

富士三十六景
強弱之係、以原

**Annual Report on the Environment,
the Sound Material-Cycle Society,
and the Biodiversity in Japan 2013**



Message from the Minister of the Environment

Dear Reader,

It has been two years and six months since the Great East Japan Earthquake that caused such tremendous damages, nevertheless there are still many people suffered and forced to live in temporary housing, facing difficulties with anxiety. The government has been doing its utmost to work on recovery and reconstruction in order to respond to their concerns. While listening to them closely, we strive to move forward with solving each issue, such as decontamination of the areas contaminated by radioactive materials, management of contaminated waste and disposal of disaster waste, and health management and consultation related to radiation.

Along with the nuclear power accident, the issue of global warming continues to be important. The administration has taken up many environmental issues such as the creation of a low-carbon society that requires us to accelerate the adoption of renewable energy and maximize energy savings. There is also a compelling need for us to find solutions for building a society in harmony with nature, forming a sound material-cycle society, as well as ensuring safe and secure living conditions.

Given that situation, we have adopted a *Society of True Prosperity for Future Generations – working together in quest of a sustainable future recovering from the earthquake disaster* as a theme for the Annual Report on the Environment, the Sound Material-Cycle Society and Biodiversity in Japan 2013. The key message throughout the report is for Japan to be transformed into a Sustainable Society of True Prosperity that ensures a rich natural environment and good living conditions as well as economic affluence, while working on recovery and reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake that is a task of immediate importance as of today. In this context, the report gives details about various initiatives linked with the building of a Society of True Prosperity, such as the formation of a low-carbon society, a society in harmony with nature, and a sound material-cycle society and expansion of the green economy to conserve the environment, in addition to decontamination and disposal of disaster waste as part of recovery and reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and green reconstruction initiatives that incorporate environmental conservation.

In the meantime, another message delivered in this report is our mission to pass down to posterity a Society of True Prosperity built on these principles. The report covers environmental education initiatives for children who live the future. Schools, communities, and other parties are making collaborative efforts in providing them with such opportunities.

It is my sincere hope that this environmental report helps you comprehend a Sustainable Society of the True Prosperity for our future generations.



Best regards,

Nobuteru Ishihara
Minister of the Environment

Cover photos:

The front page

Thirty-Six Views of Fuji *Suruga Mihonomatsubara*

After the persistent efforts for over years, the Mount Fuji (Fujisan, 3,776meters high) was inscribed on the World Heritage List as Cultural Heritage at the 37th Session of the World Heritage Committee held in the Kingdom of Cambodia in June, 2013. The title inscribed is “Fujisan, sacred place and source of artistic inspiration”.

Its representation in Japanese art goes back to the 11th century but 19th century wood block prints (Ukiyo-e) have made Fujisan become an internationally recognized icon of the symbol of ‘Oriental’ Japan and have had a deep impact on the development of Western art.

The title of the wood block print (Ukiyo-e) on the front

page is “*Suruga Mihonomatsubara*” from “*Thirty-Six Views of Fuji*” by Utagawa Hiroshige. The protruding sandy beach of *Miho* is located in Suruga Bay in Shizuoka city and it has been a popular, scenic spot for centuries for the majestic view of Fujisan in the distance. It is accordingly a part of the World Heritage site.

Japanese, Edo period, 1858 (Ansei 5) 4th month

Artist: Utagawa Hiroshige

Publisher: Tsuta-ya Kichizo

Vertical Oban

Tokaido Hiroshige Museum of Art collection

The back page

The Toki

The Toki, Japanese crested ibis (*Nipponia Nippon*), used to inhabit all over Japan. But overhunting for their beautiful feathers, deterioration of their habitats such as rice fields and forests, and an increase of natural enemies had caused the population to decrease and made them extinct in Japan in 2003.

While anticipating preservation of the species on the other hand, efforts had been made on artificial incubation; China presented Japan with a mated pair of the birds, resulting in the first successful hatching, which made the number gradually increased in Japan. From 2008, a reintroduction program into the wild

started on Sado Island, Niigata prefecture, where the management of environmental habitats and local awareness-raising had been underway.

The follow up research has been conducted by means of coloring each to identify and putting on GPS receivers to actually record the location of nesting and feeding grounds, as shown on the back page.

In the spring of 2012, chicks were successfully hatched in the wild and, as of today, about 50 of them live in the wild.

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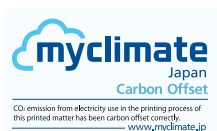
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Biodiversity



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