

From recycling to creating a new future for the world



Background and Reason for the Project

In Osaki Town, household waste is not incinerated, but converted into resources via thorough waste separation, which has led the town to achieve the highest recycling rate in Japan a total of 14 times.

The town's recycling efforts were prompted by the tight schedule for the remaining life of its landfill, which was put into service in 1992 in cooperation with the nearby city of Shibushi.

Project Aims

In the past, all waste in the town was sent to the landfill. Even though the town's waste problem was proving to be critical, constructing new incineration facilities and landfills is costly, and it can be difficult to garner resident support for the project. This meant the waste would need to be sorted and recycled instead.

In order to sort a variety of waste, the resident-led 'Osaki Recycle System' was established in cooperation and collaboration with businesses and the local government. The town administration, working jointly with community leaders, held 450 explanatory meetings over three months in 150 communities, gradually helping the residents better understand what and how to sort, collection dates, and drop-off locations.

Residents, who play a key role in this system, organized a new self-governing body specializing in waste disposal called the 'Sanitation Neighbourhood Association', in addition to sorting waste at home and at businesses, and have voluntarily taken charge

of management positions such as at waste stations and attending resource waste days.



Project Outline

Under the slogan 'Garbage When Mixed, Resources When Separated', the town began separating waste into 16 categories in 2000, which has now increased to 27 categories. They continue to achieve a recycling rate of over 80% by mixing food scraps with grass, plant trimmings, and wooden chopsticks, all of which make up the majority of the waste, to use for compost and other means.

Features and Innovations

Since 2011, Osaki Town has been providing technical assistance to several regions in Indonesia, utilizing their expertise in recycling technology, leading to international contributions and exchanges. They have also received inquiries from countries in the Caribbean, Pacific Islands and other regions, and

there is potential for further expansion of the Osaki system overseas.

In 2011, Bali, Indonesia participated in the 'International Cooperation Forum' held in Osaki Town, which fostered the beginning of a relationship between them.

In 2013, Osaki Town dispatched experts to conduct the 'Sustainable Waste Management Technology Dissemination Project' using CLAIR's model project to conduct on-site surveys and needs assessments. They are also currently conducting a JICA grassroots technical cooperation project in the same region.

In addition, recycling efforts have been shown to have a significant effect on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and, according to a survey by the National Institute for Environmental Studies, Osaki Town's emissions are 38.5% lower than those of municipalities that incinerate waste.

In order to further reduce the amount of landfill space, the town has been working on implementing a closed-loop recycling system for used diapers since 2022, and has started a collection project for disposable diapers as well.

Results of the Project

The amount of landfill waste was reduced from approximately 4,300 tons in 1998 to less than 1,000 tons by 2002, and is now around 600 tons, which is less than 80% of the original amount. The landfill is expected to remain operational for another 50 years.

With no incineration costs, the cost of waste disposal is about 90 million yen less per year, about two-thirds the national average.

The town has utilized a cumulative total of 150 million in proceeds from the sale of recyclable waste and implements projects to return the proceeds to residents, such as the 'Recycle Future Creation Scholarship Loan' and the 'Recycle Thank You Gift Certificate Project'.

Issues, Problems and Responses

With the declining birthrate and aging population,

the proportion of elderly residents exceeded 40% in 2022, and there is now the issue of a large number of 'residents who have difficulty disposing of waste'. In order to support the recycling system that the community has been working on together for many years, Osaki Town would like to establish a community support system to help enhance the vitality of elderly residents and foster collaboration with welfare facilities.

Future Developments (expected effects and project vision and issues)

The current Osaki Town has launched the 'Circular Village Concept' as its future vision, aiming to become a town where no waste is thrown away and people, goods, and resources such as energy are all circulated through the community.



Osaki Vision Map

In April 2021, the SDGs Promotion Council was established as a General Incorporated Association. The 'OSAKINI Project' undertaken by the Council is implementing various projects to realize Circular Village Osaki Town and to expand it to other regions, based on donations from companies. They are working not only with organizations overseas but also with local governments in Japan that have also faced challenges, such as having to replace incinerators.

Though Osaki Town has already achieved the highest recycling rate in Japan, the original goal was not to increase the recycling rate but to extend the

life of the landfill. However, with just recycling alone, the landfill will still eventually be completely full. From now on, the town is placing importance on creating a system in which everything is reused and recycled, and to spread this system throughout their community and society. They intend to go beyond recycling and ultimately build a circular society.

Reference URL

Osaki Town Waste, Recycling, Environment
Page

http://www.town.kagoshima-osaki.lg.jp/kn_eisei/kurashi/gomi/bunbetsu/rule.html

OSAKINI Project (Run by: The General
Incorporated Association Osaki Town SDGs
Promotion Council)

<https://www.osakini.org/>

2013 Local Government International
Cooperation Project Subsidy (Model Project)
<http://www.clair.or.jp/j/cooperation/model/17%20osaki.pdf>

Contact:

Division in Charge: Osaki Town Office Environmental
Policy Division, Environmental Policy Section
Tel.: +81-994761111