

Opening Remarks

By Mr. KIYA Masahiko, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN,
at the ASEAN Blue Carbon and Finance Profiling Project Launch Event
Jakarta, 21 May 2025

- H.E. Satvinder Singh, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Economic Community,
- YBhg. Dato' Ts. V. Valluvan Veloo, Chair, ASEAN Coordinating Task Force on Blue Economy,
- Mr. Norimasa Shimomura, Resident Representative, UNDP Indonesia,
- Excellencies, Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

(1. Introduction)

It is my great honor to have the opportunity to attend this launch event for the ASEAN Blue Carbon and Finance Profiling Project and to deliver my remarks.

I would like to extend my gratitude to each one of you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to join us today.

Your presence here underscores our shared commitment to tackling one of the most pressing challenges of our time: climate change.

(2. Why We Work Together for Blue Carbon and Blue Finance)

Addressing climate change requires urgent and collaborative action. Our initiative today, focusing on Blue Carbon and Blue Finance, is a crucial step toward sustainable environmental and economic practices. Japan is honored to support this important initiative.

Blue Carbon ecosystems, such as mangroves, seagrasses, and salt marshes, play a vital role as carbon sinks, helping mitigate climate impacts. Their preservation is key to maintaining ecological balance and biodiversity.

Blue Finance offers innovative financial solutions to support these ecosystems and promote sustainable economic growth. The ASEAN region, with its rich marine resources and vibrant coastal communities, is well-positioned to lead in this area.

This project reflects our deep commitment to climate resilience, ecosystem protection, and regional collaboration. Through this project, we aim to share Japan's experiences in integrating Blue Carbon into national climate policy. This will enable Southeast Asian countries to access practical tools and innovative financing models for implementation.

Together, through strategic collaboration and partnerships, we can establish a regional platform to measure Blue Carbon and to provide Blue Finance for climate action and sustainable growth.

(3. Achievements of the Blue Economy Project)

Last year, Japan, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the ASEAN Secretariat collaborated on the ASEAN Blue Economy Innovation Project, highlighting 60 innovative startups and organizations across ASEAN and Timor-Leste.

These groups excel in promoting sustainable fisheries, expanding blue tourism, combating plastic pollution, and addressing climate change.

These innovators will join a network of stakeholders from the new project and showcase their successful community-led and institutional projects at high-profile platforms such as the Expo 2025, Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

(4. Introducing ERIA's Asia Zero Emission Center)

Japan is deeply committed to fostering collaboration in these areas. The establishment of the Asia Zero Emission Center in the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) exemplifies our dedication to simultaneously achieving energy transitions, economic growth, and energy security. This initiative aligns with our shared goal of achieving decarbonization while promoting economic growth, demonstrating the potential for synergy between environmental initiatives and economic development.

(5. Recent Diplomatic Efforts)

Recently, from May 3rd to 7th, Mr. Kishida Fumio, former Prime Minister of Japan, visited Indonesia and Malaysia as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister and Supreme Advisor to the Parliamentary Association of AZEC.

He met with H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN, where they exchanged views on advancing decarbonization efforts across the ASEAN region, underscoring the importance of collaboration.

In Indonesia, Mr. Kishida also had an opportunity to meet with President Prabowo Subianto to discuss further cooperation through the Parliamentary Association of AZEC. President Prabowo welcomed the initiative, emphasizing the importance of decarbonization and energy transition.

In Malaysia, Mr. Kishida engaged in discussion with Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who affirmed Malaysia's commitment to AZEC and cooperation as ASEAN Chair.

(6. Introducing Ministry of Environment of Japan)

I am pleased to announce that Mr. Ito Fumio, Director of the Decarbonized Society Promotion Office, Ministry of the Environment of Japan, has joined us for this important event.

As a panelist, Mr. Ito will share valuable insights from Japan's experience, focusing on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and global warming countermeasures. We look forward to his contributions, which will undoubtedly enrich our discussions and provide us with a deeper understanding of effective climate strategies.

(7. Conclusion)

ASEAN-Japan cooperation has just embarked on a new journey toward the next 50 years. Japan is determined to continue encouraging ASEAN's success in this new frontier of Blue Carbon and Blue Finance.

I look forward to working with all of you to make this project impactful to the people in the entire region. I am hopeful that this project will serve as a catalyst for further cooperation and investment in this field.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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