

The challenge to establish the Recycling-based Society

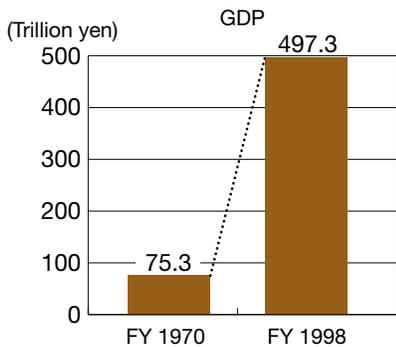
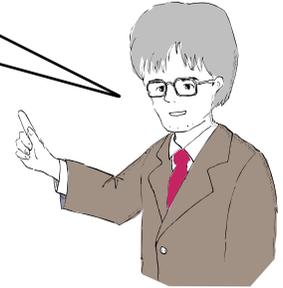
-The Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-based Society Enacted-



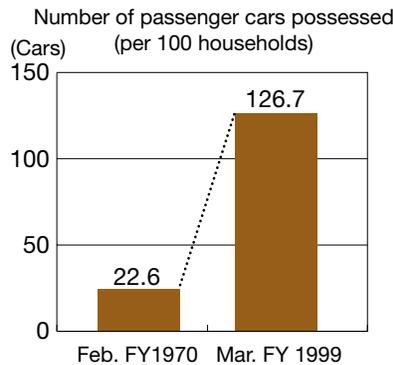
The Environment Agency

The Year 2000 Is the First Year of The challenge to establish the Recycling-based Society.

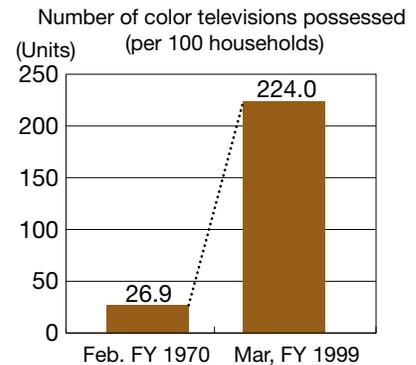
We have lived a prosperous life in the 20th century, which was supported by the system of mass production, mass consumption, and mass disposal.



(Data by the Economic Planning Agency)

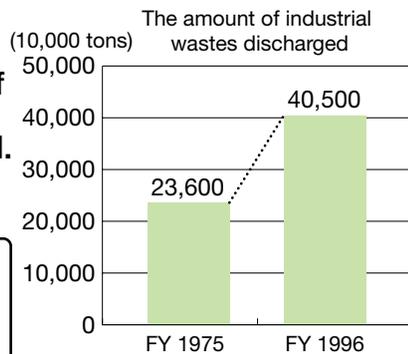


(Data by the Economic Planning Agency)

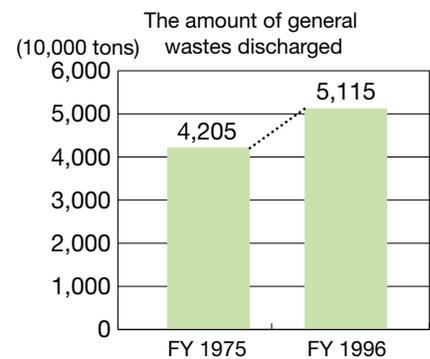


(Data by the Economic Planning Agency)

In exchange for such prosperity, huge amounts of wastes have been discharged.

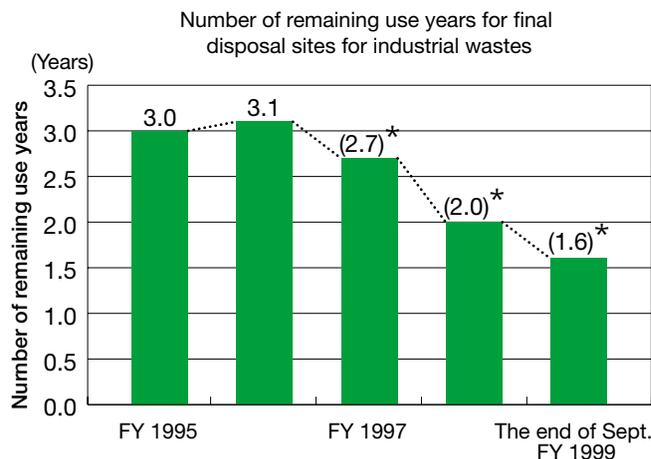


(Data by the Ministry of Health and Welfare)



(Data by the Ministry of Health and Welfare)

Waste disposal sites will soon be full.



(Note) The number with * is based on an interview survey conducted in October of FY 1999. As to FY 1999, the number is as of the end of September 1999. (Data by the Ministry of Health and Welfare)

Japan will be filled with wastes unless something is done.



Therefore, we have to tackle, right now...
Changing from a One-Way Society to the Recycling-based Society.

The Recycling-based Society

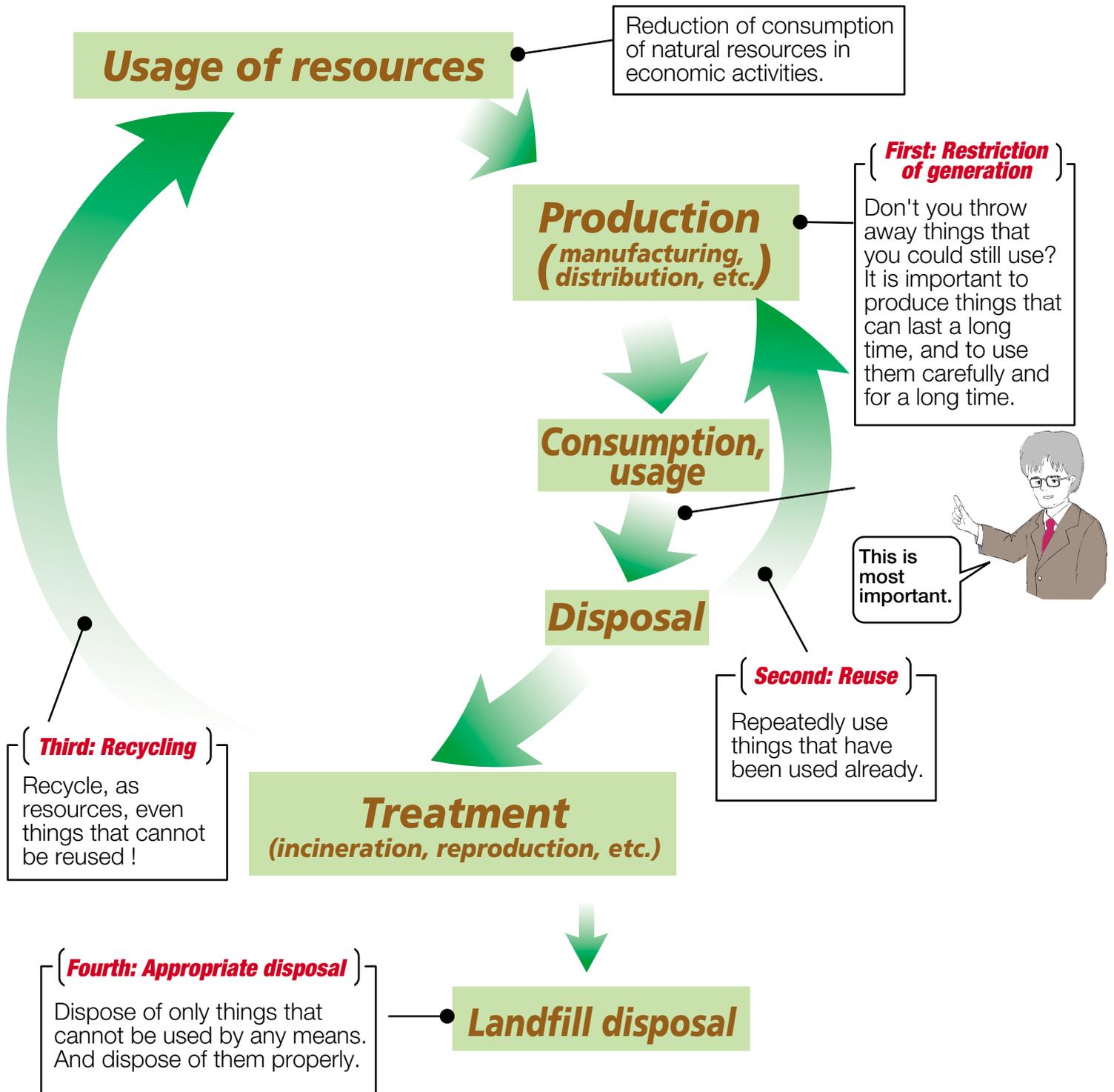
What is needed now is to urgently review our lifestyles and economic activities and pursue a society in which consumption of natural resources is restricted, with a reduced environmental burden.

Let's start the following right now.

Above all, try not to produce wastes, as much as possible.

Use produced wastes as resources, as much as possible.

Properly dispose of wastes that cannot be used by any means.



"The Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-based Society" was enacted in May 2000, in order to change Japan, in the 21st century, to **the Recycling-based Society**.

Points in the Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-based Society

This Basic Law aims to promote waste measures and recycling measures comprehensively and systematically.

Priority orders of efforts for waste disposal and recycling were stipulated by law for the first time.

In what order should waste disposal and recycling be tackled?

The first effort is to reduce production of wastes as much as possible.

Examples: To produce strong products and use them as long as possible.
To choose and purchase products with simpler and less packaging.

The second effort is to re-use, as many times as possible, things that are no longer needed.

Examples: To return empty beer bottles to a liquor store.
To recycle old clothes at a flea market.

The third effort is to recycle, as resources, things that cannot be used repeatedly.

Examples: To sort wastes before disposal.
To take TVs and refrigerators that are no longer being used, to an electric appliance store.

The fourth effort is to burn things that cannot be used as resources, and use the heat produced from their incineration.

Examples: To use the heat generated from burning wastes for power generation or a warm-water pool.

The last effort is to appropriately dispose of things that cannot be re-used or recycled and that must be disposed of, in a manner that does not contaminate the environment.

Examples: To appropriately burn wastes so as not to generate dioxins, etc.
To bury wastes so as not to influence the surrounding environment.



There are orders in handling wastes in considering the environment.



Wastes are useful things that can be used repeatedly or recycled.

"Discharging person's responsibility" and "Extended Producer Responsibility" are keywords. Pursuit of these responsibilities will be promoted.

Discharging person's responsibility

A person that discharges wastes, or who will discharge wastes, takes responsibility for recycling and disposal of the wastes.

Examples: To properly sort wastes.

A business party conducts recycling and disposal of its own wastes.

Extended Producer Responsibility

A business that produces and/or sells things bears a certain responsibility until even after the things become wastes.

Examples: To make considerations in designing or material selection to facilitate recycling and disposal.

To indicate materials, etc., to facilitate recycling and disposal.

To conduct taking-back or recycling of things that have become wastes, according to the characteristics of the things.



How to pursue this idea is a next step.

The responsibility of a person who discharges wastes, and the responsibility of a person who produces things, are clearly stated.



A basic plan will be established, and all of us, as a whole, will promote creation of the Recycling-based Society.

Opinions will be heard from the Central Environment Council regarding specific guidelines on the basic plan and ideas of the basic plan.

Opinions will be heard widely from the general public.



A basic plan to promote the formation of the Recycling-based Society will be established. The plan will be reviewed about every five years.



All of us together, as a whole, will promote the creation of the Recycling-based Society.

The Recycling-based Society is created by every citizen being a protagonist, so we all have to present good ideas and make good plans.

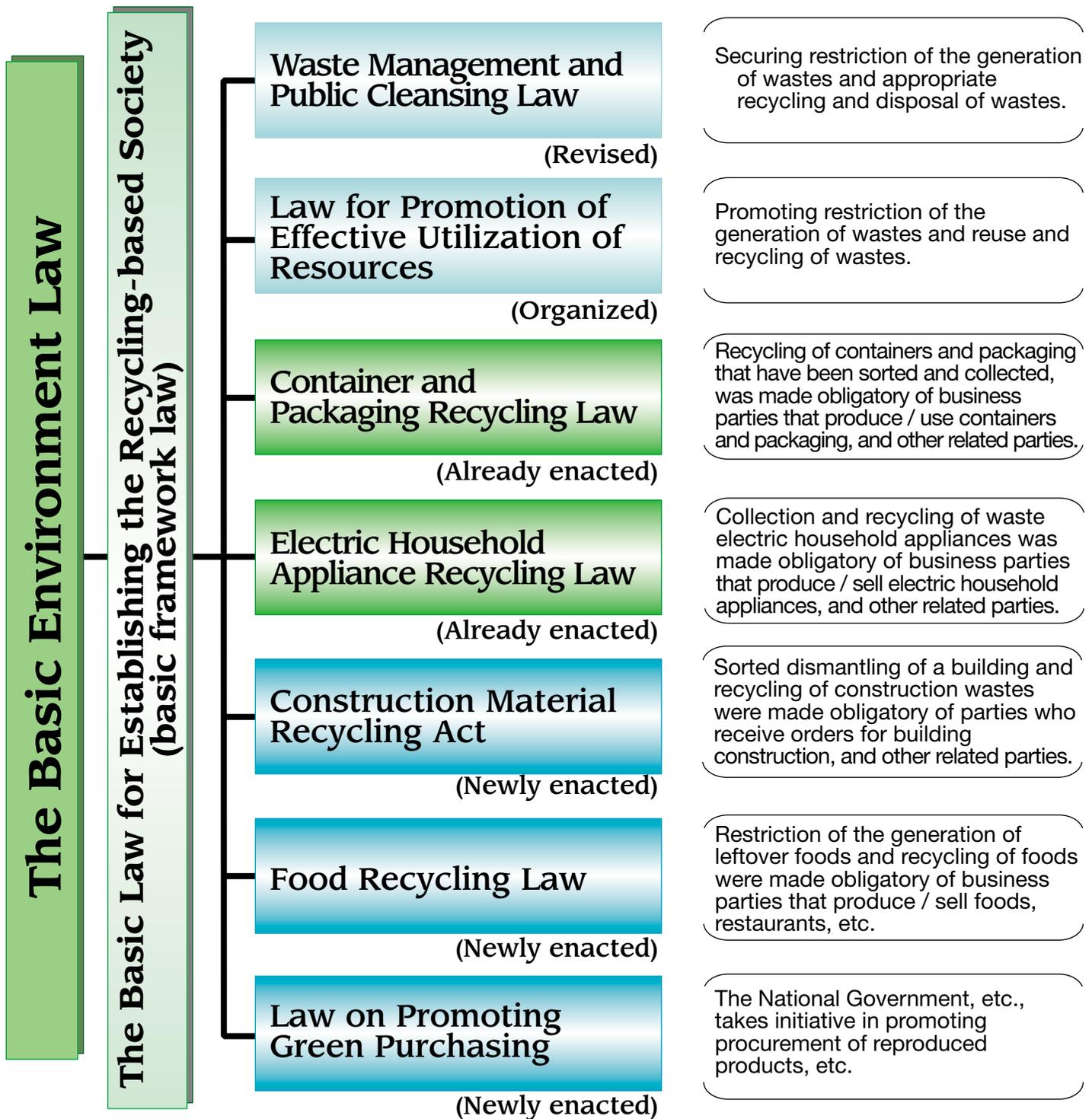


In addition, other measures that will be implemented by the Government, toward the establishment of the Recycling-based Society, are clarified.

- Measures to reduce production of wastes.
- Such measures as regulations to secure appropriate disposal of wastes.
- Measures to prevent the generation of pollution, such as by establishing waste disposal facilities.
- Measures to promote usage of reproduced products.
- Such measures as restoration of the original condition, when a problem in environmental conservation occurs by illegal disposal, etc.

In addition, **five individual laws**, such as revision of the **Waste Disposal Law**, were established.

Effective efforts will be promoted toward the establishment of the Recycling-based Society through integrated operation of these laws, centered on the Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-based Society.



Points in Laws Enacted and Revised Based on the Basic Law.

Revision of the Waste Management and Public Cleansing Law

- Establishment of a framework for prefectures to establish facilities for safe and appropriate waste disposal
- Strengthening of responsibility of a discharging business party (business party that discharges wastes)
- Prohibition of outdoor incineration, etc.

Law for Promotion of Effective Utilization of Resources (revision of the Law for the Promotion of Utilization of Recycled Resources)

- Introduction of measures for restricting (reducing) the generation of wastes through saving product resources and prolonging the use life of products
- Introduction of measures for reuse of parts, etc.
- Making it obligatory for business parties themselves to systematically tackle measures to reduce and recycle by-products.
- Making product collection and recycling obligatory of business parties, etc.

Construction Material Recycling Act

- Making it obligatory for a party that placed an order for dismantling of a building, to report to the prefectural governor.
- Making the following obligatory of a party who received an order for dismantling of a building, etc.
 - ① Sorted dismantling of specific construction materials (concrete, wood, etc.), etc.
 - ② Reuse of specific construction materials as resources
- A prefectural governor's advice, warning, or order to a party who received an order for dismantling, etc.
- Registration of building dismantling business parties with a prefectural governor, etc.

Food Recycling Law (law concerning promotion of reuse of food recyclable resources, etc.)

- The National Government establishes judgment standards related to efforts by food-related business parties (business parties that produce/sell foods, restaurants, etc.) , regarding restriction of the generation of leftover foods and their recycling.
- Food-related business parties will promote recycling, etc., according to the judgment standards.
- A registration system of reuse business parties will be established, and use of foods as fertilizer and feed will be promoted.

Law on Promoting Green Purchasing

- The National Government, etc., takes initiative in promoting the procurement of environmentally friendly products (eco-products), such as reproduced products, based on the procurement plan.
- Promotion of providing information helpful for "green purchasing," etc.

To Every Citizen

In the 21st century, we will say good-bye to the conventional "throw-away" society.

It is the time for us to work to establish the "Recycling-based society" for efficient utilization of the valuable resources our earth provides.

And the year 2000 is the first year of this challenge toward establishing the Recycling-based Society.

Now we are facing waste problems. The problems are directly related to the conveniences of modern life and an affluent society filled with things - like the front and back sides of a coin.

In order to tackle the problems, we have no choice but to review our economic activities and lifestyles, which presently consist of mass production, mass consumption, and mass disposal.

We have responsibility to assuredly pass down the environment we have inherited from our ancestors to future generations, in good condition. For that purpose, the Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-based Society was enacted, as a basic framework for such efforts.

- Above all, try not to produce wastes, as much as possible.
- Use the produced wastes as resources, as much as possible.
- Properly dispose of wastes that cannot be used by any means.

These three points are the basic message to you all, which were incorporated in the Basic Law.

Tomorrow is too late to start efforts toward establishing the Recycling-based Society.

Let's start our efforts today.

October 2000

Edited : Planning Division, Water Quality Bureau, Environment Agency

Homepage of the Environment Agency : <http://www.eic.or.jp/eanet/>



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