

# Japan Environment Quarterly

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Environment Agency

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## Statement by Prime Minister of Japan Ryutaro Hashimoto at UNGASS\*

\* *Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly for the Overall Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of Agenda 21*

23 June 1997, United Nations, New York

At the Earth Summit five years ago, the international community initiated a grand effort to protect our beautiful planet Earth and permanently ensure prosperous and peaceful lives for all humankind. Regrettably, however, despite the enormous efforts of the international community since then, the global environment remains gripped by many problems. If the situation remains as it is, it may be difficult to pass on this irreplaceable Earth to the twenty-first century. Now, let us renew our determination and seriously consider concrete measures to promote sustainable development, a goal upon which we agreed at Rio de Janeiro.

Immediately before coming here, I renewed my determination, together with the other leaders at the Summit of the Eight held in Denver, to preserve the global environment. I would like to stress two points: our responsibility to future generations, and global human security. Bearing these points in mind, it is necessary that each of us develop a strong consciousness and shoulder our responsibilities. We must change our lifestyles. Moreover, it is necessary to develop innovative environmental technologies and to promote their transfer to developing countries in order to foster sustainable development. In light of the need today for a global effort to tackle environmental issues, the United Nations is assuming ever greater importance. Let us renew our pledge to cooperate with the United Nations.

Among our many environmental problems, global climate change stands out as a serious issue that directly affects not only the lives of people today but also the future existence of the human race. The Third Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will be convened in our ancient capital of Kyoto in December. We must spare no effort to ensure a successful conclusion of the Conference. At the Denver Summit, the eight countries agreed that they intend to

*(cont'd pg. 7, Statement)*

## Seventh Asia Pacific Seminar on Climate Change

The Seventh Asia Pacific Seminar on Climate Change was held 7 to 10 July 1997 in Fujiyoshida, Yamanashi Prefecture. It was organized by the Environment Agency of Japan, Fujiyoshida City, Yamanashi Prefecture, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and attended by experts from 18 countries, including China, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tuvalu, the United States of America, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

The seminar's objectives were to facilitate the preparation of national communications for the United Nations Framework Convention

*(cont'd pg. 2, Climate)*

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on Climate Change by exchange of experiences; to exchange information on other topics of concern, such as progress on activities implemented jointly (AIJ) to deal with climate change; and to discuss a possible regional mechanism to facilitate exchange of information and views on the implementation of the UNFCCC in the region, including a regional

network to facilitate access to the latest scientific, technological, research-related, and institutional information.

The Environment Agency and United Nations University offered to prepare a directory of past or planned activities in the Asia-Pacific region related to climate change, in order to deal with gaps and duplications.

This series of seminars started in 1991. Participants agreed that in the future this seminar could be reinforced, with broader participation involving more stakeholders, including business, environmental NGOs, local governments, and other forums. Thailand offered to host the next Seminar in late 1998. 🌐

## Enactment of the Environmental Impact Assessment Law

On June 9, after several years of effort, Japan enacted the national Environmental Impact Assessment Law. The objective of the law is to ensure that adequate consideration of environmental preservation is made in the implementation of projects. Before engaging in a large-scale development project, businesses are required to assess the impact of the project on the environment, listen to the opinions of regional public corporations and citizens, and based on the results, obtain a permit for the project. Types of projects covered by the law include roads, dams, railways, airports, power plants, etc., which are large in size and which may have a noticeable impact on the environment, which the national government is implementing, or for which the government is responsible to issue permits.

The law adopts a listing method by scale to identify projects for which an environmental impact statement (EIS) is required. The proponent of a projected exceeding a certain scale designated by an ordinance under the law (Class 1 projects) shall be required to prepare an EIS without any screening process. A project with a scale smaller than the threshold for Class 1 projects but larger than a certain scale also designated by the ordinance (Class 2 projects) will be

presented to a screening process where the competent authorities determine the necessity of EIS for such a project.

