

Statement by Satoshi Tanaka, Director-General Environmental Management Bureau,
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I would like to pay respect for the first Arctic Environment Minister's Meeting by the efforts of Finland as chairmanship and appreciate the opportunity to participate and to submit a statement as an observer.

The Arctic is a very precious and important region in the world which has unique and diverse natural environment and nurtures a lot of wildlife. In addition, the environment of the Arctic is the foundation of livelihood of indigenous people.

However, even if the environmental changes including the melting of Arctic sea ice is expected to bring a new development to the human, there is a possibility that the changes become threats for the human which cause natural environment of the Arctic to change drastically and bring global warming and the rising of sea level

In addition, marine plastic litters, which is a global issue as well as marine pollution caused by harmful material, has been discovered in the Arctic and it has been pointed out a possibility that marine plastic litters have an impact on marine ecosystem in the Arctic.

The National Institute for Environment Studies of Japan concluded the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Finnish Environmental Institute (SYKE) last year, and then the Prime Minister of Japan welcomed its conclusion and agreed with the President of Finland on strengthening cooperation in environmental issues. Japan also has clarified the global distribution of CO₂ and methane and the amount of the emissions and sinks, the seasonal and annual variabilities of greenhouse gases by "Greenhouse Gases Observing Satellite (GOSAT)." The data regarding these greenhouse gases is important for each country and Japan would like to share it.

Japan also researches conditions of marine litters including microplastics as a part of global effort, and supports the development and sophistication of waste

management in developing countries, which may be large sources of marine plastic litters. In this year's G7 marine plastic litter issue has been discussed, and at the next year's G20 summit under Japan's presidency, Japan will address the issue of marine plastic litters and would like to exercise leadership in globally effective efforts.

Furthermore, in regard to the bird species that nest in the Arctic and migrate through Japan, Japan has not only tried to conserve wetlands in it for their use and contributed to the conservation and protection of biodiversity in the Arctic, but also contributed to the works of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna of the Arctic Council by dispatching researchers and staff to its meetings.

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Japan would like to work on researches and studies regarding the environmental changes in the Arctic and contribute to the sustaining and protecting of natural environment and biodiversity in the Arctic. In the next year's G20 under Japan's presidency, Japan will hold the G20 Ministerial Meeting on Energy Transitions and Global Environment for Sustainable Growth and discuss environmental issues there. Japan would like to exchange opinions and cooperate with the member countries of the Arctic Council.

Thank you.