has actively implemented high-quality assistance in the area of water and sanitation. For instance, Japan has continuously been the world’s largest donor in the water and sanitation sector since the 1990s, and has contributed \$5.5billion US dollars of ODA in the five years between 2002 and 2006, which accounts for about 37% of the bilateral donor’s total.

On the occasion of the Fourth World Water Forum in 2006, Japan announced the “Water and Sanitation Broad Partnership Initiative”, named “WASABI”, which shows the basic policies and concrete measures of Japan’s assistance on water and sanitation.

Based on this initiative, Japan supports the self-help efforts of developing countries on water and sanitation, establishing broad partnerships with international organizations, and other donor countries.

To facilitate the practical implementation of IWRM, Integrated Water Resource Management, UNESCO with the cooperation of Japan launched the IWRM Guidelines at the 5th World Water Forum this past March. By using the guidelines, we will continue to contribute to the promotion of IWRM in the world.

We should keep in mind that continuous effort is essential to tackle water and sanitation issues.

Many of us around this table have historically struggled with water related problems and promoted the effective use of precious water resources. Let’s share such experiences, our expertise and our technology, and promote high quality assistance.