



Case Study

Iida City (Nagano Prefecture, Japan)

The Dive Into Ideas of “21’ Iida Environmental Plan”

Iida City, with a population of 100,000 people, developed on the river terrace along Tenryugawa River and commands a close view of the Southern and Central Alps. In December, 1996, Iida City adopted “21’ Iida Environmental Plan” (“Environmental Plan” hereafter), composed of 21 leading projects and carefully categorized issues for each district to consider and is thus involved in environmental conservation.

The “Environmental Watcher System,” “School Woods System,” “Study Group to Challenge ISO as a Region” are only a few examples of the unique approaches of the environmental conservation measures that the city promotes. The “Iida Environmental Plan” allows a general view of the city’s measures.

New Ideas at the Planning Stage

- Environmental Investigator (Environmental Watcher) System

The “21’ Iida Environmental Plan” was established in December, 1996, but preparations for its adoption had actually already been started in fiscal 1992 with the establishment of Eco-Life Promotion Headquarters and missions to precedent areas.

What was unique about its planning process was that basic studies, namely, studies on familiar nature and landscape and environmental studies using index animals were conducted by “Environmental Investigators (Environmental Watchers)” which included primary and secondary school children.

The Environmental Investigator System was launched with 110 investigators gathered through public advertisement. In fiscal 1994, the first year of the implementation of the system, citizens reported on what nature and landscape they wanted preserved most by indicating on maps the location and their reasons. Studies on the natural environment and those on geographical and geological features were conducted and observations were also held.

Upon conducting studies, the Iida City Environmental Map Making Manual” was prepared by the city’s Environmental Conservation Division, City Museum and Inadani Nature Society, to be distributed to investigators.

Furthermore, environmental watchers identified the nature and landscape in their home area or in Iida City that they are were familiar with or wanted preserved for the future, for each of the categories given, by indicating on maps the names and locations. The reports were reclassified by district. Environmental maps were made according to these reports whose number had reached 438.

Other than these research projects, the city has built a partnership with Inadani Nature Society for studies on the status quo of the natural environment, commissioning the society to conduct professional research on the fauna and flora and geographical and geological features.



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The Establishment of Guidelines for Environmental Consideration by District

A feature of the Environmental Plan is the adoption of Guidelines for Environmental Consideration based on the maps made through public participation.

The guidelines promote the creation of an environment that enhances the best features of each of the sixteen districts that compose the city.

For example, the Guidelines for Environmental Consideration for Yamamoto District, indicate the status quo and ideals for the district's environmental by issue. The issues raised by the city include the improvement of the living environment along roads, the prevention of river and groundwater pollution, the conservation of the natural landscape and the utilization of facilities and natural resources.

The Regional Guidelines for Environmental Consideration cover public undertakings that the administration takes the initiative in and other projects implemented within the city.

Abstract of the Environmental Plan

To introduce the overall structure of the Plan, the Environmental Plan's motto is "Iida City - A City of Bright Skies and Soft Breezes," for the realization of which the city is to be built "with consideration" (consideration both towards the environment and towards people, and furthermore, for the effective and planned use of national forest resources).

The five pillars of the measure are: 1)building a circular city system, 2)building a beautiful green city, 3)building a safe city, 4)fostering awareness and 5)fundamental measures supporting all issues. 21 fundamental measures and individual measures have been implemented under the five categories. The following are extracts of said measures:

<Building a circular city system>

1. The Adoption of the Waste Management Costs Assumption System

In Iida City, waste management cost has reached 500 thousand Japanese Yen on the increase yearly.

Due to the fact that there are limits to the impact of public advertisement to reduce the amount of waste, the need to maintain fairness between citizen who endeavor



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to reduce waste and those who carelessly create waste, the need to promote waste reduction at the production, marketing and consumption stages, the city has decided to adopt the following system to have waste producers assume the management costs. The following are guidelines for the system:

- The cost that one assumes should be based upon the weight of waste disposed. (The more waste one creates, the more one pays.)
- The system should promote reduction and recycling by enhancing public awareness through the assumption on management costs.
- The management costs should be utilized for the conservation of the citizens' living environment and be decided upon with consideration to public opinion such as those of the Environment and Health Association.

The system should be adopted at the earliest time possible, in view of the achievement of reduction targets for the year 2000.

2. The Diffusion of Eco-friendly Housing

For the diffusion of housing that is friendly to the environment in that it is built with consideration for energy saving, nature and landscaping, the city will promote its adoption in public housing and the opening of model houses.

3. The Diffusion of Solar Energy Facilities

To obtain clean energy in order to contribute to the prevention of global warming by reducing CO2 emission, the city promotes solar energy generation.

The city seeks to publicize the national government's subsidiary program and to promote supporting measures for citizens to take the initiative in the establishment of facilities.

<Building a Beautiful and Green city>

4. The Promotion of Forest Fostering and the Conservation of the Natural Environment Found Nearby

The city promotes the fostering and of forest to foster and protect the blessings of nature.

The city promotes the conservation of the surrounding environment of rivers and marshes.



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5. The Promotion of Building a City with the Scent of Trees

For the establishment of a safe and warm living environment, the city encourages the use of national resources in public facilities and in cooperation with related organizations, promotes the education of citizens and businesses.

6. The Promotion of Development Projects with Consideration to Nature and Landscape

The city promotes quick response to the establishment of public facilities, road improvement and river improvements.

As citizen demands for more contact with waterfronts are particularly strong, the city promotes local understanding towards preserving naturally existing rivers and canals in improvements.

