Miraculous Recovery from Soot-filled Skies and Dead Seas

The Kitakyushu region is one of the four major industrial zones in Japan, and was developed mainly by the heavy chemical industry. It has been a key driver of the modernization and high economic growth of the country. However, industrial development also caused serious pollution in the region. In the 1960s, air pollution in the Kitakyushu region became the worst in Japan, and Dokai Bay turned into a dead sea due to waste effluent from factories. The first people to take action and demand countermeasures against pollution were women, who were worried about their children’s health. These activities by residents were taken up by the mass media, raising awareness about pollution in society, which prompted companies and local governments to take stronger action against pollution.

Unified action by citizens, companies and local governments led to rapid improvements in the environment. Kitakyushu was known in and out of Japan as a miracle city that healed its environment in the 1980s.

SDGs Future City

The city has led activities to create a sustainable society, resulting in its selection as an “Eco-model City” and “Future City.” It was also the first model city in Asia to be selected for “A Territorial Approach to the SDGs” program by the OECD in April 2018. In June 2018, moreover, it was selected as an “SDGs Future City” and “SDGs Model Project of Local Government” by the national government. Kitakyushu City will continue to promote activities that work toward realizing SDGs through industry-government-academia cooperation, aiming to create the best city for living in Japan.

Worldwide Network of Environmental Cooperation

Through environmental cooperation with Dalian City in China, a friendship city of Kitakyushu City, the effectiveness and importance of international cooperation at a regional level through finely-tuned measures and cooperation with local residents have been recognized. Therefore, Kitakyushu City proposed and built a network among cities to promote cooperative environmental activities and projects between member cities in the network. Member cities also started to take various actions to become leading eco-friendly cities in Asia.

Since its opening as a pavilion for the Kitakyushu Expo held in 2001, the Kitakyushu Environment Museum has been a place for environmental studies and activities, attracting many visitors from both in and outside the city. The Museum is designed for enjoying, through seeing and touching, learning about eco-friendly activities in our daily lives, public and private efforts to preserve the environment, and the history of overcoming pollution and global environmental problems.

It aims to encourage people to think for themselves about an ideal vision for Kitakyushu City as a “SDGs Future City” and, having learned about its history, to take action.

Three Functions

Environmental Study Center

The venue can be used for learning about the environment in school or community education classes. The Center helps to foster environmental leaders who can identify facts, learn, make decisions, and take action for the environment to solve current environmental problems.

Environmental Information Center

The Center publicizes information on environmental events hosted by NPOs, companies and governmental bodies, as well as activities by local and national governments, in addition to global environment-related issues.

Environmental Activity Center

The Center can be used for gatherings and meetings by various NPOs and civic groups engaged in environmental activities.

Supporting Your Environmental Studies

Environmental study concierge

The concierge help environmental studies in diverse ways, such as introducing study programs and environmental study facilities in the city, planning eco-friendly tours, and giving advice on training and seminars.

Mobile environmental museum

Our staff will go to your school, kindergarten, or nursery school to give a talk to parents or guardians, as well as conduct experiments or games related to the environment.

Environmental study supporters

Citizen volunteers support environmental-related studies and activities. They help others enjoy learning about the environment through making eco-friendly handicraft, etc.
Actions by companies

Second Zone

KYUSHU City boasts a rich natural environment and serves as an entrance to Kyushu, Kitakyushu City. Located in the north of Fukuoka Prefecture, it was built on the northern edge of the Seto inland sea, facing the Japan Sea (Hibikinada) to the north and the Seto inland sea (Suzonada) to the east. Learning about the bountiful nature of the city through pictures and videos.

Here, a history of solving these problems and restoring the rich natural environment through cooperation is presented. As the city developed as a center of manufacturing, citizens faced various pollution problems. For example, in 1901, the publicly-run Yawata Steel Works was established in Yahata, and greatly contributed to the modernization and industrialization of Japan. In addition, world heritage sites in Kitakyushu City are introduced through videos. This zone exhibits industrial materials such as coal and iron ore that were actually contributed to the modernization and industrialization of Japan.

History of Overcoming Pollution

This zone introduces the history of overcoming pollution in Kitakyushu City, which was once considered impossible. As the city developed as a center of manufacturing, citizens faced various pollution problems. Here, a history of solving these problems and restoring the rich natural environment through cooperation is presented. Starting with activities by citizens, efforts to solve pollution problems have grown to encompass industry, academia and government.

History of Kitakyushu City

Kitakyushu has flourished since ancient times, leveraging its geographical advantages as a transportation hub in Kyushu and as a center of coal production. In 1901, the publicly-run Yawata Steel Works was established in Yahata, and greatly contributed to the modernization and industrialization of Japan. This zone exhibits industrial materials such as coal and iron ore that were actually used, as well as industrial products, and gives a history of the region. In addition, world heritage sites in Kitakyushu City are introduced through videos.

History of Kitakyushu City

This zone introduces environmental actions by Kitakyushu City, environmental activities by citizens, organizations, companies, and schools, new energies, and more in detail using photo panels.

Environmental Technologies and Eco-Friendly Lives

Visitors can enjoy learning how the Earth works and the current situation of the global environment by touching and operating the exhibits, thus seeing the relationship between themselves and global environmental problems through their own experiences and feelings.

Kitakyushu Eco House

This eco-friendly house is designed for a lifestyle independent of fossil fuels through basic environmental performance, including thermal insulation, air-tightness, ventilation, and use of natural materials, as well as using renewable and renewable energies and an eco-friendly lifestyle and way of living. Various eco-friendly measures are presented, from the traditional Japanese veranda and earthen floor, to cutting-edge facilities such as photovoltaic power generation systems, V2H (Vehicle to Home; power supply from fuel cell vehicle to house) equipment, and hydrogen fuel cells.

Third Zone

The Global Environment and Our Daily Lives

This zone explains the global environmental problems in our daily lives and global economic activities. Visitors can enjoy learning how the Earth works and the current situation of the global environment by touching and operating the exhibits, thus seeing the relationship between themselves and global environmental problems through their own experiences and feelings.

Fifth Zone

Kitakyushu, an SDGs Future City

This zone introduces environmental actions by Kitakyushu City, environmental activities by citizens, organizations, companies, and schools, new energies, and more in detail using photo panels.

Prologue

Located in the north of Fukuoka Prefecture and serving as an entrance to Kyushu, Kitakyushu City boasts a rich natural environment facing the Japan Sea (Hibikinada) to the north and the Seto Inland Sea (Suzonada) to the east. Learning about the bountiful nature of the city through pictures and videos.

Second Zone

Prologue

First Zone

History of Kitakyushu City

History of Overcoming Pollution

Eco House

Total floor area: 183.43m²

Fourth Zone

Environmental Technologies and Eco-Friendly Lives

This zone explains the global environmental problems in our daily lives and global economic activities. Visitors can enjoy learning how the Earth works and the current situation of the global environment by touching and operating the exhibits, thus seeing the relationship between themselves and global environmental problems through their own experiences and feelings.

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