The law also introduces a scoping process with public involvement. A proponent shall be required to prepare a document describing how the proponent will conduct surveys, predictions or evaluation of the environmental impacts of the project, and make it public to seek opinions from local governments or people interested in environmental conservation. After preparing a draft EIS, the proponent shall make it public again. The local governments concerned and anyone who is

interested in environmental conservation can express their opinions. A final EIS shall be transmitted to the competent authorities for consideration for a licencing process. The Environment Agency can express its opinions on the final EIS to the competent authorities. The competent authorities can require the proponent to revise the final EIS, if necessary.

The law will enter into force in June 1999, while the scoping process will start in June 1998. Ordinances on project categories and Basic Technical Guidelines will be issued in December 1997. 🌐



U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan discusses the 'Rio Plus 10' proposal for a U.N. meeting in 2002, with Environment Minister Michiko Ishii in May in Tokyo

# Quality of the Environment in Japan 1997

The *Quality of the Environment in Japan 1997*, the white paper of the Environment Agency, was approved by the cabinet on 3 June. The report notes that 1997 is an important year for the environment, 5 years since UNCED (the Earth Summit) in

Brazil, with the June United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Environment and Development, and with the December COP3 Kyoto Conference of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The first chapter takes as the main theme 'New Responses and Responsibilities to Combat Global Warming' and covers global warming as one of the most pressing environmental problems of today. This chapter starts by describing global warming mechanisms and impacts, shows the status of emissions of greenhouse gases from the world and Japan, covers the direction

of appropriate responses and considers emission reduction strategies by sector. It concludes with consideration of necessary regulatory and economic measures, ways to promote voluntary citizen initiatives, and how to use other policies such as international cooperation.

Chapter 2 covers the problems of pollution arising from our increasing use of materials, the need to reduce waste generation, make concrete steps to re-use/recycle, and the need to take measures to reduce toxic chemicals. Chapter 3 discusses the contribution of science, technology, education, and socio-economic activity for environmental problems. Chapter 4 reports on every aspect of the state of the environment in Japan.

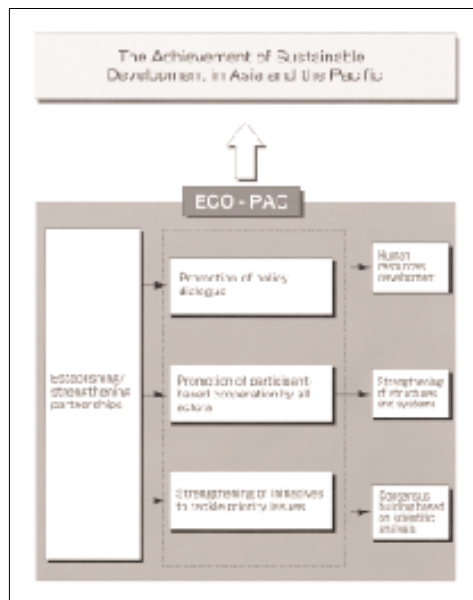
The English version of the *Quality of the Environment in Japan 1997* is not yet available. 🌐



*The cover illustration by famous illustrator KUNTA appeals for the protection of the global environment, showing penguins troubled by melting Antarctic ice and other animals troubled by global warming.*

## Environmental Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific – ECO-PAC

The Environment Agency released a report recently entitled “Environmental Cooperation Program in Asia and the Pacific toward Sustainable Development” (ECO-PAC). The conceptual paper “brings together a blueprint for future environmental cooperation aiming for the realization of sustainable development in the region in the 21st century,” building on Japan’s Basic Environment Plan. Key fields of work include promotion of (1) environmental policy dialogue in the Asia and Pacific region through forums, cooperation with international organizations and bilateral environmental



cooperation; (2) cross-sectoral initiatives with local governments,

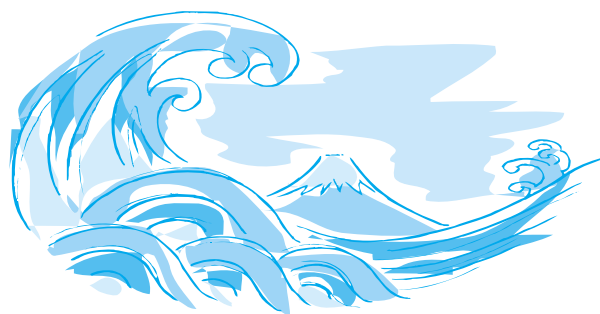
the private sector, NGOs, etc.; and (3) sector-specific initiatives such as preparing manuals and organizing workshops on pollution prevention, nature conservation, global environmental protection, and environmental education. Starting with the fundamental goal of establishing and strengthening partnerships, the ECO-PAC program aims to provide support to developing countries to strengthen human resources to deal with environmental issues; institutional arrangements; and consensus building based on scientific analysis. (See figure.) 🌐

# NOWPAP First Forum Meeting on Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response

The NOWPAP First Forum Meeting on Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response was hosted by the Japanese Transport Ministry and Toyama Prefecture in Toyama City from 23 to 25 July with participants from China, Japan, Korea, Russia, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and International Maritime Organization (IMO). The meeting included national reports on organizational, legal, and oil spill prevention structures, discussion of a possible international legally-binding treaty or non-legally-binding Memorandum of Understanding for NOWPAP, creation of an oil pollution reporting system (POLREP) in the region, and scientific and technical cooperation such as development of

environmental sensitivity (ESI) maps, etc. The Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region (NOWPAP) involves China, Japan, Korea, and Russia in the goal of protecting the marine environment in the seas surrounded by these countries. The First NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting, held in Seoul, Korea in

September 1994, adopted the Action Plan and set priorities for work. The Second Intergovernmental Meeting, in Tokyo in November 1996 approved a detailed programme document. Member states agreed to host Forum meetings at least twice a year on a rotational basis, as well as table-top and field exercises. The Second Forum Meeting will be held in Korea in April 1998. 🌐



## Pollutant Release & Transfer Registers (PRTR) in Japan

The production and use of chemicals, and generation of hazardous wastes in industrialized and industrializing countries has led to increased emissions of chemicals, and presents risks on human health and the environment. In many countries, governments, communities and workers are not adequately aware of these emissions and the associated risks. In the years since the 1992 Earth Summit and the adoption of Agenda 21 the international community and national governments have been taking steps towards establishment of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) as a means of improving environmental

management at the national level. Support has come from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). A PRTR Workshop for the Countries of the America held in Mexico at the end of July gave opportunities to share information and experiences.

### PRTR PILOT PROJECT IN JAPAN

Japan is also making steps forward, starting with the establishment of a PRTR Technical Advisory Group in October 1996,

headed by Dr. Jiro Kondo, formerly President of the Science Council of Japan. The Group's discussions have culminated in plans for a PRTR Pilot Project which started this summer. The Pilot Project involves 1,700 businesses in Kanagawa and Aichi Prefectures, targeting 178 chemicals that have been identified as having carcinogenicity, chronic toxicity, reproductive toxicity, or ecological toxicity, etc. Businesses will be required to report to the Government annual volumes of the listed chemicals released to the environment via air, water, or soil (including leakage) and transferred as waste from their facilities. In addition, the government will estimate volumes of the listed


# Environmental Summit of Local Governments Around the Sea of Japan

The Environmental Summit of Local Governments Around the Sea of Japan was held in Toyama City from 21 to 23 July. The meeting was sponsored by Toyama Prefecture with cooperation from the Environment Agency and the Transport Ministry, and attended by about 130 persons including representatives from a total of 28 local governments (16 from Japan, 2 from China, 6 from Korea, and 4 from Russia). Starting with the understanding that environmental conservation in the Northwest Pacific (Sea of Japan and Yellow Sea) region is an urgent and important issue for local governments in the region, participants discussed exchanges of environmental information and know-how, collaborative activities at the local government level, and

responses to oil pollution incidents.

The "Toyama Appeal" resulting from the summit lists actions which the local governments should take, including urging their national governments to implement quickly the action plan project of NOWPAP; to build capacity of personnel and develop technology for conservation and restoration of the marine environment; to actively contribute to initiatives for marine environment protection; and to create initiatives for watercourse management, considering the impact of land-based activities on marine environment.

Referring to the oil tanker disasters that occurred in January off the shore of Shimane Prefecture, Japan, and in April

near Kuzei, South Korea, the Appeal also gave special attention to dealing with oil spills and their prevention, urging local governments to request their national governments that have not yet done so to sign the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-Operation (OPRC Convention, which entered into force in May 1995), to improve the system of compensation for oil pollution damage; to strengthen monitoring of marine ecosystems and rescue capability for sea birds; to improve the inspection and monitoring of ships; and to create a cooperative response system for the use and movement of large-size oil-recovery ships during disasters, etc. 


chemicals released from non-point sources. The Government will compile reports and provide information based on the Pilot Project. It is hoped that this initiative will be a comprehensive test of the PRTR process, help to form a common understanding of parties involved, and allow Japan to make steps to introduce a PRTR system in Japan.

The Environment Agency will be organizing an International PRTR Conference in Tokyo in September 1998.

## WHAT IS A PRTR?

A Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) is a catalogue or database of releases and transfers of potentially harmful chemicals

including information on the nature and quantity of such releases and transfers. The data for PRTRs can be collected from point sources of pollution, such as factories, as well from diffuse sources, such as agricultural operations or transportation activities. A PRTR usually covers releases to air, water and land as well as wastes transported to treatment and disposal sites. A key feature of a PRTR is that it includes information about specific chemical species such as benzene or mercury rather than broad categories of pollution such as volatile organic compounds, greenhouse gases, or heavy metals. An integral part of a PRTR scheme is that the collected information is

made available to all interested parties. (Excerpt from a UNITAR manual) 

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# Final Report of Research Panel focuses on Eco-Tax Options relating to Global Warming


The Research Panel on Economic Instruments such as Taxation and Charges in Environmental Policies released its final report in July, dealing with options for environmental taxes to deal with global warming.

The Research Panel, chaired by Professor Hiromitsu Ishi of Hitotsubashi University, has met 23 times since August 1994 to research and discuss the economic instruments which the government

was mandated to research by the Basic Environment Law and Basic Environment Plan of Japan.

The 50-page Final Report introduces the latest status of eco-taxes overseas (Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden) aimed at global warming, describes the need for such taxes in Japan, considers design and effects of introducing carbon taxes or carbon/energy taxes, and

presents 4 options for introduction in Japan. The four main options are outlined in the table below.

The work of this Research Panel is seen as important input to develop consensus in Japan to introduce economic instruments to combat global warming. The Environment Agency will use this paper to further dialogue with industry and other sectors of society. 

## 4 Eco-Tax Options to deal with Global Warming


Option / Target	Objective	Tax Level	Use of Tax Revenue	Adjustments	Amount of Tax Revenue & Economic Impact	Merits/Demerits
#1 carbon	achieve CO2 reduction targets by both incentive effects and subsidies	3,000 yen/t C (about 2 yen per litre of gasoline)	subsidies for global warming countermeasures	for (1) items which are difficult to apply charges (fuel for international airlines, international marine transport, distant fishing operations), (2) non-fuel uses of oil (e.g. when used as raw material). Note: (1) and (2) apply to all 4 Options	Tax revenue: about 1 trillion yen Impact: 0.6% decrease of GDP per year	(+) since the tax rate is low and tax revenue is used for subsidies, the economic impact is low (-) in order to obtain the desired results, consideration of a proper system to distribute subsidies is needed
#2 carbon	achieve CO2 reduction targets by incentive effects only	30,000 yen/t C (about 20 yen per litre of gasoline)	general revenue	(1) special measures for high energy-consuming industries (steel, chemicals, glass, cement, etc.), or (2) exemptions for companies which have made agreements with gov't regarding CO2 reduction, or (3) do not tax any industrial sectors, but do tax households and transportation sectors.	(If adjustments considered) Tax revenue: about 10 trillion yen  Impact: 0.5 — 1.36% decrease of GDP (in 2010)	if adjustments are introduced, (+) can suppress the predicted increase in CO2 emissions from the household and transportation sectors (+) impact on industrial sector is relatively small (-) since this option gives no incentive to industrial sector, other measures are needed (-) the tax rate is high, and burden great on those who pay
#3 carbon + energy	achieve CO2 reduction targets by both incentive effects and subsidies, and reduce other environmental burdens	tax carbon and energy equally: 1,500 yen/t C for Carbon; for the rest, tax energy	subsidies (generated from carbon taxes) for global warming countermeasures; subsidies (from energy taxes) for photovoltaic energy technology development, etc.)	tax exemptions for fuel for co-generation, etc.	Tax revenue: about 1 trillion yen  Impact: About the same as in option 1	(+) can expect greater promotion of new energy development than in Option 1 (-) as in Option 1, consideration of a proper system to distribute subsidies is needed
#4 carbon + energy	achieve CO2 reduction targets by incentive effects alone, and reduce other environmental burdens	tax carbon and energy equally: 1,500 yen/t C for Carbon the first year, and 15,000 yen/t C in 10 years; for the rest tax energy	(1) general revenue, (2) subsidies to developing countries for CO2 reduction measures	(1) conduct border tax adjustments, (2) tax exemptions for small-scale consumption	(If adjustments considered) Tax revenue: 1st year about 1 trillion yen 10 years later about 10 trillion yen  Impact: 0.31 — 0.94% decrease of GDP (in 2010)	(+) by having border tax adjustments, there is no need to make adjustments per industry, and impacts on competitiveness can be avoided (+) by gradual introduction, can make adequate preparations (-) there are many issues involved in border tax adjustments

