

Japan would like to submit the written comment in response to the UNEA Presidency's letter dated 15 January 2025.

For the question (1), (2) and (3):

The triple global crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution is posing significant challenges to the humanity and hindering the achievement of the global agendas such as the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Overcoming these challenges simultaneously and effectively requires synergistic approaches, which takes advantage of the inextricably intertwined nature of these challenges and increases the overall impact of interventions.

The Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 highlights the importance of optimizing synergies among different entry points for transformation to achieve the SDGs. Subsequently, the Second Global Report on Climate and SDG Synergies “Synergy Solutions for Climate and SDG Action: Bridging the Ambition Gap for the Future We Want”, was launched jointly by UNDESA and the UNFCCC Secretariat in July 2024, as the outcome of the independent work of the Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergy. This scientific report concludes with the key message “**The period to 2030 must serve as a major launchpad for meaningful and sustained transformative actions that ensure a prosperous and healthy future for all on a net-zero, resilient, and healthy planet in 2050 and beyond. Synergistic action must be at the heart of this transformation.**”

Japan believes that the element of the importance of promoting synergies, and the above-mentioned key message should be reflected in the UNEA7 Ministerial Declaration to advance the UNEA7 theme of “Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet”.

For the question (3):

Circular economy (CE) is crucial for transitioning to sustainable production and consumption and addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.

However, it was disappointing that UNEA 6 meeting failed to adopt the proposed CE resolution (※) and that CE was not incorporated much into the Ministerial Declaration. At UNEA7, member countries should commit to accelerating the transition to CE by including it as one of the priority areas in the Ministerial Declaration.

In Japan, the Cabinet approved the Fifth Fundamental Plan for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society in August 2024, clearly positioning the transition to a circular economy as a national strategy, which is the driving force in forming a sound material-cycle society. In addition, a new ministerial council on circular economy has been established to promote the transition to a circular economy as a whole government in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and other relevant ministries and agencies.

Under the Japanese G7 Presidency in 2023, “Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency Principles,” or CEREP, was endorsed at the G7 Hiroshima Summit. The principles serve as guidance for the business sector to promote circular and resource-efficient businesses across the value chains. Japan will continue to lead international discussions related to 3R and circular economy in UNEA.

It is important to monitor progress on circularity and resource efficiency throughout the value chain through a common disclosure framework and indicators, which is also emphasized by CEREP.

We believe the Global Circularity Protocol for Business (GCP) developed by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and the One Planet Network (OPN, hosted by UNEP) serves as such a framework. Thus, Japan is also committed to the development of GCP.

※ CE resolution : Draft resolution on stepping up efforts to accelerate transitioning domestically, regionally and globally to circular economies