

## Social Contribution Activities (Forest Preservation and the Youth Education)

Ricoh's mission as a corporate citizen is to communicate with the public and contribute to the creation of a more affluent society through the unified efforts of management, employees, and shareholders. To ensure that our efforts will continue, we established a social contribution fund. Every year, with the approval of shareholders at the general meeting, 1% of the difference between annual profit and annual dividends up to ¥200 million is added to the fund. The fund is used in activities dealing with global issues, such as global environmental conservation, sound education of the youth, the promotion of culture and sports, and the promotion of science and technology. The fund is also used in activities that respond to social needs and continuously contribute to local communities.

### Forest Preservation Activities

The global rate of deforestation is increasing. Between 1980 and 1990, 154 million hectares of tropical forests around the world disappeared, an area four times the size of Japan itself\*.

Deforestation is the cause of such serious problems as deteriorated ecosystems, loss of water resources, soil erosion, air pollution, and decreased CO<sub>2</sub> absorption. Japan has maintained a relatively high percentage of forested area at approximately 67%, while that of the entire Asian region has decreased to as low as about 16%. This decrease was caused in part by lumber from tropical regions being exported, 50% or more of which was destined for Japan and other industrialized countries in Europe and the Americas.

Ricoh established its social contribution program in fiscal 1999 to restore and preserve forests as well as to conserve biodiversity, which is being threatened worldwide. The program focuses on the preservation of virgin forests and the restoration of natural forests, including *satoyama* (community forests), in the Asian region, including Japan.

\* *State of the World's Forest 1999*, FAO

### ● Importance of Forest Preservation and Restoration

At present, various companies and national governments are engaged in afforestation activities around the world, planting eucalyptus trees or pine trees. Although such activities are beneficial to an extent in terms of preventing certain kinds of natural disasters and reducing greenhouse gases through the absorption of CO<sub>2</sub>, there are some doubts as to the extent of those benefits to the ecosystem. To restore the ecosystem and prevent the global environment from deteriorating further, it is important to create ideal forests by planting different native trees. Of course, it is also important to preserve the original forests that are naturally ideal.

### ● Promotion of Activities through Partnerships

Forest preservation activities are almost impossible to carry out without the understanding and cooperation of local communities. Therefore, it is important to help those communities become more environmentally aware, because once they are, they will gladly help out as much as they can. In poorer regions, it is also important to offer jobs to the local community in the areas of forest restoration, afforestation, forest management, and resource recirculation. With this in mind, Ricoh started six projects under its social contribution program in fiscal 1999 to restore and preserve forests. In fiscal 2000, two projects were added to

the program. The projects take the local ecosystem and community into careful consideration and work together with environmental NPOs, which are pioneers in forest preservation and restoration activities. Ricoh promotes partnerships with its overseas Group companies as well. Hideki International, for example, donated a printing machine to Colombo University through Ricoh's forest preservation project. Hideki International is one of Ricoh's agents in Sri Lanka, and Colombo University is home to the Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka. The donation was reported in major newspapers in Sri Lanka. Ricoh Philippines, as another example, offered prizes for a poster contest as one of its activities related to Ricoh's forest preservation project. Ricoh



Restoration of *satoyama* (Bangladesh)



Restoration of riverhead forests (Malaysia)



Conservation and restoration of environmental hot spots (Sierra Madre, the Philippines)

### Ricoh supported NPOs

Country	Project	NPO		
		Name	Description	Web site
Sri Lanka	Conservation and restoration of forests in world heritage areas	Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka	Research of birds in Sri Lanka and domestic and international environmental conservation activities through the protection of wild birds	—
Philippines	Conservation and restoration of forests in environmental hot spots	Conservation International	Using funds and human resources for the conservation of biodiversity (1,200 members in 32 countries)	<a href="http://www.conservation.org">http://www.conservation.org</a>
Brunei	Preservation of virgin mangrove forests	Ramsar Center Japan	Conducting activities to promote the ratification of the Ramsar Convention (on Wetlands) in Asia and the appropriate utilization of wetlands	<a href="http://www.museum-japan.com/rcj/">http://www.museum-japan.com/rcj/</a>
Madagascar	Survey of tree crowns in forests	Pro Natura	International NPO conducting forest preservation activities in Asia and Africa	—
Bangladesh	Restoration of <i>satoyama</i>	Bangladesh Poush	Providing environmental education, especially to children, and promoting afforestation activities in Bangladesh	—
Japan	Preservation and restoration of <i>satoyama</i>	Wild Bird Society of Japan	Conducting activities to protect wild birds and to preserve their habitats based on the idea that humans must share the earth with wild birds	<a href="http://www.wbsj.org/">http://www.wbsj.org/</a>
Malaysia	Restoration of natural forests	WWF	The world's largest environmental conservation NGO conducting a wide range of activities to conserve biodiversity, including conserving the ecosystem and preventing global warming	<a href="http://www.wwf.or.jp/(WWF Japan)">http://www.wwf.or.jp/(WWF Japan)</a>
Malaysia	Restoration of riverhead forests	OISCA	Promoting the independence of local communities and environmental conservation through rural development and greenery activities in the Asian-Pacific region	<a href="http://www.oisca.org/english/index.htm">http://www.oisca.org/english/index.htm</a>

Philippines is also independently supporting forest preservation activities conducted by Conservation International. Through these activities, local communities become more environmentally aware, which greatly promotes social and environmental contribution. Local communities become more aware of the importance of the natural environment when they observe how concerned Japanese companies are about preserving it. In Japan, Ricoh stresses the importance of forest preservation through advertisements in magazines and plans "eco-tours" to help bring this fact to the Japanese people even further.

