

Country Experiences in National Reporting to the CSD – JAPAN

a) The role of national focal point in your country;

The role is solely to coordinate the preparation of national reports. The preparation process annually conducted includes the following steps:

- i) Receiving national reports questionnaire from the CSD Secretariat through Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- ii) Proposing the process for preparation to relevant Ministries and Encouraging them to make inputs; in some cases, translating questions into local language (i.e. Japanese) to enhance the understandings of the involved officials;
- iii) Compiling draft report based on their inputs in line with the intention of the questions;
- iv) Negotiating the draft report until consensus is reached within the government; and
- v) Submitting decided report to the CSD secretariat through Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

b) Inter-ministerial coordination in preparing national reports;

Ministry of the Environment has been the coordinator for the preparation of National Reports. All Ministries has been involved in preparation process with the circulation of relevant documents and draft report and the opportunities to make inputs to the reports. If counterparts of relevant Ministry are not familiar with CSD process and national reporting, the coordinator gives the information for better involvement and further contribution. It is natural to say that degree of the involvement of Ministries differs each other, depending on the theme of questions based on the multi-year program of CSD.

c) How your country has reconciled reporting requirements from different UN system bodies including mandatory reporting for conventions;

Responsible divisions within each Ministries get involved in preparing required reports other than CSD national report. The consistency of the answers in those reports including that of CSD national reports has been assured by giving relevant divisions opportunities to check the answers and by circulating draft reports within and among Ministries. The redundancy in questions in CSD national reports and other reporting requirement is sometimes apparent and we feel the need to coordination within UN systems. However, the government has not seen such reconciliation problem a big issue in the operation of requirements so far.

d) What capacity and resource issued do you have in preparing your national report;

Officials in designated divisions of each Ministry has been responsible for coordinating within the Ministry and make their inputs to national report. These officials hold an inter-Ministry

meeting once or twice a year to confirm the process and discuss possible strategies for the CSD process.

e) Other issues including difficulties/obstacles encountered in national reporting;

We would like to touch upon the experiences and challenges regarding the stakeholders' involvement in national reporting preparation process since the beginning.

The history of the stakeholder involvement for national reporting can be divided into three stages.

First: for a few years after Rio Summit, government of Japan had conducted a consultation meeting with interested NGOs during the preparation of national reports. While this was considered useful in terms of internalization of point of stakeholders' view, this process had not lasted more than that.

Second, after the first stage, national reports have been coordinated entirely within governments until CSD8 national report.

Third, during the preparation for CSD9 national report, the government holds a consultation meeting with the participation of the members of JCSD (Japan Council for Sustainable Development, an NCSD), consisting of government, business, local authorities and NGO sectors. While sufficient input was not made from these stakeholders, it was contributed to the enhancement of the dialog between stakeholders and government.

Seeking for better stakeholder involvement is a learning process. In order to increase substantial input from major groups to national report, it requires patience, generosity and creativity of relevant stakeholders and government staffs for a long time with continuous efforts.