The statement by Forestry Agency of Japan

at the 1st meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad-Hoc Expert Group

(25th April 2016)

It is a great honor for me to have an opportunity to share with all the participants here the major outcomes of an informal Expert Panel meeting held in Tokyo, Japan last month, from March 7th to 11th at the very beginning of our substantive work on the IAF Strategic Plan as well as the quadrennial programme of work.

The Expert Panel meeting was organized by the Forestry Agency of Japan in cooperation with UNFF Secretariat for the purpose of providing an avenue for discussion on the possible contents and elements of the Strategic Plan.

The meeting was attended by 35 experts from member states of different regions, member organizations of CPF, major groups and other stakeholders. I am sure most of them are also present here at this AHEG meeting today.

All the participants attended the panel in their personal capacity, given the nature of the meeting, which is to promote free exchange of views on the strategic plan, however, the meeting was very productive, constructive and fruitful.

Following the presentation on the background paper by the two consultants, Ms. Stephanie Caswell and Mr. Ivan Tomaselli, as they have just explained their findings to us all

contributing to the broader context of sustainable development. In particular, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change were named as the most important global frameworks which IAF should leverage.

Secondly, the strategic plan should provide guidance to all IAF components, meaning not only UNFF and its member states but also the CPF, the G3FNet and the UNFF trust fund, to promote and facilitate the implementation of SFM at the global, regional, subregional and national levels. It was also emphasized, however, that introducing new obligations or proposals for action for countries, like the ones we saw in the IPF/IFF process, sometimes dubbed as a shopping list, should not be an option.

Thirdly, the strategic plan should identify priority areas and actions with possible time-bound targets linking actions to quantitative targets, as well as resources as its main component to achieve the IAF objectives, taking into account the goals and

substitute of fossil fuel should be fully realized.

- 4) Forest certification could be a very useful tool to achieve SFM on the ground, however, certification in tropical forests entails enormous challenges especially in terms of financing. A time-bound, step-wise approach should be considered.
- 5) Mechanism of monitoring, assessment and reporting of UNFF should be better utilized.

Also, from Japan's point of view, the involvement of JICA, Japan's bilateral technical