

Kitakyushu: An SDGs Future City

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 in the modernization and high economic growth of Japan. Industrial development however, also caused serious pollution in the region.

In the 1960s, air pollution in the Kitakyushu region became the worst in all of Japan, and the 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 the women of Kitakyushu, 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.



Sky filled with smoke (1960s)



Clear blue skies restored (today)



Dokai Bay, so badly contaminated that even E. coli bacteria could not survive (1960s)



Dokai Bay restored (today)

Worldwide Network of Environmental Cooperation

Through environmental cooperation with China's Dalian City, 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 was 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

SDGs Future City

Kitakyushu has led activities to create a more 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 the "Territorial Approach to the SDGs" program by the OECD in April 2018.

Moreover, in June 2018, 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.

Supporting Your Environmental Studies

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.



Environmental study concierge

The concierge helps to promote 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.



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Mobile environmental museum

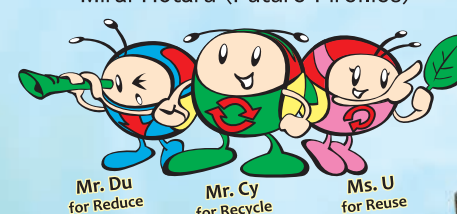
Our staff also visits schools, kindergartens, daycare centers, or local community centers, to give talks, conduct experiments, play games, and more activities related to the environment.



Takamiya

ENVIRONMENT MUSEUM

Mirai Hotaru (Future Fireflies)



Mr. Du
for Reduce

Mr. Cy
for Recycle

Ms. U
for Reuse



※SDGs : Sustainable Development Goals

Since its opening in 2002, 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.

Opening hours

9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

* Admission until 4:30 p.m.

Closed

Mondays (or the following day if Monday is a national holiday)
Year-end and New Year holidays
(December 29 to January 3)

Access Map



By JR train

Approx. 5 minutes by foot from Space World Station on the Kagoshima Main Line

By bus

Approx. 5 minutes by foot from Higashida Odori Iriguchi bus stop on Nishitetsu Bus

By car

Approx. 5 minutes by car from Otani I.C. of Kitakyushu Urban Expressway

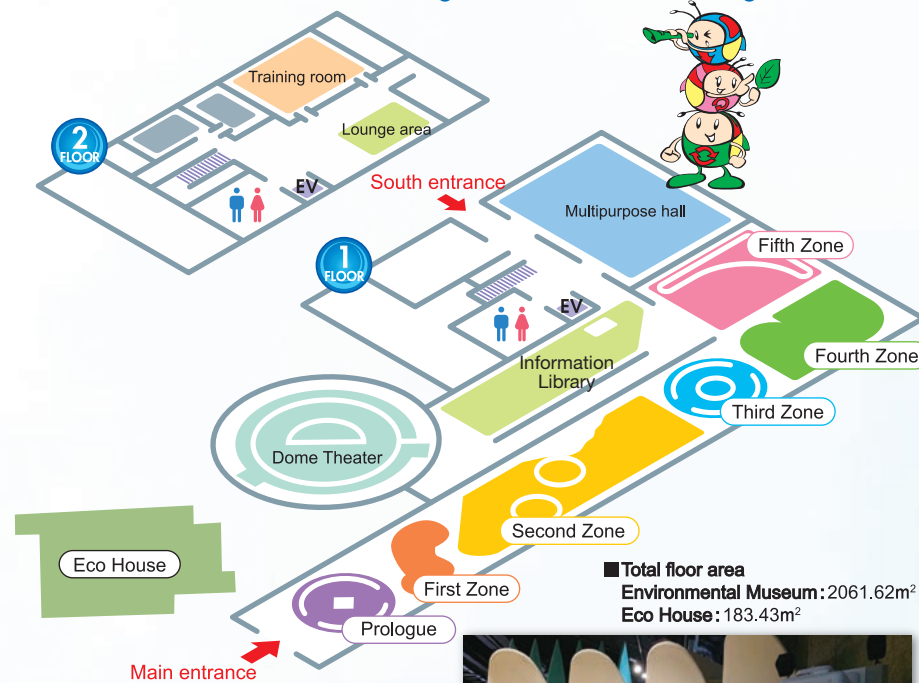
Center for Environmental Studies and Communications in Kitakyushu City

Prologue



Located into the north of Fukuoka Prefecture and serving as an entrance into Kyushu, Kitakyushu City boasts a rich natural environment facing the Japan Sea (Hibikinada) to the north and the Seto Inland Sea (Suonada) to the east.

Learn about the bountiful nature of the city through pictures and videos.



First Zone History of Kitakyushu City

Kitakyushu had flourished since ancient times, leveraging its geographical advantages as a transportation hub in Kyushu and as a center of coal production. In 1901, the government-run Yawata Steel Works was established in Yahata, and greatly contributed to the modernization and industrialization of Japan.

Here, you'll find exhibits of industry and academic history, and materials such as coal and iron ore that were actually used, as well as industrial products. In addition, world heritage sites in Kitakyushu City are introduced through videos.



Second Zone History of Overcoming Pollution

This zone introduces the history of overcoming pollution in Kitakyushu City, which was once considered impossible.

As the city developed into 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.

A movement started by citizens, efforts to solve pollution problems have grown to encompass industry, academia and government.

■ Citizens' efforts to stop pollution



- Members of a Women's Association in the Tobata area learned ways to study air pollution from university professors, as they were concerned about persistent dirt on their air-dried laundry.
- They then visited the city council and companies to explain their research results and the harm caused by pollution.
- They also produced an 8-mm film called "We Want Our Blue Sky Back" and used it to raise awareness.

■ Actions by companies



- Companies that were major sources of pollution made significant changes to reduce pollutants and waste by converting to a resource- and energy-saving production processes (introduction of cleaner production).
- They also took measures to prevent pollution in the air and water treatment processes.

■ Actions by the government



- The city government established a Pollution Monitoring Center to monitor the status of pollution.
- It also dredged Dokai Bay to remove pollutants.
- The government also improved public sewage systems and established green buffer zones.
- It signed pollution control agreements with companies.

Third Zone The Global Environment and Our Daily Lives

A zone where visitors can see, play, and learn about carbon neutrality and climate change.

The exhibitions challenge visitors to think about what each of us can do to take action for the future of the Earth.



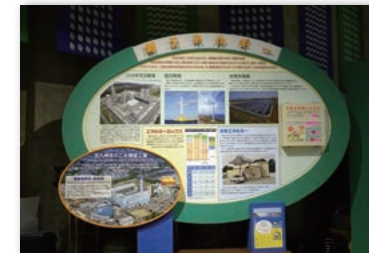
Fourth Zone Environmental Technologies and Eco-Friendly Lives

Here, visitors can learn about the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and the concept of resource recycling. The methods of separating waste in Kitakyushu City and eco-friendly products are also presented here. The zone also explains the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) in an easy-to-understand manner.



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.



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 natural 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.



Walking through the 4.6 billion-year history of the Earth with your imagination.

Kitakyushu Road of Earth



The "Road to Earth" allows visitors to experience the spectacular drama of 4.6 billion years - from the birth of the Earth to the present day - by walking along a 460-meter route while listening to a guide's explanation. This unique, hands-on environmental education program, designed to stimulate your imagination, was conceived by the Furano Nature School, founded by a screenwriter So Kuramoto.

It is the only program of its kind in Kyushu.

* The Road to Earth experience is currently closed due to construction.

