Country Questionnaire Prior to the Senior Officials Meeting on the 3R Initiative
- JAPAN -

[Country Questionnaire Survey]

1. Major developments regarding the strategies, policies and activities on the 3Rs in Japan since the Ministerial Conference on the 3Rs (April 2005)

(1) Increased recycling rate

The Government of Japan has enacted a set of laws governing the recycling of specific items, including the "Law for Promotion of the Sorted Collection and Recycling of Containers and Packaging," combined with the introduction of extended producer responsibility (EPR). Steady progress in the implementation of such legislative and voluntary initiatives of the business sector has raised the recycling rate of general wastes, which reached 16.8% in FY 2003. In addition, the recycling rate for industrial wastes has been increasing slightly in recent years, marking 49% for FY 2003.

(2) Establishment of a "Support scheme for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society"

The government established a "Support scheme for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society" in FY 2005, with the aim of establishing a sound material-cycle society supported by local communities. This scheme is designed to promote the 3Rs through the establishment of waste treatment and recycling facilities (facilities for promoting energy recovery, materials recycling and organic waste recycling) as widely as possible and on a comprehensive basis, in collaboration of the national government and municipalities. One third of the expenses incurred in subsidized projects will be covered by grants from the national government to the relevant municipalities. As for advanced model facilities (facilities recovering methane and other biogases at a higher rate of efficiency), the national government provides the relevant municipalities with half the incurred project expenses.

(3) Review of the "Law for the Promotion of the Sorted Collection and Recycling of Containers and Packaging"

The Central Environmental Council and the Industrial Structure Council examined and evaluated the "Law for the Promotion of the Sorted Collection and Recycling of Containers and Packaging (Containers and Packaging Recycling Law)" tens years after it came into force. In January 2006, these councils presented a proposal urging the control of the generation of containers and packaging waste and a review of the methods used for the recycling of products. The necessary actions, such as legal revisions, will be undertaken based on their proposals.

(4) Public awareness raising regarding the 3Rs

The Japanese minister of the environment took the initiative in promoting the more active use of the *furoshiki* (a traditional Japanese square piece of cloth used to wrap various items) in order to inspire everyone to further reduce waste. The minister's initiative is intended to encourage people to use the *furoshiki* when shopping instead of plastic bags that are readily provided at all supermarkets.

In the summer of 2005, a nationwide tour of the 3R campaign vehicle, nicknamed "Robot Car," was organized to promote the 3Rs across Japan.

(5) International harmonization in relation to the 3Rs

The government of Japan hosted a workshop on wastes generated by electronic products and electrical appliances (e-waste) in Tokyo in November 2005, in cooperation with the secretariat of the Basel Convention. The workshop produced a programme of action and recommendations for the implementation of projects on the environmentally-sound management of e-waste in the Asia-Pacific region.

In addition, in November 2005, the Asian Network for the Prevention of the Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes held its second workshop, discussing such issues as the alliance approach for the prevention of illegal transboundary movements of hazardous wastes.

Furthermore, the Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM) plans to hold a joint seminar on a sound material-cycle society / circular economy / 3R activities in Tokyo in February 2006, in which locally-based 3R activities will be discussed.

(6) Cooperation with developing countries

The Ministry of the Environment has conducted surveys of six Asian countries since FY 2005 that are designed to support the formulation of national 3R plans and visions. In addition, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provides seminars on the 3Rs for developing countries.

2. Domestic 3R activities

2.1 Good practices on 3Rs

Please describe your successful activities in relation to the 3Rs, including those at the national level, the municipal level, with industries and NGOs/NPOs. What are the major elements for the success of the activity? What cooperation do you need from other countries for the more effective promotion of the 3Rs? If you need to establish certain alliances between related parties, or require certain technologies, describe these as well.

(Successful activities)

- Reduction of volume of final disposal and increased recycling rate, as a consequence of the enhanced responsibilities placed on industrial waste emitters, the introduction of extended producer responsibility, and promotion of voluntary initiative from the business sector. (Refer to the Appendix figure)
- Launch of the "Support scheme for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society"
- Establishment of the 3R Activities Promotion Forum

2.2 3Rs and governance

To promote the 3Rs, it is necessary to develop a governance system that responds to the different situations and conditions of each country. Are there any specific issues related to the institutional arrangements for the implementation of the 3Rs and environmentally-sound management of wastes? For example, many countries will need to address the issue of how to treat the informal sector that is engaged in recycling and recovering activities. Do you have any such approach?