7. The Promotion of Pleasant Landscaping

For the promotion of building a beautiful characteristic town in each district, the city encourages the development of a landscaping system based on the city's fundamental guidelines and the active support of citizens.

<Building a Safe City>

8. The Promotion of Water Purification Measures for Rivers etc.

The city will establish water quality targets for major rivers within the city and in order to achieve these goals, will promote industrial waste measures and other active measures including those for the diffusion of waste management facilities. As improvements are not visible in water quality, for Matsukawa River, which runs through the center of the city, the city seeks, in particular, to strengthen measures to maintain water quality with the cooperation of related organizations.

Furthermore, the city encourages environmental studies and monitoring, including those of groundwater pollution for which chemical substances are responsible.

<Fostering Awareness>

9. The Adoption of the Eco-Instructor System

The city will adopt the Eco-Instructor System in order to foster, among citizens, leaders who will take the initiative in activities and seek for partnership with the administration.

10. The Establishment of School Woods

As a part of an education that encourages children to experience nature, the city promotes the establishment of School Woods where children can foster emotional minds.

11. The Promotion of Public Participation

For the enhancement of public concern for environmental administration, the city promotes public participation - gatherings and questionnaires through which it can have an understanding of public demand and the implementation of the Environmental Watcher System.

<Fundamental Measures Supporting All Issues>

12. The Establishment of a Environmental Coordination Council and the Adoption of an Evaluation System for its Impact on the Environment

In order to show concern for the environment from the planning stage of development programs, the city promotes the establishment of an Environmental Coordination Council for public undertakings and the adoption of an evaluation system for private programs.

13. The Promotion of Eco-Offices and Fostering the Environment Industry

In order to promote consideration for the environment among industrial circles along with citizens, the city promotes the Eco-Office System and the fostering of the environment industry.

14. The Enhancement of Environmental Conservation Functions in Agriculture

The city promotes agriculture using environmental conservation methods such as the use of low-chemical and organic fertilizers as well as the establishment of a structure that seeks to maintain and improve to conserve the landscape that farmland creates and the natural environment.

The city promotes the Eco-Village Project in agricultural areas as a model project.

Numerical Targets

The numerical targets for each measure are as follows:

Area of measure	Items	Target year	Numerical Target
Building a circular city system	Amount of waste disposed per capita (household waste)	Fiscal 2000	253kg (13% down from status quo)
	Amount of waste disposed per business	Fiscal 2000	2,300kg and under (17% down from status quo)
	Ratio of recyclable waste to entire amount of waste disposed	Fiscal 2000	26% and under (status quo 20%)
	Diffusion of solar generation	Fiscal 2000	1% of all households
Building a green city	Amount of tap water used per capita per day	Beyond fiscal 2000	290 l. or under (control to average of fiscal 1990-1994)
	Streets with adequate greenery	Fiscal 2010	30% or more compared to entire length (status quo 20%)
	Area of green park space per capita	Fiscal 2010	20 m ² (status quo 8m ²)
Building a safe city	Water quality of Matsukawa River (downstream from Myoukinkyo Bridge)	Fiscal 2000	BOD2mg/l or under (status quo 3-5mg or under)
Fostering Awareness	Level of satisfaction for the living environment of neighborhood	Fiscal 2010	67% (status quo 51%)
	Level of citizens' practices for environmental protection I try to reduce waste. I take my own shopping bag when shopping. I try to buy products that are eco-friendly. I take the bus or train instead of my car. I am a cooperative member of a group that works to preserve the environment. I try not to burn plastics.	Fiscal 2010	81% (1996: 71%) 40% (1996:16%) 60% (1996: 40%) 25% (1996: 12%) 33% (1996: 18%) 80% (1996: 57%)

What have been raised as targets for "Fostering Awareness" are the outcome of a questionnaire conducted on one thousand citizens chosen randomly.

School Woods System

The School Woods System is one of the programs among Iida City's environmental measures that city officials take special pride in as a project that "should be a good example for other local governments to follow."

With the objectives of nature conservation and children's environmental education, the city has initiated the School Woods establishment project in which forests near elementary schools are contributed as School Woods. In fiscal 1997, five schools received School Woods. In the following five to six years, seventeen elementary schools within the city are to have School Woods.

This project aims to conserve and properly manage the nature around schools by arranging parts of forests into School Woods. Land is basically obtained by buying it as the conservation of forests is not a temporary issue but one that must be continuously approached in the future.

The management of School Woods is left entirely up to elementary schools with only one condition - "conserving forests as forests."

The undermentioned are a few of the five characteristic examples of the management of School Woods.



<Zakoji Elementary School>

The forest beside the school, is composed mainly of Japanese red pines. The forest, with a rope stretched around and playthings such as a balance beam made from logs, is a spot for children to in during recess and after school. It also has name tags and bird houses on trees for nature observation. Zakoji Elementary School had been involved in similar activities previous to the adoption of the School Forest Project and thus is a predecessor.



<Kamikugata Elementary School>

The forest, a comparatively flat one because it was originally abandoned farmland, is found behind the school. Since there were few trees in the forest, children planted trees - deciduous trees, in particular. The school has begun making a biotope where insects and killifish can live and a part of the forest, which was initially full of weeds, has been dug into a pond.

<Shimokugata Elementary School>

The school uses the forest in its curriculum because it is within a ten minutes walk from the school. The forest is full of tree types that bear fruit such as akebi and walnuts. Seasonal observations called “Spring-Seeking” and “Summer-Seeking” are held and shiitake mushrooms are cultivated in it.

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