

■ Endorsements of Sekisui House's initiatives and publication of its nature-positive methodology

- Mr. Makoto Haraguchi, Fellow, MS & AD InterRisk Research Institute and Sustainability Section SVP for TNFD, MS & AD Insurance Group Holdings

Mr. Makoto Haraguchi, a member of the MS&AD Group engaged in research and consulting on corporate greening as an interface between business and biodiversity, and a leader in global biodiversity conservation as the only Japanese member of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), has provided the following endorsement.

"I welcome the publication of the primary data of the 20-year *Gohon no ki* Project in this way as a tool for evaluating and predicting the benefits of greening for biodiversity. We are at a major turning point in our attempt to create a nature-positive world leading up to 2050. The planning and management of densely populated cities will continue to be key to the success of this transition. This cannot be done, however, just through government provisioning of parks and such like. Most land in cities is privately owned, which means that private sector measures are also indispensable. Residential sector initiatives in particular need to be strategically implemented because of their importance in cultivating a nature-positive mindset and getting people at all levels of society involved. Requiring house owners to comply with housing energy conservation standards and encouraging them to consciously change their consumption habits and lifestyles would go a long way to making Japanese cities more resilient and sustainable. Sekisui House's nature-positive methodology also promises to be a useful tool to the urban development and construction sectors that are obliged to disclose information to ESG investors."

- Mr. Teppei Dohke, Executive Secretary General of the Japan Committee for the International Union for Conservation of Nature

Mr. Teppei Dohke has long been involved in promoting biodiversity conservation in Japan by attending international IUCN and Convention on Biological Diversity conferences, working with overseas NGOs, and gathering and analyzing international data. In this capacity and also as someone with specialist knowledge in OECMs, he has provided the following endorsement.

"The 196 countries that are signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity are currently negotiating ambitious biodiversity goals and indicators for what could be called a Paris Agreement for biodiversity with the aim of having it ready for adoption in May next year.

"The topics being discussed include securing urban green spaces designed for biodiversity, expanding protected areas and other areas for promoting coexistence with nature (OECM), and investing corporate management with a core biodiversity perspective, and Sekisui House's tool and this verification of the feasibility of quantitatively evaluating biodiversity could well provide a major boost to the reaching of international agreement on ambitious numerical targets. The *Gohon no ki* approach is also noteworthy for the way it provides a means for ordinary people to choose to support biodiversity at the private housing level of urban development."

- Ms. Mariko Kawaguchi, Specially Appointed Professor, Rikkyo University / Executive Advisor to CEO, Fuji Oil Holdings Inc.

Ms. Mariko Kawaguchi, a leading sustainability management expert active in advising stakeholders (companies, financial service providers, consumers) on SDG issues, has provided the following endorsement.

“The COP26 UN Climate Change Conference has ended. Although the world has made little progress toward achieving the goal of limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C, moves are afoot to leverage the financial system to tackle climate change. Like climate change, declining biodiversity also poses a threat to humanity’s sustainability, but initiatives to reverse this decline have been very slow to get off the ground owing to the difficulty of understanding the issues involved, quantifying biodiversity, and formulating appropriate actions.

“The quantification of biodiversity is key to motivating society to conserve biodiversity. This evaluation of the effectiveness of the *Gohon no ki* Project is a landmark initiative that has achieved the long-awaited goal of quantifying biodiversity by surveying garden tree planting at the individual level to quantitatively evaluate biodiversity at the national level.

It is also an excellent example of successful partnership between science, industry, and private individuals that will likely serve as a model for future sustainability initiatives. Another noteworthy aspect is the way this initiative can open the eyes of city-dwellers, who tend to think of networks of diverse ecosystems as being about distant countryside and oceans, to the fact that biodiversity is actually very much part of their world, and something that they themselves can nurture in their own gardens.

“Measures that make use of natural capital are needed today also to tackle climate change, and this *Gohon no ki* Project will hopefully serve as a model for initiatives that leverage partnership between science, business, and the general public to promote the conservation and restoration of biodiversity throughout the world.”

- Mr. Yasuhiro Kubota, Professor, Faculty of Science, University of the Ryukyus / Representative Director, Think Nature Inc.

Professor Yasuhiro Kubota conducts macroecological research internationally to scientifically shape appropriate conservation and utilization of biodiversity. He is currently pursuing the implementation of conservation science in society through incorporating his research team as a company specializing in big data biodiversity projects. As Sekisui House’s partner in quantitatively evaluating the effectiveness of the *Gohon no ki* Project, Professor Kubota has provided the following endorsement.

“The Anthropocene epoch in which we now live may well become the era of the 6th mass extinction in the history of the Earth, and we are beginning to witness the turmoil in society caused by a serious decline in biodiversity. Biodiversity is the natural capital that underpins the sustainability of human society. Time is running out fast, and the business sector too needs to take effective actions to build a nature-positive world.

“Global enterprises can turn this crisis around through their businesses by making a commitment to projects for conserving and restoring biodiversity as an international business growth strategy. As researchers, we can provide realistic and effective science-based solutions. Macroecological analysis driven by big data and machine learning (AI etc.) enables the conversion of enterprise performance in this area into KPIs and comparison of the effectiveness of various actions. Biodiversity big data, which encompasses the distribution, genomes, functions, and food chains of flora and fauna, can furnish scientific proof of the direct contribution of business activities to the conservation and restoration of natural capital, as in the case of Sekisui House.

“Though profit-generating business activities appear to conflict with activities to conserve and restore biodiversity, they can be reconciled scientifically to drive social change and create a nature-positive world through business.”