The reduction in the amount of waste generation is lagging. A set of countermeasures, including a shift from free to charged waste treatment services, is required to spur the control of waste generation.

Although the number of newly-revealed cases of illegal dumping and the quantities of material being dumped are on the decline, the elimination of illegal dumping has not yet been achieved. We have, therefore, revised the "Waste Management and Public Cleansing Law," to strengthen the penalties for illegal dumping, as well as tightened the Manifest System of Industrial Waste, among other relevant measures.

2.3 The 3Rs and environmentally-sound management of industrial waste

Since economic development tends to cause an increase in the amount of industrial waste generation, the environmentally-sound management of industrial waste is essential to promote the 3Rs. To decouple economic development and industrial waste generation, what kind of role is expected for the industrial waste emitter, national and local governments, including municipalities? Also, please give us your views on how to share the responsibilities for the construction and operation of the final disposal sites among the stakeholders?

In Japan, industrial waste emitters are required to reduce the quantity of industrial wastes for which they are responsible, to reuse and recycle the waste, and to dispose of them in an environmentally-sound manner. Local governments, including municipalities, instruct and supervise industrial waste management contractors and facilities to ensure environmentally-sound management.

In principle, the final disposal sites for industrial waste are constructed and operated by private enterprises. However, public agencies support the arrangement of facilities for the required quantity of disposed items.

3. International 3R policies and strategies

The international flow of recycled and remanufactured products contributes to both the efficient use of resources and the prevention of environmental pollution if the proper mechanisms are in place. On the other hand, however, it was also observed at the Ministerial Conference on the 3R Initiative that the transboundary movement of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing may entail contingent environmental pollution.

3.1 Situation of the transboundary movement of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing

Regarding the transboundary movement of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing, what are the major recyclable resources observed in exports from and imports to your country? Are there any specific problems in relation to exports and imports of these recyclable resources and remanufactured goods? What are the major reasons for any problems?

In recent years, Japan has increased its export of scrap metal (steel, copper and aluminum), waste paper and plastic waste. Notably, the volume of scrap copper and aluminum doubled between 2000 and 2003, and more than 90% of this volume is destined for China and Hong Kong. The importation of recyclable resources to Japan has gradually decreased to 60 per cent over the past decade, the major items being waste vegetable oils, slag and steel scrap.

One problem is the difference that exists between the categorization system of regulated material among the different countries. In some cases recyclable resources exported from Japan were deemed illegal under domestic regulations and laws in the recipient country.

Another problem encountered was that used home appliances and personal computers exported as secondhand goods were regarded as recyclable resources in the recipient country and returned to Japan. Therefore, major issues exist in the classification of second-hand goods and recyclable resources.

3.2 Prevention of environmental pollution caused by the transboundary movement of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing

To prevent environmental pollution caused by the transboundary movement of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing (illegal exports and imports of hazardous wastes, and inappropriate management in the recipient country), what kind of policies and measures (e.g., cooperation among national governments and other stakeholders) are expected? If your country has already launched such activities, please provide us with detailed information.

In 2003, the Asian Network for the Prevention of the Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes was launched based on a proposal from Japan. By facilitating the frequent exchange of information among governmental officials in Asian countries in charge of implementation of the Basel Convention, as well as organizing workshops, this system contributes to capacity building for the implementation of the Basel Convention and to the establishment of an information exchange system. The network now plans to share information and prepare guidelines for the criteria of secondhand goods.

Other measures to prevent environmental pollution caused by the transboundary movement of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing include: prior consultations with domestic enterprises planning such exports; the publication of related systems in Japan and other countries on the website; and, concerted activities in cooperation with the customs departments.

3.3 Harmonization of economic and environmental benefits through the transboundary movement of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing

Please provide information on the positive and negative socio-economic impacts of the increase in the importation and exportation of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing in your country. What kinds of policies and measures have been implemented to support the positive effects and mitigate the negative effects of the trade in recyclable resources and remanufactured goods?

As a positive effect, exports and imports sometimes turn out to be more economically beneficial depending on such conditions as the demand for the relevant goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing, as well as the recycling costs. In particular, the advanced technologies available in Japan can be applied to imported goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing, which also contribute to the reduction in environmental pollution in the exporting country and efficient use of resources.

Negative impacts include: the risk of expansion in illegal exports and imports due to the voluminous transboundary movements of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing; change in the balance of supply and demand of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing due to the increase in the export volume of them; and, the

difficulty in ensuring the stable movement of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing, due to actual operations of and/or changes in domestic systems in the recipient country.

