

Opening Remarks

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Last year in Japan we had record breaking heavy rains and snows, which seem to be the symbol of the climate change. It has given us opportunity to think of the climate change and its impact. In such circumstances, the IPCC² Fifth Assessment Report³ was submitted after six years of work, which has actually raised interest in the ongoing and continuous increase in the greenhouse gas effect emission. Also, in order to suppress the global temperature increase within two degree Celsius, we have to work not only the reduction of the emissions due to the forest degradation and deforestation, but also work on the new afforestation as well as CO₂ underground storage measures.

In such initiatives the Fourth Assessment Report⁴ has indicated the importance of reducing emissions from forest. That has received attention globally, but at that time it was only the expectation that was discussed and there were no concrete technology or policies to support that. In such circumstances, in 2010, the REDD Research and Development Center⁵ of the FFPRI was established. We have been working very aggressively on implementing the accuracy, transparency, and have very well balanced monitoring technologies to balance the cost and also work on the analysis of the drivers as well as the safeguard measures.

Looking back, in the forest carbon monitoring, it was considered to be quite unrealistic to achieve any accuracy. It was considered not good or not right to discuss the drivers and safeguard. However, for the past five years, together with the developed countries and developing countries working together we have addressed these issues one after another. Then, two years ago at the COP⁶19 Warsaw⁷ meeting, the basic agreement on the framework of the REDD+ was reached. In response to that last year was a year where Brazil and other countries have submitted the data with a scientific ground on the reference level and the technical assessment has been carried out. This indicates that, for the past five years, the REDD+ initiative has seen substantial progress.

At the COP20⁸ held at the end of last year, based on the Warsaw framework agreement, the discussion and the exchange of opinion was held regarding the REDD+ funding and financial mechanisms. In response to that, in the open seminar this fiscal year, the REDD Research and Development Center of the FFPRI has decided to go one step beyond from what we have been doing and focus not only technology, but go beyond to discuss the financing and policies as well. This year's discussion is going to be the key in

¹ Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute: <http://www.ffpri.affrc.go.jp/en/>

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

³ <http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/>

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http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_ipcc_fourth_assessment_report_synthesis_report.htm

⁵ <http://www.ffpri.affrc.go.jp/redd-rdc/en/>

⁶ Conference of the Parties: <https://www.cbd.int/cop/>

⁷ <http://www.cop19.gov.pl/>

⁸ <http://www.cop20lima.org/>

establishing the solid ground for the REDD+ for the year 2020 and beyond.

The REDD Research and Development Center has been established for five years. We are facing a milestone. Up until now we have been focusing on the scientific aspects and served as a technical hub to connect REDD+-relevant parties in Japan. However, in the future, we will have to shift our focus more towards the actual operation and projects in the field. Last November, the REDD+ platform was established in Japan, so we have taken one big step forward in promoting REDD+ in Japan.

With this international seminar today, I hope that we will be able to enhance and deepen the understanding related to the financial mechanisms, the organizational policies, as well as further promotion of the measures for forest preservation, conservation, and the measures against climate change. For the organization of this seminar, we have received support from JICA⁹, ITTO¹⁰, CIFOR¹¹, IGES¹², and RIHN¹³. We have also received substantial support from the Forestry Agency¹⁴, MOFA¹⁵, METI¹⁶, MOE¹⁷, and the Japanese Forest Society¹⁸. Taking this opportunity I would like express our deepest gratitude to all the people involved and I appreciate your continuous support in advance.

⁹ Japan International Cooperation Agency: <http://www.jica.go.jp/english/>

¹⁰ International Tropical Timber Organization: <http://www.itto.int/>

¹¹ Center for International Forestry Research: <http://www.cifor.org/>

¹² Institute for Global Environmental Strategies: <http://www.iges.or.jp/en/>

¹³ Research Institute for Humanity and Nature: http://www.chikyu.ac.jp/rihn_e/

¹⁴ <http://www.maff.go.jp/e/>

¹⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/>

¹⁶ Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry: <http://www.meti.go.jp/english/>

¹⁷ Ministry of the Environment: <http://www.env.go.jp/en/>

¹⁸ <http://www.forestry.jp/english/>