### **Ichimura School of Nature**

Ricoh's social contribution activities are especially focused on promoting the sound education of Japan's youth. In fiscal 2000, the Company started a project to open the Ichimura School of Nature, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Kiyoshi Ichimura, the founder of Ricoh. At the Ichimura School of Nature, children from the 4th grade of elementary school to the 2nd grade of junior high school will spend every two weekends in a month plus summer vacation together to grow crops and take care of livestock. The school's basic aim is to help children learn how to earn a living from mother earth through experience and community living. The school will also teach them to cherish the natural environment, to be considerate of others, and to obey rules as a member of society as well as how to take care of themselves and how to discern safe activities from risky ones. The school will be opened in the Kanto Region (Yadoriki in Ashigarakamigun) in March 2002 and in Saga Prefecture, the birthplace of Kiyoshi Ichimura, in fiscal 2002.

### **Ricoh Kids Workshop**

Ricoh completely supports the Ricoh Kids Workshop organized by the New Technology Development Foundation\*. At the workshop, children from the 4th grade of elementary school to the 3rd grade of junior high school enjoy getting hands-on experience disassembling facsimiles and laser printers to see how they work. The workshop was held three times in fiscal 2000.

One of the children at the workshop said, "I had a great time taking the machines apart! It was neat to see what the inside of a machine was like." Another child said, "To be honest, I don't like science very much, but the experiment we got to do changed my mind. It was the first time I was really interested in doing a science experiment. I have a lot of friends who don't like science either, and I want them to participate in the workshop." The parents of the participants also appreciated the event. One parent was quoted as saying, "Usually, my child returns home from this kind of an event with nothing in particular to say about it. This time, however, as soon as he returned home he told me that he had a great time. The experiment he got to do seemed like a wonderful experience for him, especially when given enough time for explanations."

\* See side bar.



### **Promoting Children's Awareness of Environmental Issues**

Ricoh created ECO TODAY<sup>1</sup>, a Web site for elementary and junior high school students, in cooperation with students from Yokohama Digital Arts School. Through a series of dialogues between a boy, Osamu, and a girl, Hikaru, the site presents global environmental problems using easy-to-understand examples from daily life and describes what can be done to solve the problems. The Web site also introduces Ricoh's environmental activities. In fiscal 2000, Ricoh received first prize from Eco goo<sup>2</sup>, an environmental portal site.

1. See page 61.  
2. <http://eco.goo.ne.jp/>

### **■ The New Technology Development Foundation (Ichimura Foundation)**

In 1968, Kiyoshi Ichimura, founder of Ricoh, established the New Technology Development Foundation to commend and support technological development and research that contributes to society. After his death and in accordance with his will, all the securities that Ichimura owned (worth approximately ¥3 billion at that time) were donated to the foundation to finance the following.

**1) New technology development**  
The foundation supports domestic researchers working on practical uses for scientific technologies. The criteria used to determine whether a particular researcher gets support include the originality of the technology and the degree of economic benefit expected from the technology.

**2) The Ichimura Industrial Prize**  
The foundation awards a ¥10 million prize to business managers and technology developers who have contributed to the technical progress of scientific technologies, the development of industries, the promotion of culture, or the welfare of the people. At the 32nd Ichimura Industrial Prize Presentation Ceremony (held on April 28, 2000), the prize, which was being presented for the first time in three years, was awarded to Toshiba for its development of a large-capacity NAND flash memory and for its pioneering research into application fields.

**3) The Ichimura Academic Contribution Prize**  
The foundation presents the Ichimura Academic Contribution Prize to researchers or research groups that have contributed to the progress of academic fields through the development of practical technologies. Winning research projects are chosen from among those being conducted at universities and research institutes. In addition to the prize money, the winners are subsidized for travel expenses to international research seminars, etc.

**4) Promotion of the creativity of children**  
The foundation gives the Ichimura Idea Prize to encourage elementary and junior high school students to be creative and organizes the Ricoh Kids Workshop to help them enjoy learning about science and to raise their interest in scientific technologies.

**5) Plant research**  
The preservation and nurturing of plants are a worldwide responsibility. To this end, the foundation manages plant research facilities and supports plant researchers by providing them with buildings and fields in which to conduct research.