(from pg.1, Statement)

commit to meaningful, realistic and equitable targets that will result in reductions of greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2010. This is a message addressed to this special session as well. Let us also at this special session demonstrate, as the general will of the United Nations, our firm commitment to the success of the Kyoto Conference. I assure you that Japan is resolved to do its utmost in this regard, and I sincerely appeal to all the countries gathered here to extend their cooperation to the Kyoto Conference. It goes without saying that we must strive, also from a medium- and long-term perspective, to solve the issue of global climate change. For example, if we want to stabilize the density of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere at a level about twice as high as it was before the Industrial Revolution, it will be necessary to reduce global per capita carbon dioxide emissions to one ton by the year 2100. This is a great challenge that cannot be met with the existing technology. And it will be necessary for the whole world to unite in order to achieve this objective. For this purpose, and to accelerate, with international cooperation, efforts to prevent global warming, I would like to propose an initiative, to be called the Comprehensive Strategy for the Prevention of Global Warming, or Green Initiative. It will consist of two pillars: Green Technology and Green Aid. Under Green Technology, we would promote the efforts of developed countries in the development and dissemination of energy conservation technologies; the introduction of non-fossil energy sources such as photovoltaic power generation; the development of innovative energy and environmental technologies; and worldwide afforestation and preservation of forests. Under Green Aid, we would utilize ODA and private financial resources to cope with the issues of energy and global warming and promote cooperation with developing countries through the development of human resources. I appeal to like-minded countries for their participation and cooperation. In the past, Japan had a very serious pollution problem. And on reflection, it successfully strengthened its environmental policies in a fundamental way. Also, since the Earth Summit in

Rio de Janeiro, Japan has enacted its Basic Environmental Law and established its Basic Environmental Plan, thereby making clear its new environmental policies. At the Olympic Winter Games which will be held in Nagano next year, every possible consideration will be given to preservation of the environment. And we have declared "Preserve and Nurture the Natural Environment" as the theme of the Aichi Expo, which will be held in the year 2005. Japan is prepared to present not only its successes but also its failures, and to cooperate with others so that its mistakes will not be repeated. Official Development Assistance (ODA) plays an important role in promoting sustainable development in developing countries. Its ODA adheres to the principle that environmental conservation and development should be pursued in tandem. Japan reached the ambitious target it set for itself at the Earth Summit, and actually exceeded the targeted amount of ODA in the environmental field by more than forty percent, providing 1.44 trillion yen (which is approximately US\$13.3 billion) in assistance over the five-year period. Although my Government is now facing severe budgetary constraints, it will give the greatest possible consideration to ODA in the area of environment. As a second initiative, I would like to announce that we shall promote, for developing countries, a new plan entitled Initiatives for Sustainable Development toward the Twenty-first Century (ISD). The plan of action under the Initiatives is as follows. First, air and water pollution measures: Japan will promote the establishment of the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia. Utilizing the environmental centers to whose establishment it has contributed, Japan will, for example, enhance the monitoring capacity of individual countries and also work to establish an information network on pollution. Moreover, it will further promote the transfer of environmental technologies for the prevention of pollution. Second, on the issue of global warming: Japan will promote transfer to developing countries of technologies related to the conservation of energy

