

A proposal for the creation of a better environment in the Seto Inland Sea

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At Kansai Electric Power, we view as extremely important the goals of preserving the rich natural environments in the Seto Inland Sea and achieving the sustainable economic growth needed for residents in coastal areas to live rewarding lifestyles. We feel that aggressive efforts are needed to achieve these goals.

To achieve these goals, the national government, local public organizations, companies (companies, fishermen and farmers) local residents and other entities must correctly assess the situation and then divide up the responsibilities and make an active effort to implement them. In order to form a consensus on the role of each participant, including the share of costs, it will be necessary to study concrete policies and schedules and the like, based on the current state of the economy.

No concrete vision has been identified for the establishment of the target objectives. In promoting efforts, a common vision and unified awareness on the part of all participants will be needed. For this reason, studies must be pursued in a scientific manner, step by step, starting with an assessment of the current situation and continuing with study of the orientation of the efforts, setting of objectives, determination of the practical content of efforts, study of measures for promotion, preparation of plans, implementation, follow-up to determine the status of implementation, review of plans and feedback. It will be particularly important for the national government and local public organizations to play a strong central role in the promotion of these efforts.

To achieve both environmental preservation and rewarding lifestyles, it will be crucial to create an overall vision for the entire Seto Inland Sea region and then use this vision to assess needs at the regional, municipal and small group level, in order to create a consensus that will be used as the key to building in schemes for who does what to what region with what kind of concept, and by what time. In this process, care must be taken so the measures are not forced on the residents in that area. For this reason as well, cooperation among industry, government, academia and private citizens is needed, with each entity having a thorough recognition of its role, and that incentives be provided, in order to build a framework that will enable active efforts to be made.

In addition, we feel that these efforts must be coordinated with efforts aimed at the creation of a sustainable society. There have been calls to limit the amount of reclamation done; for this reason as well, the promotion of the "3 Rs" (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) will be indispensable. Last year relevant laws were subjected to major revision. Adopting this main

goal and promoting "eco" projects should be actively pursued as the role of industry; however, more aggressive efforts on the part of all entities are needed. In actual implementation, relevant laws are intertwined with and constrict one another and in many cases they are one of the reasons that the promotion of reuse has not made much progress. Review and upgrading of laws toward the promotion of the "3 Rs" will also be needed.

Restrictions aimed at preventing water pollution in the Seto Inland Sea have been implemented on numerous occasions. In response, the industrial world has done its utmost to take measures to prevent such pollution. As can be seen from the reduction of COD loads, the reduction targets for the load from the industrial world have been met. But despite this fact, the water quality of the Seto Inland Sea has remained constant. In response to this situation, we have stated our view that the evaluations conducted each time on the measures up to now and their effect should be made public, and the mechanism of eutrofication should be identified and truly effective measures implemented. However, these evaluations have still not been made public. In the fifth series of restrictions, restrictions on total nitrogen and phosphorous loads will be introduced in addition to COD. However, further work toward a scientific elucidation of the mechanism by which eutrofication occurs should be promoted, and effective options based on the scientific knowledge regarding each of the causes should be submitted, together with a cost-benefit analysis for each option. In addition, reduction plans should be reviewed in the future as needed.