

Statement by Mr. Jechul YOO

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Oceans and seas, forests, biodiversity

[Check against delivery]

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair.

First, I would like to thank the Technical Support Teams and the Panelists for their valuable input.

[Framing the issues – Biodiversity, Oceans and Seas, and Forests]

Biodiversity has generally been considered as environmental issue, but it is critical part of social and economic pillars of sustainable development as well.

Loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services undermines global development and potentially harms the most vulnerable communities and economies around the world, considering its impact on food security, health, land, water, and our resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

Consideration of biodiversity and natural resources goes beyond terrestrial ecosystem, and we need to recognize the role of oceans and marine biodiversity in sustainable development as well.

Health of marine ecosystems and resources is directly linked to food security, livelihoods, and sustainable economic growth, and holds a key to survival of humanity.

Sustainable forest management is also vital for enabling sustainable development, and concerted actions in this area can improve access to multiple values and benefits of forests, which are interlinked with other sectors such as land, water, and biodiversity.

In order to fully recognize social and economic value of natural resources and ecosystem services provided by biodiversity, oceans and seas, and forests, we need to change conventional approach taken towards these issues.

Building on what we discussed at Rio+20, we need to advance our efforts on developing broader indicators of economic progress and bring out new thinking on socioeconomic value of natural capital.

We also need to improve science and data which can help us better inform relevant policy decisions. We recognize the role of Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in this regard, and welcome the recent adoption of its initial work programme.

[Natural resources and ecosystem services in SDG framework]

Mr. Co-chair,

This Open Working Group has historic responsibility to design a pathway to achieve truly sustainable development which is meaningful for everyone.

Learning from the experience of MDG, our global conversation on SDG needs to better recognize the

importance and value of natural resources and ecosystem services across the three dimensions of sustainable development.

This process is a unique opportunity for global community to mainstream the consideration of natural environment in the context of economic and social development, and inspire true innovation breaking the silos.

We've had interesting discussion on "integrated approach" yesterday, and we support a dedicated overarching goal on natural resources and ecosystem services including biodiversity, oceans and seas, and forests.

The possible goal could include sector-specific targets, and environmental, social and economic indicators could be identified to measure the progress and encourage actions across the three pillars of sustainable development.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Targets could provide a basis in developing a relevant goal in SDG framework.

Ongoing discussions and processes on Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (MAR) system for sustainable forest management could also help the discussion on relevant targets and indicators.

We are deeply aware that we have a long list of wide-ranging issues, while we envisage a simple and concise set of SDGs.

This is why we suggest considering these relevant issues as a cluster of natural resources and ecosystem services, taking into account the inter-linkages and potential synergy.

In this regard, we support the suggestions made by the Technical Support Team on biodiversity, especially on its recommendation to build coherence among relevant proposals on SDGs and include goals relating to the protection of ecosystems and their natural resources as central component of SDGs.

In a report published in October last year, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network also took a similar approach, and identified a relevant topic as one of the ten priorities – which is “securing ecosystem services and biodiversity, and ensuring good management of water and other natural resources”.

[Conclusion]

Mr. Co-chair,

The Republic of Korea believes the discussions on SDGs should fully take into account the value of natural resources and ecosystem services.

As you are aware, the Twelfth Conference of Parties of CBD will be held this year in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea with the theme of “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development.”

As the host country of CBD COP12, the Republic of Korea is, and will be, making continued efforts to support global discussions on biodiversity and related issues in the SDG and Post-2015 development agenda.

We also look forward to making constructive contributions in the next phase of developing SDG with your leadership and guidance.

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair.