

## Corporate Social Responsibility in Japan – focused on Environmental Communication

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### 1. Corporation and Environmental Diseases in Japan

In 1960's and 70's, Japan had serious disease problems, which are still remaining "Kogai" (=pollution) problems, and energy shortage, that was "Oil shock". Through these experiences, many of companies took their measures for survive and had their appropriate sections, which dealt with energy and material supply or anti-pollution etc, and stuff.

Some said that "Kogai" experiences were the one of most stimuli in Japanese companies to take both formal and informal environmental measures. And also, the concept of corporate ethics was widely accepted (Fukukawa, 1997).

### 2. Emergence of Corporate Responsibility – internal management

Japanese Environmental Sociologist N. Iijima said almost all of the company, where they didn't have any treats for internal management, finally connected with notorious "Kogai", which means "external" pollution. In short, internal company management, which includes workers' welfare, cleanliness of workplace and enough communication etc, is the precondition of good external management.

### 3. Regulation Method and its success – 1970's

As we already know, so-called Japanese economic success and environmental protection were achieved through the initiative of governmental sections. They usually used regulation or control method, which were noise abatement, tremble control, air pollution, sewage management and so on. And most of companies tried to accept those regulations to do their business. Because of the expensive compensation to victims, it was obviously better to avoid making pollution. As for the environmental protection, these passive companies' measures were said to be a "negative corporate responsibility" (Nogami, 1997). Moreover, thanks to this environmental success, which means they could control their business under regulations with end-of-pipe technologies, environmental protection of Japanese companies had stayed in the stage of anti-pollution level.

### 4. Corporate Responsibility to Corporate Social Responsibility

In late 1980's, we were in the age of "environmental boom" with reporting "Sustainable Development". At the same time, many of the companies started paying attention to environmental Risks. In this stage, they should treat all of the possibilities of environmental degradation. With accepting these changes, ISO14000's, environmental code of actions from top management or voluntary action plan were rapidly adopted among Japanese companies. And through these new measures, companies tried to make them disclose about their environmental or sustainability information.

### 5. Environmental Communication

In late 1990's, some companies realized that to have good relations with community people or NGO/NPO's would be one of the best way to fulfill their CSR. Even more, these relations sometimes help expanding their profitable achievement. Because, they can easily touch with the consumer's needs or demands. In this context, the intermediate groups those are NGO/NPO's are a kind of interpreter of the actual market. In this presentation, it will be pointed out that these "Mutual complementation" by intermediate groups might be a key to success for introducing a CSR concept.