

**Official Comment of the Japanese Government
on the report of the monitoring mission to
Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Site**

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the mission team for having visited Shiretoko during the coldest season in February. We are glad that many experts and local stakeholders were able to receive precious advice on various issues during direct dialogue with the mission team. We are confident that all of the parties concerned have renewed their determination to continue protecting Shiretoko.

We are most grateful for the high appraisal by the mission team of our bottom-up management approach—an approach that is only possible through the involvement of local communities and stakeholders, together with the scientific knowledge applied through the overall scientific Committee and specific Working Groups. We also thoroughly appreciate the many specific and constructive recommendations contributing toward the appropriate conservation management of Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Site.

We shall continue and accelerate the measures in the framework of management that were recognized by the mission team, and promote further efforts towards the conservation of Shiretoko on the basis of the recommendations of the mission team as well as the ones at the time of inscription.

To contribute to the conservation of biodiversity in the world, we will put forth our very best and hope that Shiretoko would be a model for the management of Natural World Heritage Sites not only in Japan, but in other countries and regions as well.