To support the positive effects and mitigate the negative effects, we provide prior consultation services concerning the export and import of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing. We also hold briefing sessions for related parties. As additional approaches to mitigate the negative impacts, we have exchanged information with the representatives of other countries through the Asian Network for the Prevention of the Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and have urged the related parties to satisfy the standards for goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing in the recipient country.

4. If there are any other issues related to the promotion of the 3Rs that should be discussed in the Senior Officials Meeting, please provide us with your input below.

We propose discussing the synergistic effects between 3R promotion and other related policies.

Appendix

Figure 1 Change in Final Disposal Amount

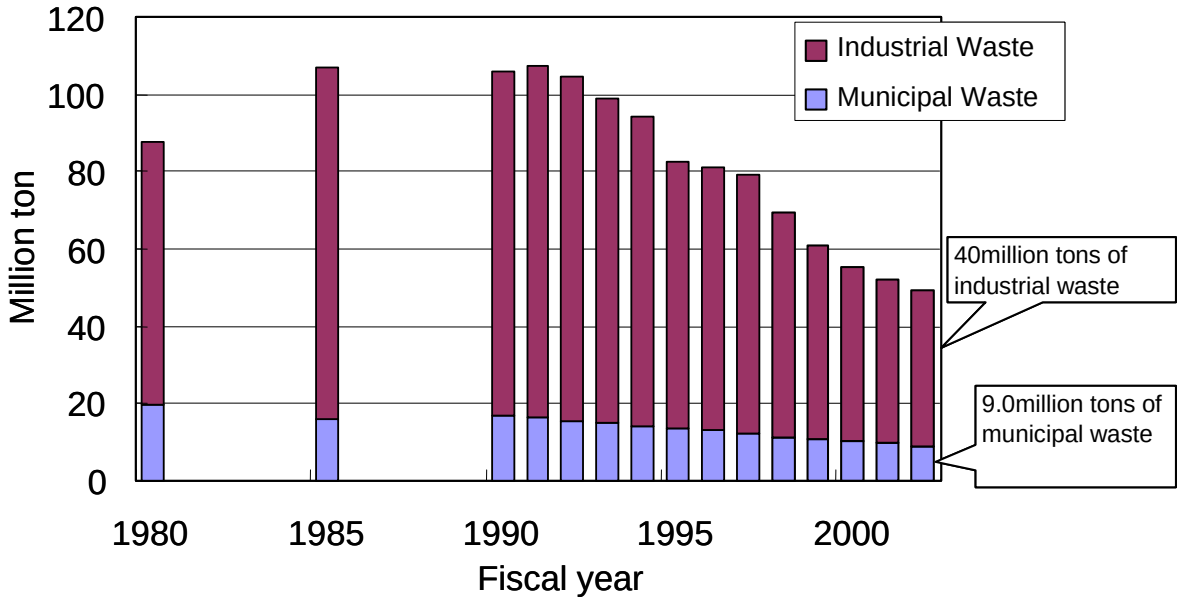
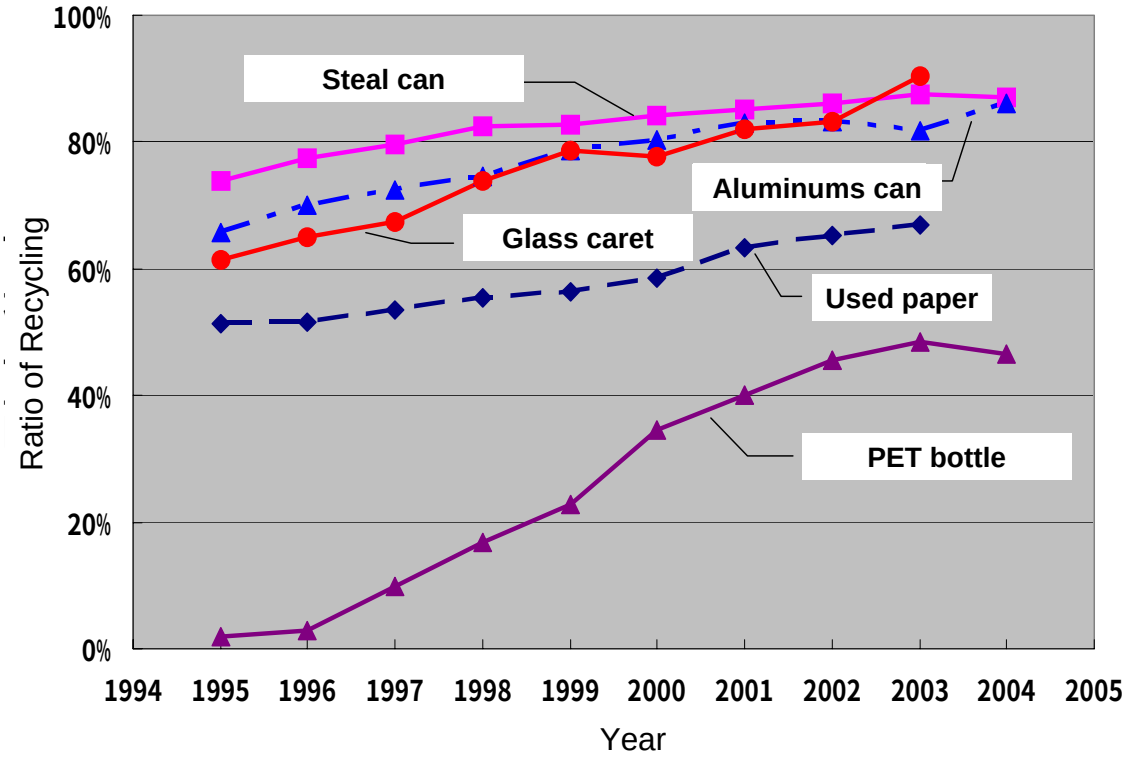


