

## **O29.1**

### **Review of Japan's activities in pursuit of balancing water quality management and bio-productivity in the Seto Inland Sea**

Mimi Ishida-Nameki

Ministry of the Environment, Japan

#### **Abstract**

The Seto Inland Sea is the largest enclosed coastal sea in Japan and the people have coexisted with the nature of the Sea, being historically benefitted from the Sea. With concentration of both population and industries and the reclamation programs, however, we lost much area of seagrass beds and tidal flats while the water quality deteriorated notably in the high economic growth in 1960s. We have therefore conducted environmental water quality management activities based upon the Water Pollution Control Law and the Law concerning Special Measures for Conservation of the Environment of the Seto Inland Sea through controlling COD, N and P to prevent eutrophication.

Our activities have improved the water quality, seeing less incidents of red tides. We however continue to observe red tides and water areas where no to little oxygen is present in some areas in the Sea. We also recognize new issues around bio-diversity and bio-productivity. Conservation and restoration of habitats are still behind where we should be. Another possibility suggested is that excessively reduced level of nutrients can negatively affect bio-productivity.

We need to address such complicated issues as caused by increased nutrients as well as caused by decreased nutrients in some areas. In order to grapple with such issues, not only local governments but also various stakeholders need to actively participate in drawing the ideal state of the Sea in the respective area perspective. For this initiative, we submitted to the Diet the bill of amendment of the Law concerning Special Measures for Conservation of the Environment of the Seto Inland Sea in 2021 to facilitate the introduction of the new system for nutrients control.

#### **Keywords**

inland sea, policy making, water quality management, tidal flats