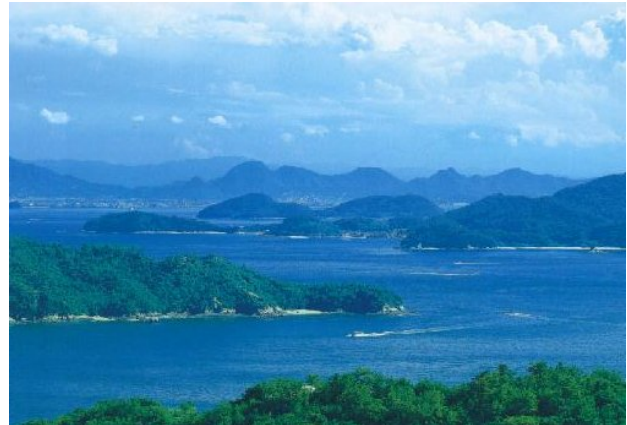


Seto Inland sea Declaration

Meeting in Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture, on the eastern coast of the Seto Inland Sea, we, the participants of the International Conference on the Environmental management of Enclosed Coastal Seas '90(EMECS '90), discussed the urgent need for the environmental protection and appropriate use of enclosed coastal seas the world over.



Enclosed coastal seas, which are largely surrounded by land and endowed with a natural environment, have long been used for fishery and other human activities as well as for waterborne traffic and for recreation, thereby supporting the flourishing life of people living along their coast and, at the same time, fostering a wide variety of cultures.

However, when people become overconfident with the blessings of such seas in pursuing their activities, detrimental changes to the environment of enclosed coastal seas may eventually deprive people of the benefits they now enjoy.

Recognizing that the environmental protection and the appropriate use of enclosed coastal seas are matters of urgent global concern, and given that the rich environment of enclosed coastal seas is in serious jeopardy in many parts of the world, we wish to emphasize the importance of the following points:

1. The rich environment and great benefits of enclosed coastal seas must be passed on to future generations.

To this end, all those concerned should seek to advance the use of such seas in a sustainable manner, while conserving their environment.

International and regional co-operation in coastal zones, including technology transfer and information exchange, should be further enhanced.

As these seas have long been closely related to human life, and in order to carry out appropriate environmental conservation and protection, the active participation of the public should be strongly encouraged through the extensive development of environmental education and the further enhancement of public awareness.

2. Due to the poor exchange of water, tremendous efforts are required to restore the environmental quality of enclosed coastal seas once they become polluted. Furthermore, algal blooms and anoxia have had adverse effects on fishery and recreation in many enclosed coastal seas.

In order to effectively prevent the pollution of both the water and the sea bed of these seas, research, monitoring and exchange of information should be further promoted on the properties of the environment of enclosed coastal seas, the effects of contamination on ecosystems, the mechanisms of the outbreaks of algal blooms and the causes of anoxia as well as methods and techniques for their prevention.

Further studies should be conducted on the protection of marine resources and habitats as well as the potential effect of changes in the global climate;

3. Land and sea resources and the environment are closely interrelated and land use, industrial activity, coastal reclamation and other activities affect the quality and availability of coastal land, coastal waters, their ecosystems, the natural landscape and the marine environment. Thus a comprehensive, integrated approach to coastal zone management is needed to ensure economic development as well as environmental protection of these areas. This can be achieved only through close co-operation between national, regional and local levels of the governments concerned. Such co-operation requires strong political commitment and consensus at all levels.

A comprehensive approach would involve planning at regional and local levels, preventive policies and appropriate control of the inflow of heavy metals, hazardous chemicals, organic and other pollutants from the catchment basin and other areas. In addition, conservation and preservation measures are needed to maintain the natural character of coastal areas.

In implementing policies effectively, appropriate combinations of regulatory measures and economic instruments would be needed. The implementation and performance of relevant policies should be constantly reviewed.

4. As can be seen from the above, a comprehensive contribution from all fields of research, including the ecological, social, economic and cultural sciences are needed, in order to advance the use of enclosed coastal seas in a sustainable manner, while conserving their environments.

Accordingly, we eagerly hope for continued opportunities to promote comprehensive interdisciplinary research and the international exchange of opinions and information.

We note with satisfaction that a body of researchers on the Seto Inland Sea is being organized for the furtherance of studies on its environmental conservation and appropriate use.

5. The utilization of enclosed coastal seas in a sustainable manner in industrialized and developing countries is a particularly important task for the entire world. To avoid the recurrence of the environmental pollution and deterioration experienced by industrialized countries, the transfer of appropriate knowledge and experience from developed countries to developing countries should be further promoted.

We welcome the initiative of the Japanese government in implementing a training program, beginning in 1990, to transfer technology for the environmental management of enclosed coastal seas to developing countries.

We highly appreciate the fact that those experts from a variety of nations and regions concerned with the problems of enclosed coastal seas, have met together at EMECS '90. Through the exchange of information and experience on their respective seas, we have explored ways and means of using these seas in a sustainable manner, while conserving their environment, based on the recognition that the sea, which links all nations, is the origin of life.

In full confidence that EMECS '90 has greatly contributed to the solution of problems concerning enclosed coastal seas, matters which are of global concern, we earnestly hope that in light of the extent and importance of such problems, another such gathering will take place in the near future.

Kobe, August 6, 1990
International Conference on the Environmental
Management of the Enclosed Coastal Seas '90