

**Good Growth Conference
Lima, Peru**

**Remarks by Naoko Ishii
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Opening Session, MAY 13, 2019

Check Against Delivery

Your Excellency, President Vizcarra,

Ministers, Colleagues and friends, good morning!

This meeting is taking place at a critical moment.

Last week, the global assessment by the UN Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, or IPBES, revealed the scale of the nature crisis before us. The report paints an alarming picture of species extinctions, wildlife population declines, habitat loss and depletion of ecosystem services.

This comes after the Global Environment Outlook 6, published at the UN Environment Assembly in March 2019, told a similar story, *“a major species extinction event, compromising planetary integrity and Earth’s capacity to meet human needs, is unfolding.”*

Those reports pointed to the same drivers of global natural degradation including food system and land use, overexploitation, pollution, and climate change.

While, last year, the IPCC 1.5 degree report said we need an urgent and unprecedented transformation in all aspects of our economies between now and 2030.

Message from science is crystal clear. We humans have become dominant forces of degrading natural environment and have pushed the carrying capacity of earth to its limits.

It has become also evidently clear that we need to transform our economic systems if we are to continue to prosper within safe planetary boundaries. The food system and land use is on the top of the list.

Good news is that we come to recognize that we are in deep trouble, but that we know why and what is more importantly that we start fighting back.

Mr. President, Ministers, Colleagues

How have we been fighting and how goes the battle?

It has been 5 years since the New York Declaration on Forests was endorsed and 8 years since the Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 was founded.

The headline number does not look too good. As we have already seen scientists have alerted us to the unprecedented loss of biodiversity. And, Global Forest Watch informed us that the tropics lost 12 million hectares of tree cover in 2018, the fourth-highest annual loss since record-keeping began in 2001.

While this is a massive challenge, we have witnessed some wins in heroic battles.

Take the Brazilian Amazon soy moratorium – it has reduced deforestation in this critical global biome.

Indonesia has also seen a drop in its forest loss for two consecutive years thanks to the moratorium.

The **Good Growth Partnership**, which brought us together today, joined those efforts two years ago. Our conviction is that only through bringing everyone together along the commodity supply chains, can we shift the commodity supply chains toward deforestation-free and sustainable.

For the past two years, working with you, we have started to see very good results in some places.

- In Indonesia and Liberia, we are working with the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and local governments to step up sustainability standards.

- We are also helping to train and share knowledge with smallholders so that they can shift their practices.
- In Paraguay, IFC is providing ESG risk management training to a private sector partner.
- Also, the program is supporting the development of the TRASE tool which helps raise awareness in markets. This helps improve Brazil soy data.

However, as we have seen we have a long way to go before we can win the battle.

Over the next three days we will learn more from each other which is very valuable. But, I want to set a challenge to us to identify concrete ways to make progress. There are three questions that I have in mind.

1. How do we do a better job supporting the government and private sector to align their interests so that we can build momentum to go over the tipping points?
2. We all know that finance, which is often neglected in these discussions, can play a critical role in taking care of nature. How do we bring financial regulation and practice into the discussion in a more meaningful way?

3. How do we turn communities and small-holders from problems that need to be dealt with into agents for change?

On my side, we at the GEF are just in the first year of the four-year investment cycle, GEF-7. The flagship program is “Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration”. The program will cover globally important geographies for both the commercial agricultural commodities causing deforestation (e.g., soybeans, coffee, cocoa, palm oil and livestock) and food staples whose production causes natural landscape degradation, GHG emissions, water depletion, and chemical pollution (e.g., rice, wheat and maize). The design of this program is very much built on the experiences of the Good Growth Partnership Platform. Our continued learning from the GGP will be critical to its evolution.

Personally, I have been very busy rolling out this program for the past few months, visiting many countries and talking to the governments. I realized one of the challenges is how to break out of sector silos and integrating between and among actors.

One of my destinations was Peru. When I visited here in January, I was so impressed that the government had recognized this need for integration and collaboration across ministries and the private sector and had taken it wholeheartedly onboard. Fabiola Muñoz, who was then the Minister of Environment, organized a meeting for me with

Agriculture, Energy, Fisheries, and Foreign Affairs. I want to congratulate President Vizcarra for his vision and leadership.

I am particularly pleased to see that, Fabiola is now the Minister of Agriculture. This is clear recognition of the interconnectedness between agriculture and the environment and I think the more we see this type of cross-ministerial posting within governments around the world the better off the environment will be.

Let me close by expressing my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of Peru for hosting this year's conference.

I look forward to even greater collaboration with all of you.

Only by working together can we win the battle.

Thank you.