Figure 2 Progress on Recycling



The Showcase of 3Rs Good Practices

Date: _____

Country/Organisation: **Japan**

No.	Name of the practice	Summary of the practice -level of implementation (national, local, industry, NGOs/NPOs) -duration -stakeholders involved	Impact: -Improvements after the introduction of the practice	Key For Success What are the major reasons for the success of the activity?
1	Enhancing the responsibility of an industrial waste emitter, introducing the extended producer responsibility and promoting the efforts of the business sector	The government of Japan has taken such measures, over the past dozen years or so, as the establishment and the reinforcement of the mass volume industrial waste emitter's plan for disposal, the establishment and the reinforcement of the manifest system and the tightening of the requirements for the permission of waste treatment through the revision of the Waste Management and Public Cleansing Law. Also, the government enacted a set of recycling laws, including the Law for Promotion of the Sorted Collection and Recycling of Containers and Packaging and introduced the extended producer responsibility. In addition, the government established the Guidelines for Waste Treatment/Recycling by Commodity or by Businesses and promoted the voluntary efforts.	The recycling rates of various items have risen. The quantities of final disposal of both municipal wastes and industrial wastes have decreased. As an example, due to the introduction of the home appliance recycling system, the re-merchandising rate has increased (in FY 2003, Air-conditioners: 81%, Televisions: 78%, Refrigerators: 63% and Washing machines: 65%).	Many enterprises have spent more in waste treatment by the enhanced responsibilities placed on industrial waste emitters. Consequently, the number of notable waste management contractors has increased. In addition, due to the enactment of a set of recycling laws and the introduction of extended producer responsibility, the roles of enterprises, local governments and consumer have been clarified and consequently the recycling business too has expanded.
2	Establishment of a "Support Scheme for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society	The government established a "Support Scheme for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society" through the 3Rs in FY 2005 supported by local communities. This scheme is designed to promote the 3Rs through the establishment of waste treatment and recycling facilities as widely as possible and on a comprehensive basis in collaboration of the national government and municipalities. One third of the expenses incurred in subsidised projects will be covered by grants from the national government to the relevant municipalities.	In FY 2005, two hundred and thirty-seven municipalities were making efforts to establish Sound Material-Cycle Societies by utilising this scheme. Also, the approaches to the 3Rs in the region, such as energy recovery with the incineration of waste, have progressed.	The promotion of the 3Rs has been substantiated in the locality by formulating the goal to promote the 3Rs and the plan to realise it in collaboration between the national and local governments.
3	Establishment of the 3R Activities Promotion Forum	In order to disseminate the efforts and advanced technologies relating to the 3Rs, "the 3R Activities Promotion Forum," which consists of local governments, private companies, industry organisations, research institutes and NGO/NPO, was been established in January 2006.	The forum provides an opportunity for stakeholders to participate in the 3R activities, leading to collaboration and information-sharing among the stakeholders.	The "Zero-Waste Partnership Conference," which had aimed at creating a zero-waste society, had practical consequences with its activities. The Conference served as a foundation for the 3R Activities Promotion Forum.