

Japanese Government Representative's Speech for the 34th Convention High Level Special Meeting "Forests and Energy" (Draft)

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The Japanese Government Representative
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(Opening)

My respects to the President and all participants present. It is a great honor for me to attend this 34th High Level Special Meeting "Forests and Energy" as a representative of the Japanese Government, and to be allowed to express my views regarding forests, in particular "Forests and Energy." First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to Mr/Ms.XX for having assumed the chair for this session, as well as paying my heartiest respect to the Chief Secretary Mr. Jacques Diouf and staff related to the FAO Secretariat who have worked for preparations and managements.

(The Situation Surrounding the World's Forests)

To begin with, we have just now come to acknowledge the fact that forests provide a variety of benefits such as the supply of wood, the protection of water and earth, conservation of biodiversity, the absorbability and preservation of carbon, provisions of spaces for recreation and the like.

However, as you already know, the World Forest Resources Assessment (FRA 2005) still shows critical conditions regarding the world's forests, with a decrease of 7,300,000 hectares a year ongoing, particularly in tropical areas.

Under these circumstances, there are increasing international expectations for the roles of forests, such as protecting the global environment and contributing to the alleviation of poverty, and international discussions have been active in highlighting specific themes, such as countermeasures against illegal cutting prescribed by the G8 and the preservation and utilization of the forests under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

(Japan's contributions to the promotion of sustainable forest management)

The FAO has so far developed a wide range of activities for the promotion of sustainable forest management for the world's forests, and in line with this, Japan is

On this occasion, we think it essential that the FAO engages in operations utilizing its special character and strengths in cooperation with the agricultural sector, involving itself in local community efforts for the use of community forestry and so on.

(Conclusion)

Last of all, I would like to conclude my speech by sincerely hoping that this Special Meeting will be of great significance. The President, all participants present, thank you for your attention.