

Speech by Governor Kaihara of Hyogo Prefecture.

Governor Schaefer, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is a great privilege for me to be able to be here with you to attend EMECS '93.



First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to Governor Schaefer of Maryland, the Maryland State Government and the University of Maryland for their tremendous efforts that have made EMECS '93 a reality.

Japan is a nation that is made up of four main islands and numerous smaller ones. Three of these four main islands Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu serve as the boundaries for an inland sea called the Seto Inland Sea. This inland sea covers nearly three times the area of Chesapeake Bay. It is dotted with countless islands and has a scenic beauty that rivals that of the Aegean Sea.

As Japan's industrial areas bordering this inland sea expanded, environmental pollution likewise increased, to the point that in the 1970's there was a real danger of the Inland Sea becoming a "dead sea." To cope with the crisis, local governments in the coastal regions established the Governors' and Mayors' Conference on the Environmental Protection of the Seto Inland Sea (Note 1). Since that time, this organization has worked with the Environment Agency of Japan to establish regulations for landfills and factory waste water and to facilitate the disposal of household effluent. These efforts have enabled the crisis to be averted and halted the decline in water quality.

However, the coastal area bordering the Seto Inland Sea is home to 34 million people. In order to both preserve the environment and still ensure an affluent lifestyle for these people, many problems must still be overcome in many different areas, including government, economics, science and technology and education.

Faced with these problems, in 1987 Professor Ian Morris and other people from the University of Maryland visited me for an exchange of views. It was at this time that I became aware of how important it was for different regions facing the same problems of preserving and utilizing the environment of enclosed coastal seas to share effective

knowledge, technologies and information and pool their efforts to find solutions to these problems. Subsequently, I recommended that an international conference be held for this purpose.

Fortunately, this proposal was endorsed by many people, and EMECS '90 was held in 1990 in the city of Kobe in Hyogo Prefecture, the Prefecture of which I am Governor. 1,238 delegates came from 42 countries to attend the conference. Among the many significant achievements of this conference was a consensus that strong political commitment and an approach to coastal management that involves all concerned parties will be needed in future efforts to preserve enclosed coastal seas, as expressed in the Seto Inland Sea Declaration adopted at the conference.

Subsequently, in order to best utilize the achievements of EMECS '90, we moved ahead with plans to create an international network. This was intended to both support the Research Institute for the Seto Inland Sea (Note 2) made up mainly of people involved in related research and also facilitate the exchange of information between researchers studying enclosed coastal seas.

Since 1990, we have also welcomed relevant government officials from developing countries for research aimed at the transfer of technologies for the environmental management of enclosed coastal seas. These international activities on the part of Hyogo Prefecture have attracted a great deal of interest from researchers and organizations in nations facing enclosed coastal seas around the world, and the fruits of the network have been growing steadily.

The Agenda 21 adopted at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil last year is still fresh in my memory. It calls for "g...new approaches to marine and coastal area management and development, at the national, subregional, regional and global levels, approaches that are integrated in content and are precautionary and anticipatory in ambit...." It also gave several examples of programme areas for these efforts.

Therefore, I think it is very significant that following the success of EMECS '90 researchers, government officials and citizens groups working to preserve the environment of enclosed coastal seas around the world have come together at EMECS '93 to deepen ties and find ways to deal with the many problems relating to the preservation of the environment and the appropriate use of enclosed coastal seas, in order to pass on the bounties of our enclosed coastal seas to the next generation.

It is my hope that the EMECS conferences, first held in 1990 and now in 1993, will continue to be held on a regular basis, and that they will continue to contribute to the environmental management of enclosed coastal seas.

For this purpose, I feel that it would be helpful to set up an organization of international character and demension to serve as the wellspring for promoting future EMECS conferences and encouraging international efforts at the environmental management of enclosed coastal seas. Moreover, it seems to me that the incentive to do so has become stronger in recent years.

Therefore, speaking on behalf of Hyogo Prefecture, I would like to express our intention to establish with the cooperation of all the participants gathered here today and other relevant individuals and organizations what I am tentatively calling the International EMECS Center in the city of Kobe in Hyogo Prefecture, Japan.

The International EMECS Center would, in theory, further expand on the activities that Hyogo Prefecture has taken a leading role in promoting since EMECS '90. It is my hope that during the term of EMECS '93 we will be able to obtain an understanding and recognition of the benefits of establishing such an organization on the part of the scholars, government officials, citizens groups and international organizations participating in this conference, and to achieve worldwide support to serve as a base for this endeavor.

In closing, I would like to again thank Governor Schaefer, the State of Maryland and the University of Maryland for all that they have done to ensure the success of EMECS '93. Thank you for your attention.

Note 1: The Governors' and Mayors' Conference on the Environmental Protection of the Seto Inland Sea consists of 13 prefectures and five designated cities that work together to protect the environment of the Seto Inland Sea.

Note 2: The Research Institute for the Seto Inland Sea is an academic research organization made up mainly of people involved in research related to the Seto Inland Sea.