

Message from the President

The rich resources of our planet Earth have given birth to many forms of life and have supported the broad-ranging and ambitious activities of mankind. Nevertheless, recent human activities that have exceeded the healthy limits of resource usage have adversely impacted this life-sustaining ability of the Earth. Not only does this pose a threat to our coexistence with other life on Earth but it also threatens the future of the human race itself.

In order to bequeath a strong and bountiful Earth to future generations, each of us must reduce the environmental impact of our activities. For that to happen, governments, companies, citizen groups, and even individuals must be aware of the environmental impact that has been placed on the Earth and actively seek to reduce it. Mutual consultation and co-operation are also critical for efficient environmental conservation.

For the Ricoh Group, safeguarding this precious planet Earth is one of our corporate missions, and the environmental conservation activities of the entire Group are a part of our management philosophy. Specifically, we believe that the following two ideas are crucial: (1) we must reduce the environmental impact of our products, and (2) we must reduce the environmental impact of all of our corporate activities, including development, production, sales and services, used-product recovery, and recycling.

To survive in the next century, a company needs to be more environmentally oriented and carry out more socioeconomic practices. We have been through a period of Passive Stage, in which we simply dealt with regulations, and a period of Proactive Stage, in which we voluntarily took measures to reach higher goals in conserving the global environment. We are now in a period of Responsible Stage, in which we are increasing our economic value as a company to continue such activities. We need to aggressively appeal to society in helping decrease the overall negative impact on the environment while working with communities and citizen groups in activities that contribute to the environment. We also need to provide proper disclosure so that our customers will be able to see how we are pursuing appropriate environmental conservation activities. In this way, we will actively help build a society that recirculates resources, which is essential to environmental conservation, and contribute to the continued existence of mankind.

This report, which is publicly available, summarizes the details and results of our environmental conservation activities during fiscal 1999. We hope that this report will help as many of you readers as possible in discovering the extent of Ricoh Group's environmental measures. We also welcome your honest opinions to further improve our activities in terms of both quality and effectiveness.

Masamitsu Sakurai
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