



The restoration of the earth's recuperative powers is a mission for companies. The Ricoh Group is actively promoting the conservation of ecosystems through partnerships with NPOs.

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Mr. Yasushi Hibi
Representative of the CI Japan Program

Our corporate activities are based on benefits offered by the global environment, including natural resources, but at the same time, such activities have damaged the global environment. The Ricoh Group is actively working toward the conservation of ecosystems from a global point of view in recognition of the fact that not only the reduction in environmental impact caused by corporate activities but also the repair of damage caused on the global environment is a corporate mission.

INTERVIEW

NPO Interview

Conservation International

Because all economic activities support ecosystems on the earth, companies, working with citizens, should make more positive efforts toward biodiversity.



Mr. Yasushi Hibi
Representative of the CI Japan Program

Profile
Established in 1987, **Conservation International** is headquartered in Washington, D.C., the United States. Approximately 900 members in 40 countries are engaged in ecological research and studies, conservation activities, cooperation with companies, and so forth, mainly in environmental hot spots that need urgent conservation measures for the sake of biodiversity.

Ricoh's support triggered the expansion of the project.

The project in the Republic of Ghana was really significant in that it is expected to lead to the expansion of conservation effects in the future. Ricoh was the only company that stood for the project at the time of its initiation. We believe that Ricoh approved of our activities because it had a good eye, which is unique to Ricoh.

As a result of the achievements brought about by the first phase, which had the support of Ricoh, we were able to obtain a large amount of financial aid from the United Nations. We are currently expanding the project into peripheral areas. In the future, we hope that the whole area will become prosperous and be supported by sustainable agricultural methods, with the preservation of virgin forests and the recovery of natural forests.

Q Why is Ricoh engaged in the conservation of ecosystems?

We believe that a company's social responsibility is to strive for not only the maintenance but also the positive recovery of the global environment.

Companies have contributed to the development of society by conducting business using natural resources generated by rich ecosystems and offering high-quality products and services. On the other hand, the activities of society, including mass production, mass consumption, and mass disposal, now far exceed the capacity of ecosystems. As a result, ecosystems are deteriorating, natural diversity is disappearing, and the aggravation of environments where we can live is rapidly progressing. As entities that carry out business activities supported by ecosystems, companies are required to not only strive to reduce environmental impact generated by business activities but also fulfill a social responsibility of maintaining and recovering ecosystems.

The Ricoh Group, which became aware of the significance of the impact corporate activities have on the global environment at an early stage, is promoting various efforts in all business fields and striving toward the conservation of ecosystems, aiming to limit environmental impact to within the capacity of the earth and realize a sustainable society.

Q What are the purposes of the activities and concrete standards used in selecting projects?

Ricoh keeps its eye on forest ecosystems, which are particularly abundant in biodiversity compared with many other kinds of ecosystems.

Ricoh has been engaged in the Forest Ecosystem Conservation Project since 1999, aiming at the conservation of ecosystems for the conservation of biodiversity. Our principle is to select activities that allow local residents to continuously use forest resources and promote such conservation with the participation and understanding of residents while conserving biodiversity.

Concrete standards for the selection of projects include the following:

- ◎ Places where biodiversity is observed and ecosystems are threatened with destruction
- ◎ Biodiversity that can be recovered through certain approaches
- ◎ Pilot activities (no achievements have been made yet) that can be supported by society
- ◎ Projects that realize both improvement in residents' quality of life and the conservation of the natural environment

In addition, priority is given to areas with a natural environment that is valuable from a global point of view.

At present, nine projects* are being continuously promoted in eight countries around the world.

* For further details, [See page 63.](#)

Q What partnerships have you formed with environmental NPOs?

Partnerships with groups that are well informed of biodiversity and the conservation of ecosystems are essential for Ricoh to promote ecosystem conservation.

We have formed partnerships with groups that have approved of our ideas and now have a global base for activities. For example, in 2000 the "Tropical Rain Forest Restoration Project in the Philippines" was the first opportunity for us to collaborate with Conservation International (CI). With the addition of the "Tropical Rain Forest Restoration Project in Ghana," which started in 2002, our involvement has now doubled.

CI is an organization that has vast scientific knowledge about biodiversity and was established to solve environmental problems, placing priority on the relationship between ecosystems and people. Because the stance of CI in its activities coincides with the ideas of Ricoh, the trust between the two as partners has become increasingly deep-rooted, and projects are progressing without a hitch.

We believe that we are able to offer support to areas that have the most urgent need of preservation on the earth thanks to such organizations as CI.

The conservation of biodiversity is an issue that should be addressed by companies, NPOs, and the administration in close cooperation.

Ricoh is highly rated for its environmental management, through which it reduces environmental impact and simultaneously realizes corporate growth. I think Ricoh is making steady progress toward the conservation of biodiversity, which is a more positive activity for the benefit of the global environment, proving that the company is engaged in activities in all fields in a well-balanced manner. There are few companies in Japan that understand the relationship between the global environment and companies as Ricoh does. The activities of society are based upon the benefits of biodiversity. I believe that the conservation of biodiversity is one of the responsibilities that companies should fulfill as corporate citizens even if it is not directly related to business. The conservation of biodiversity cannot be realized by only NPOs or companies. CI intends to continue establishing good partnerships with prescient companies and carry out effective projects.

