

## Kobe Declaration on Separation of Solid Waste

The participants in the Third 3R Conference for Asian Local Governments held in Kobe recognized that discussions regarding the “ Separation and Recycling of Solid Waste” held on November 15, 2010, were very significant for mutual understanding and the sharing of our experience of dealing with problems.

### (1) Recognition of the current situation

The mass production and consumption culture gaining a foothold in our lives has resulted in a rise in the amount of solid waste. It is expected that the worldwide amount of solid waste will increase from 12.7 billion tons in 2000 to 27 billion tons in 2050. This waste includes items that could still be used or have important value as a resource. It is therefore necessary to aim for the thorough collection and recycling of valuable materials to reduce the amount of solid waste that needs to be disposed of.

Japan and other Asian countries have collected solid waste separately and recycled part of it from old times, but this was an unstable recycling system with a limited scope. To prevent environmental pollution and greenhouse gases from increasing due to the future rise in the amount of solid waste and the diversity in the quality of solid waste, it is necessary to take measures to restrict solid waste by taking into consideration of the circumstances of each municipality and to convert the old methods into an effective separation and recycling system.

### (2) Role of each stakeholder and the initiative of the government

To convert an effective separation and recycling system, the citizens, waste handlers, and local governments have to fulfill their respective roles. Concerning the citizens, it is important to ensure that they are aware that solid waste is garbage if mixed but a resource if it is separated and share information on the activities of other citizens in advanced cities. Most recyclers are small companies but they play a

key role in the actual recycling work, so they are expected to further energetically pursue their business operations. Local governments need to provide technical support and information to the recyclers. In addition, temporary workers, including waste pickers who collect valuable materials, not only to contribute to recycling but also have a certain effect on the prolongation of the life of landfill disposal site. Accordingly, it is recommended to work on what these sectors should be doing. Local governments are required to take effective measures at various points in the life cycle of solid waste, which consists of the discharging, collection, transportation, and final disposal of solid waste, to enable the citizens and recyclers to understand and develop the motivation for the separation and recycling of solid waste, and to develop a system with a practical effect.

### (3) Conclusions

Today's participants have fully recognized, through reports from various local government and the discussion about them, that the separation and recycling of solid waste contribute to the conservation of natural resources and the living environment as well as to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, we have come to a common view that to further increase these effects, we need to make separation and recycling more active and to involve the surrounding municipalities governments in it.

We expect that every participants of the 3R Conference for Asian Local Governments will keep the results of this conference in mind in order to demonstrate 3R activities in Asia and to promote 3R society, which will result in the further development of this conference.

November 15, 2010