News Release

June 27, 2024
SynecO, Inc.
Development Bank of Japan Inc.

Development Bank of Japan Investment in SynecO, Inc.

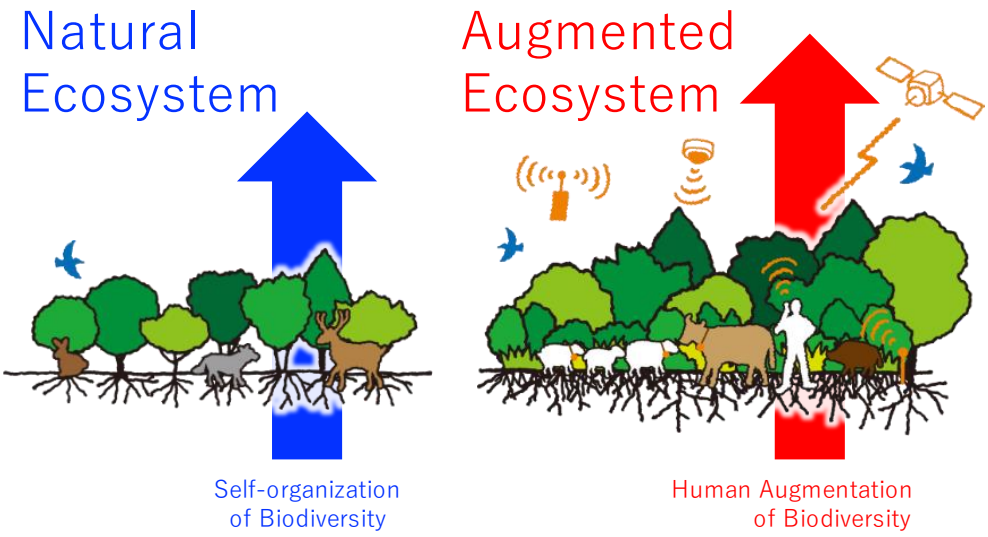
~ Aiming for sustainability of civilization through augmented ecosystems ~

Development Bank of Japan Inc. ("DBJ") has invested in SynecO, Inc. ("SynecO"; head office, Minato-ku, Tokyo; President and Representative Director Masatoshi Funabashi). Sony Group Corporation has also invested in SynecO on the same occasion. Established in April 2021, SynecO is the inaugural project of Sony Innovation Fund: Environment, a Sony Group Corporation venture capital fund.

As global environmental problems such as climate change and biodiversity loss have become more serious due to human socioeconomic activities, efforts toward a sustainable society, including the restoration of natural capital and biodiversity, have accelerated—in addition to efforts addressing climate change toward carbon neutrality. In this context, there is growing interest in the use of technologies and services from related startups.

SynecO is a startup that aims to build a new relationship between essential human activities and the natural environment by providing solutions using "augmented ecosystem" (Note 1) such as Synecoculture™ (Note 2) and technologies that support the evaluation and construction of ecosystems. In augmented ecosystem, human intervention is essential to optimize the overall ecosystem and promote biodiversity beyond the natural state.

Augmented Ecosystem



Source: Sony Computer Science Laboratories

Synecoculture introduced in a cacao field and harvested vegetables

(Immediately after the introduction of Synecoculture)

(Seven months after the introduction of Synecoculture)

(Harvested vegetables (cacao not included))

Through this cooperation with SynecO, DBJ believes that it will be promoting business construction in a wide range of social areas and solving issues related to natural capital and biodiversity, thus contributing to the sustainable development of Japan. DBJ made use of the DBJ Startups and Innovation Fund (Note 3), which is part of DBJ's Special Investment Operations (Note 4), to execute the investment.

In the future, DBJ and SynecO will work closely with each stakeholder to further develop SynecO's business and improve its corporate value, overcoming the trade-off between traditional human activities and biodiversity to create synergies for multi-faceted ecosystem services and foster the creation of the natural-social common capital

foundation.

DBJ published "Biodiversity-Related Startup Initiatives: Creating New Trends Using Nature Tech" in the March 2024 issue of DBJ Monthly Overview.

(Note 1) The augmented ecosystem is a state of ecosystem with enhanced biodiversy beyond the natural state through active human interventions, realising diverse ecosystem functions and ecosystem services**.**

(Note 2) Synecoculture is a new cultivation method which applies augmented ecosystem to food production. It was formulated and proposed scientifically by Masatoshi Funabashi, a researcher at Sony Computer Science Laboratories. Synecoculture is a trademark of Sony Group Corporation.

(Note 3) The DBJ Startups and Innovation Fund was established to promote initiatives to create and nurture startups and build an innovation ecosystem.

(Note 4) Special Investment Operations is an intensive but temporary scheme to supply growth capital to promote the competitiveness of Japanese enterprises along with regional revitalization, drawing only a portion of the investment (industrial investment) from the Japanese government—enough to encourage the private sector to supply growth capital.

◆About Augmented Ecosystem/Synecoculture

Augmented ecosystem is a condition of ecosystem with enhanced ecosystem functions by enriching biodiversity more than the natural conditions, through the positive influence of human activities. Synecoculture is a new cultivation method which applies augmented ecosystem to food production. It is practiced by densely mixing and growing a wide variety of useful plants without ploughing, fertilization, and pesticides. By enriching biodiversity beyond the state of nature, Synecoculture achieves augmented ecosystem with multifaceted ecosystem functions. In addition to food production, Synecoculture could also be implemented for urban green space design as well as for environmental education at schools and communities.

[Inquiries regarding this press release]

SynecO Public Relations Office

syneco-comm@sony.com

Innovation Promotion Office, Business Planning Department, Development Bank of Japan Inc.

Telephone: 03-6311-5048