

Sustainable Development in the Seto Inland Sea

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In the International Conference on the Environmental Management of Enclosed Coastal Seas '90 held in Kobe in 1990, Mr. Tadayuki Nishimura, representing the People's Alliance to Protect the Environment of the Seto Inland Sea, spoke on the subject of "Sustainable Development and the Management of the Japanese Inland Sea".

In his speech, he pointed out some problems we should solve so as to carry out sustainable development in enclosed coastal seas of Japan. The summary was as follows: (i)An environmental management plan for the entire Inland Sea area, in which execution of strict assessment, development and conservation are integrated, with priority being placed on conservation of the ecosystem. (ii)Concrete methods for citizen's participation; the introduction of a voting system for local residents in order to ensure their needs are addressed, the development of production and technical systems aimed at coexistence. (iii)Control of population concentration in the cities, easing of overcrowding and depopulation, correction of financial discrepancies, and promotion of locally-generated development. (iv)Enacting a basic law on the principles of sustainable development, and integration of individual laws and administration, etc.

The Basic Environment Law was made in 1993, and some improvements have been introduced, such as Measures to Promote Voluntary Activities by Private Organizations, and provision of information. However, the problems indicated by Mr. Nishimura's ten years ago remain unsolved today. Sustainable development has gained acceptance throughout the world as a basic idea in the whole environmental issues. It has been and will certainly be an important concept for the preservation of environment in the Seto Inland Sea.