

COND Statement on the oil spill off the coast of Mauritius

2020.08.21(Fri)

Change Our Next Decade

We, Change Our Next Decade(COND) a member organization of GYBN-Japan, is deeply shocked and saddened by the environmental pollution and the devastating impact on the lives of the local people caused by the Japanese cargo ship WAKASHIO spill off the coast of Mauritius on July 25, 2020 (local time).

The Mauritian coast, where the accident occurred, was registered as a Ramsar wetland in 2008. It is rich in biodiversity and is home to 1,700 species of life, including 800 species of fish, 17 species of marine mammals and two species of turtles. As a result of the accident, the Mauritian government declared an unusual "environmental emergency" on August 7. With the death of coral reefs and other marine life and the prospect of environmental recovery taking decades, COND is deeply concerned by this shocking state of emergency and urges the international community to work together to ensure that future generations of the world can once again enjoy the bounty of biodiversity in Mauritius.

This heavy oil spill accident not only pollutes the environment but also has a major influence on the lives of local people. Mauritius relies on tourism-related 19% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment, and one of its tourism resources, coral reefs, is polluted by the accident. The accident could have a tremendous impact on the Mauritius economy. In addition, heavy oil recovery work that takes place every day places a heavy burden on local people. Furthermore, the health hazards of local people such as air pollution caused by heavy oil are a concern.

COND, as a member of future generations and the international community, cannot afford to ignore this case. With this statement, we express our support for the restoration of the polluted ecosystems, the Mauritians who are working hard to recover the spilled heavy oil, and the local population to return to their traditional lives.

Marine pollution has the potential to gradually expand in scope and have a significant impact on the territory of neighboring countries and other countries. We call for international efforts to prevent a recurrence, such as mandatory training for

seafarers on environmental protection and the establishment of agreements that prohibit navigation near marine protected areas. We are also concerned about the fact that no language relating to the ecosystem was included in the compensation paid by the owner, Nagashiki Kisen, for the oil spill damage. Although monitoring of the impact on the ecosystem is essential, it is unclear who will bear the cost of the investigation. We therefore urge the Japanese government to provide support for long-term coastal research projects and researchers.

COND is also concerned that there has been insufficient media coverage of the case. We need to know about the accident correctly, raise awareness, and take act. We believe that the current situation can be changed little by little by just posting this matter of SNS and talking to people around us.

Finally, COND expresses its respect, gratitude and solidarity with the local people of Mauritius who are responding to this case despite the harsh conditions they are currently subjected to, as well as with the people who are engaged in the hard work of international assistance.

Reference(only Japanese) :

●最新記事コラム一覧ニュース速報ランキング Newsweek『モーリシャスが環境緊急事態宣言 日本船の燃料流出で生態系に懸念』2020/08/10 11:00

<https://www.newsweekjapan.jp/stories/world/2020/08/post-94134.php>

●BBC NEWS JAPAN『モーリシャス沖の貨物船の重油流出、なぜ深刻なのか』2020/08/14

<https://www.bbc.com/japanese/features-and-analysis-53774997>

●NHK NEWS WEB『モーリシャス沖の重油流出 現地で環境被害への懸念広がる』

2020/08/13

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/html/20200813/k10012565651000.html?utm_int=detail_contents_news-related_002

●日経新聞電子版『油流出、環境回復に数十年も モーリシャス』2020/08/14 21:00

(2020/08/15 4:59 更新)

<https://r.nikkei.com/article/DGXMZO62650430U0A810C2EA2000?s=4>

●JAPAN P&I CLUB 日本船主責任相互保険組合『保険契約規程』

<https://www.piclub.or.jp/service/information#ocean>

ABOUT US : Change Our Next Decade(COND)

Founded in 2019. Also, we are a member organization of GYBN-Japan which is Japanese chapter of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN).

Youth (high school students to young professionals) who "want to take action" and are interested in biodiversity and environmental conservation belong to the organization. The total number of members of the organization is about 50 (as of August 21, 2020).

Each team, led by about 30 youth biodiversity ambassadors, carries out activities in Hokkaido, Kanto, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku, and Kyushu, making use of the characteristics of their own region. In addition, in order to strengthen the ability of youth to express their opinions and disseminate information on biodiversity and the conservation of the natural environment, we are also focusing on policy advocacy for the Convention on Biological Diversity and the next National Biodiversity Strategy, as well as effective communication for the purpose of education and dissemination of information on the natural environment, which will make this year's achievement of the SDGs a reality. The foundation for action towards 2030 is being laid.

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