and new energy sources, including transfers under the scheme of Green Aid, to which I referred a moment ago. Third, water issues: Japan will further promote the creation of water and sewage systems, and will continue to work to prevent the problems to people's health and the harmful effects on the environments in which they live caused by water pollution. The fourth issue is the preservation of the natural environment. The issue of forests is especially important. We will promote cooperation for efforts to afforest wide areas. In the area of preservation of biodiversity, we will promote efforts mainly through the Biodiversity Center in Indonesia, which was established through the cooperative efforts of Indonesia, the United States and Japan. With regard to the preservation of coral reefs, we will establish a research center on coral reef preservation in Asia and the Pacific which may be expected to play a central role in creating a network for research cooperation. Last, but of no less importance, is the promotion of environmental education. We believe that heightening the environmental awareness of all people through environmental education is fundamental to the creation of an environmentally sound world. We intend to cooperate in promoting worldwide environmental study programmes, and support international research collaboration by establishing "Institute for Global Environmental Strategies," which will engage strategic research to develop new policy means among others. From the depths of postwar devastation and despair, Japan has achieved rapid economic growth since the end of the Second World War, experiencing severe pollution problems in the process. There is perhaps no other country that can share both the suffering of a developing country and the concerns of a developed country to the extent that Japan can. This is why Japan makes it a national policy to cooperate in the promotion of sustainable development. I pledge that I shall make every effort to ensure that this beautiful planet Earth is passed on to the twenty-first century. Now let us launch the "partnership for global environmental preservation and development."

Thank you for your kind attention. 

Please send me JEQ. Please note my new address.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments on this issue or topics of special interest: \_\_\_\_\_

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## NEW PUBLICATION



## Japan's Environmental Protection Policy 1997

A new 40-page English booklet has been released from the Environment Agency. Main sections cover the Basic Environmental Law and Plan; realization of a sustainable society; environmental impact assessment; Global Environment Information Center; global environment problems; domestic air, water and soil environments. Also included are tables of quantitative targets of the Action Plan for Greening Government Operations, and budgets for environmental protection by ministries and agencies. Useful appendices show telephone numbers, addresses and Internet homepages of key

ministries and agencies; the structure of the Basic Environment Law; and the organization of the Environment Agency. The booklet is available from the Global Environment Department of the Environment Agency.

## EDITORIAL TEAM

**Kazuhiko Takemoto**, Senior Advisor, Planning Division, Global Environment Department of the Environment Agency of Japan (EAJ) coordinates a number of the EAJ initiatives. After helping create the JEQ **Osamu Hayakawa** has left the EAJ to return to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, his jobs including serving as Vice Chair of the OECD Joint Session on Trade and Environment (Trade Committee and Environmental Policy Committee). (Thank you for your great teamwork, Osamu!) **Takayoshi Isozaki**, on loan from Kanagawa Prefecture for two years, deals with bilateral environmental relations and rides the Shinkansen (bullet train) every day from his home by the sea. **Randal Helten** is a Canadian in Japan involved in various governmental and non-governmental green activities. New staffer **Kuniko Sato** is from the Water Quality Bureau and aims to ensure JEQ deals with the wet two thirds of this planet.

- 1997**  
October  
26-31 7th International Conference on Lake Conservation and Management (San Martin de los Andes, Argentina)
- November  
5-7 1st Meeting of the Working Group on the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (Tokyo)
- December  
1-10 Third Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (Kyoto)
- 1998**  
January  
17-18 Junior Eco-Club Asia Conference (Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan)
- March  
11-13 Third APN Inter-Governmental Meeting (Beijing)
- TBA 2nd Meeting of Working Group on Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (Tokyo)
- TBA 1st Intergovernmental Meeting on Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (Tokyo)

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