

Nature Positive Declaration by **the Tokyo Metropolitan Public University Corporation**

Our central stance is that the global ecosystem, which is currently in a state of crisis, constitutes an international public asset vital to the establishment of sustainable societies. Reaffirming this position, the Tokyo Metropolitan Public University Corporation hereby presents this Nature Positive Declaration, alongside a declaration of its commitment to conservation, research, and educational activities on behalf of the global ecosystem.

We will further:

1. Promote academic research and management that contributes to nature positive, carbon neutral, and other goals and initiatives.
2. Establish an environment for students and the public that will encourage independent learning about nature positive, carbon neutral, and other environmental issues.

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YAMAMOTO Ryoichi,
Chairperson, Tokyo Metropolitan Public University Corporation

OHASHI Takaya,
President, Tokyo Metropolitan University

HASHIMOTO Hiroshi,
President, Advanced Institute of Industrial Technology

YOSHIZAWA Masasumi,
President, Tokyo Metropolitan College of Industrial Technology

The Significance of Issuing the Nature Positive Declaration by the Tokyo Metropolitan Public University Corporation

(Background)

Humans consume up to 300 million tons of natural resources per day and release enormous volumes of waste into the environment. One form of such waste, carbon dioxide originating from fossil fuels, is released into the atmosphere at a daily rate of up to 100 million tons. These emissions represent a key driver of global warming in recent years. The average global temperature in 2023 was 14.98 °C, or 1.45 °C above that prior to the Industrial Revolution. This warming trend threatens humanity's chances to meet even the 1.5 °C target adopted under the Paris Agreement. Oceans, likewise, are rapidly warming. In 2023, marine heatwaves in which seawater temperatures rise rapidly for a period of several days to several years occurred in 90 % of the world's oceans.

Extreme weather events, which are amplified by climate change, alongside expansion of human activity such as land- and sea-use change, overexploitation, infiltration of invasive species, and chemical pollution, are all causing loss of biodiversity and exacting a serious toll on the ecosystems that serve as the foundations for all living things and human survival.

(Global and domestic trends)

Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which convened in 1992, climate change countermeasures and initiatives focusing on biodiversity have been discussed in an integrated manner. The 2022 Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan decided on at the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, or COP27, contains statements on the key roles of protecting, preserving, and regenerating ecosystems as measures to mitigate and respond to climate change.

Assemblies like the Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, or COP15, in December 2022, have highlighted the nature positiveⁱ approach. In Japan, the goal of achieving nature positive by the year 2030 is espoused in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) of Japan 2023-2030, formulated by the Cabinet in March 2023. Recommendations have been made for the issuance and registration of nature positive declarations. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government has also asserted the need to achieve nature positive objectives as a 2030 target as part of the Tokyo Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 that it revised in April 2023. Various associated initiatives are currently being promoted within the city.

(Significance of issuing a declaration as a university corporation)

As a public university corporation established by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, our corporation is obligated to promote research that contributes to the resolution of major urban challenges and other research activities only metropolitan institutions of higher education are positioned to pursue. Simultaneously, we are obligated to return the positive outcomes of such activities to Tokyo residents and to the community; to seek to promulgate them worldwide; and to do its part to help establish a sustainable society. From this standpoint, research and education pertaining to the nature positive movement constitute a key mission for us.

For research pertaining to biodiversity, research on plant diversity is being undertaken utilizing a vast plant specimen collection gathered by Dr. Tomitaro Makino, including extinct plants, held at the Makino Herbarium at Tokyo Metropolitan University. Additionally, as the sole domestic university with a research facility in the Ogasawara islands since 1968 (when they were returned to Japan), Tokyo Metropolitan University has pursued surveys and research on ecosystems and other aspects of these islands. The results of this research also greatly contributed to the Ogasawara islands achieving world natural heritage status in 2011. Tokyo Metropolitan University is also pursuing research on the use of biodiversity data and on the diverse relationships between humans and nature.

We previously issued a Climate Emergency Declaration in July 2021 and have promoted various initiatives based on our Carbon Neutrality Promotion Plan. Moving forward, we will promote various other initiatives, including those aimed at returning the outcomes of research to benefit society and to address the commitments set forth in our Nature Positive Declaration.

ⁱ "Nature positive" refers to halting and reversing biodiversity loss as to help restore nature to a path toward recovery. Realizing nature positive objectives will help achieve Sustainable Development Goals 14 (Life below water) and 15 (Life on land), among other goals.