Prime Minister Kan, Minister Matsumoto, Executive Secretary Djoghlaf, ladies and gentlemen,

I would first like the people of Nagoya and Japan for being such gracious hosts. I am delighted that the government of Japan invited us to a city known for being a major center of global manufacturing that has strived to respect and protect its rich biodiversity.

I would like to share four thoughts with you today.

**Why focus on Biodiversity?**

First, you probably know of the World Bank Group as a development institution. So, you might wonder, why is the World Bank attending a conference on biodiversity?

Our answer is clear: successful conservation of our natural resources, our ecosystems, and our biodiversity is central to addressing all development challenges and to improving the lives of the poor.

Biological resources provide livelihoods, sustenance, medicines, trade, tourism, industry, and more. Forests, grasslands, lakes, oceans, deserts, and other natural ecosystems provide a range of natural services that people have often taken for granted, even though they are vital to human welfare.

I would add one more consideration: each of us – all of us – are stewards of other life on this planet. We should respect those lives.

As a practical matter, we need to demonstrate the connections among overcoming poverty, sustainable economic growth, and the preservation of the planet’s rich natural heritage.

There can be no effective preservation of that heritage unless it is done with and for the poor, who rely directly on natural resources for their livelihoods.

The countries of the world adopted The Convention on Biological Diversity in Rio 18 years ago. Since then, we have made progress by:

- establishing new protected areas;
- regulating trade in wildlife;
- respecting the rights of indigenous communities;
- empowering communities and civil society organizations to conserve critical ecosystems; and
- improving our understanding of the earth’s environment through research such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

Investments in conservation have been substantial.

**World Bank Group Investment in Biodiversity**
Over the last 20 years, the Bank Group, working with developing countries, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), environmental organizations, foundations, and many donor countries has supported over $6 billion in biodiversity conservation in more than 120 countries.

This is an impressive figure. But it is not enough.

Productivity of the land and seas is diminishing, and with them the ecosystem services that are crucial for people to get out of poverty. The buffering capacity of our environment is dwindling as climate change accelerates.

Endangered species are fading away forever before our very eyes. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature warns us that one in four mammals, one in eight birds, and one in every three amphibians and corals face extinction.

**Who should be focusing on biodiversity?**

Second, to arrest the downward spiral in biodiversity, we need to draw in a broader group of stakeholders.

We must reach out to and rely on key stakeholders who may not yet feel responsible or empowered to take actions to protect the environment. I’ve seen in my own experience that some of the most effective eco-system champions come from outside environment or forestry ministries.

My former boss, at the U.S. Treasury Department, Secretary James Baker, led the way on debt-for-nature swaps, elephant ivory, and polar bears. More recently, former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Hank Paulson hatched an idea with me that became the Climate Investment Funds, which can have biodiversity benefits. When I was the U.S. Trade Representative, we used Free Trade Agreements to build cooperation with local and international groups on CITES, migration routes, and local biodiversity projects.

We need to engage more Finance, Economic, and Commerce Ministers.

The potential allies reach far beyond governments. Many businesses want to assist.

We need to connect the cause of biodiversity with all-comers, but especially those engaged with economic growth, infrastructure development, and overcoming poverty.

We must strengthen and scale-up the actions that are proving effective -- at every level.

Last year, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, I was struck by the immense biodiversity present in Virunga National Park, the oldest and most biologically diverse nature reserve in Africa.

Courageous rangers were facing down poachers, charcoal traffickers, and warring militias.

Against all these odds, they had managed to increase the population of the park’s rare mountain gorillas during years of conflict.

These rangers deserve our thanks -- but also our help. The custodians of Virunga only needed a few million dollars to back a project to substitute locally made briquettes from grass and agricultural waste for charcoal, to save the forest. Other rangers just need basic supplies, training support, and an opportunity to learn from their colleagues around the world.

That’s one reason why I am meeting with a group of rangers here in Nagoya – to learn what they need.

Similarly, we must all learn from and continue working with indigenous communities. Under difficult conditions, they serve as stewards for biodiversity-rich ecosystems.
How Can We Value the wealth of biodiversity?

Third, we must provide the missing information to guide leaders as they make decisions about biodiversity. Tomorrow we will launch a new partnership: the *Global Partnership for Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services Valuation and Wealth Accounting*.

This new initiative will enable us to work with partners to strengthen capacity, particularly in finance and planning ministries, and integrate the true value of biodiversity and ecosystem services into a country’s development planning and its accounting systems.

Let me explain why natural wealth accounting is important.

Economic ministries make decisions based on calculations of growth, employment, prices, asset values, and returns on investments by private and public actors.

As one COO told me: “In business, you are what you measure”.

So we need to assist the economic agencies to measure “natural wealth”. The value of services we derive from ecosystems shouldn’t be assumed to be zero.

The world is slowly starting to recognize these values, for example, through payments to avoid deforestation. But we need to help advance natural wealth accounting.

For example, the calculation on destroying wetlands for housing would no longer be simply the cost of the construction and the sale of the houses producing a return on investment.

Instead it would deduct from the profit the subsidies from mortgage interest relief as well as the costs from destroying wetland livelihoods and the costs that could incur from losing a barrier to cyclones.

I want the World Bank Group to show what can be done. We will increase financing of ecosystem and biodiversity services through our projects in a wide range of sectors -- including infrastructure, agriculture, climate change, and policy lending operations.

To help countries use this new work, we will also need to help them build capacity. So I’m pleased to see that the *Revised Strategic Plan for the Convention* increases support to mainstream biodiversity into sustainable development and poverty reduction.

The Bank Group will also seek to reach out to other stakeholders, from rangers to businessmen, and on to investors in Green Funds.

The *Critical Ecosystems Partnerships Fund*, launched ten years ago will help mobilize nongovernmental and private sector partners in conserving the Earth’s most biologically rich and threatened areas. Our new *Save Our Species* program will build support with business leaders.

Fourth, the Global Tiger Initiative (GTI) is both a commitment to save an iconic species and an innovation in conservation.

Since its launch in 2008, the GTI has been pioneering a new conservation model: The GTI encourages the Tiger Range countries to “own” the process. As we learned in other fields of development, outsiders, however well intentioned, will not be successful without local ownership.

The 13 tiger range countries have now developed their own Global Tiger Recovery Program, connecting to local communities that are stewards of these landscapes, international research institutions such as the Smithsonian, national and international law enforcement groups, local and international conservation groups, celebrities and public information campaigns, and many others.
We plan to go further. Tomorrow, we will be announcing that we are developing the *Wildlife Premium Market Initiative*, as a complement to REDD. REDD, as you know, addresses forests, climate and carbon. The idea behind the *Wildlife Premium Market Initiative* is to pay money to the rural poor for protecting high biodiversity wild life in forests, as part of a REDD++ system.

Government leaders from all 13 tiger range countries will meet next month in St. Petersburg, hosted by Prime Minister Putin, to commit to saving tigers and all of the biodiversity that lives under the tiger’s umbrella.

We are making progress, but we are racing against the clock. Only some 3,200 tigers remain in the wild. This incredible animal could be extinct in our lifetime.

So in St Petersburg, bringing the heads of government together for the first time on this issue, we will seek to reverse the decline in wild tiger populations.

**Conclusion**

Mr Chairman, biodiversity is not an add-on. Preserving ecosystems and saving species are not luxuries for the rich. Conservation and development can go hand in hand. Our habitat and our planet deserve nothing less.