Committee: THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

Agenda Item: PLASTIC POLLUTION IN THE OCEANS AND GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

Japan, as an island country located in the Asian continent, is directly connected to the oceans, and therefore the protection of marine ecosystems is of vital importance to the country. Japan is one of the most populous and developed countries in the world, with a population of approximately 126 million. The high population density necessitates the efficient use of natural resources and the implementation of sustainable environmental policies. The country focuses on developing solutions to environmental problems with a developed education system, high-tech infrastructure and strong health services. Japan is one of the world leaders in terms of recycling rates and its people are very sensitive about environmental awareness. However, since plastic pollution in the oceans is a global problem, Japan argues that effective solutions should be produced not only within its own borders but also worldwide. Japan continues to cooperate with the entire world on ocean pollution and is determined to be a part of global solution proposals.

**Plastic pollution in the oceans has become an increasingly important environmental crisis in the last few decades. Since the 1970s, marine pollution has attracted more attention as environmental awareness has increased worldwide. However, the mixing of plastic waste into the oceans has become a serious problem, especially since the early 2000s. A study conducted in 2015 revealed that approximately 8 million tons of plastic waste are mixed into the oceans every year, and this has begun to threaten ocean ecosystems and marine life. Many countries have enacted laws to limit plastic use and invested in recycling projects. The leading countries are Japan, the USA, China, India and Indonesia. In 2017, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched the Clean Seas initiative and launched a global campaign to reduce plastic pollution. In this context, Japan supported a UNEP project in South East Asia and India in 2019, aiming to reduce plastic litter in the sea by 1.1 million US dollars. Japan is at the forefront of such global efforts, developing innovative technologies and strengthening recycling infrastructures to prevent plastic pollution in the oceans.**

**Japan could help spread bioplastics on the global market by developing the necessary infrastructure and technology for the production and use of bioplastics. It could launch a global “plastic carbon credit” system. In this system, countries or companies that collect and recycle plastic waste could earn carbon credits and receive financial incentives. It could launch a global competition called “Plastic Hunt.” This competition could be a platform where governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector around the world would collaborate to clean up ocean plastic pollution. Participating countries could win prizes by using ocean cleaning technologies or collecting plastic waste. Japan could develop autonomous robots that can collect plastic waste in the sea. These robots would detect and collect plastics on the sea surface and underwater and direct them to recycling facilities. Japan could perform the cleaning process without harming the ocean ecosystem by making these robots compatible with marine biology. Japan emphasizes that global cooperation is needed to reduce ocean plastic pollution. Japan is determined to take the lead in this area and is ready to work with all countries to ensure environmental sustainability.**

REFERENCES: <https://www.plasticfreejuly.org/>, <https://www.unep.org/>