

Thinking Together, Advancing Together

Regional Communities and the YKK Group

The YKK Group aims to contribute to the development of each region through business activities that utilize the characteristics unique to each region, and also to help solve the issues of regional communities as a participating member.



Global Business Management Structure

72 countries/regions
108 companies
(As of March 31, 2019)



Start of overseas operations
(New Zealand)
1959



YKK Group Tree Planting Day
The number of trees planted so far:
50,000 or more

"Becoming Part of the Local Community" — The "Cycle of Goodness" in Our Operations

Since our foundation, the YKK Group has valued links to our communities, both at home and abroad, where we do business.

Our founder, Tadao Yoshida, said the following:

communities and the economies of their respective countries. ”

(Excerpt from The Complete Works of Tadao Yoshida, Vol. II, Management Philosophy)

“YKK exists all around the globe, an expanding Cycle of Goodness.

In the course of this expansion, I have always told everyone that YKK is not just a Japanese firm; it exists in its own manifestations in the United States and Germany, for example.

We cannot expect to be loved unless we are constantly contributing to local

Yoshida also explained that when people are working abroad, "They should show respect for a place's customs, practices and traditions, and feel as if they were actually born there." At the YKK Group, we believe in being part of the local community.

We constantly bear in mind the need to think locally and work with communities to prosper and grow together in accordance with the YKK philosophy of the "Cycle of Goodness."



YKK founder Tadao Yoshida with local children

History of Community Dialogues in Kurobe City, Toyama Prefecture

The YKK Group has hosted Stakeholder Dialogues annually since 2010 to provide a forum for the exchange of opinions. The YKK Group has held an ongoing series of dialogues with a range of stakeholders, including local residents and administrations, in the

city of Kurobe City, Toyama Prefecture. By sincerely accepting the opinions we have been offered and responding similarly, we have been able to use them to solve local issues and improve the business activities of the YKK Group.

Major themes of each dialogue

Session 1 (June 2010)

What is Expected of the YKK Group in Building a Sustainable Society



Session 2 (April 2011)

The YKK Group and Symbiosis with the Natural World



Session 3 (March 2012)

What is Expected of Monozukuri at the YKK Group



Session 4 (April 2013)

Solving Social Issues in the YKK Group



Session 5 (April 2014)

What is Expected of the YKK Group Within the Local Community



Session 6 (May 2015)

The YKK Group in "Thinking Together—Regional Communities and the YKK Group"



Session 7 (April 2016)

Low-Carbon Urban Development



Session 8 (April 2017)

Building a Low-Carbon City without Reliance on Automobile Usage



Session 9 (April 2018)

Using the Facilities of the YKK Group to Pursue Harmony with Nature



▼ Main opinions received and the responses of the YKK Group (from FY2010 to FY2018)

Main opinions and comments	Main responses by the YKK Group
Contributions to the environment and reducing impacts	
Survey of groundwater use over the Kurobe River alluvial fan region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of groundwater conducted jointly with the administration and a university. Introduced an air conditioning system that uses groundwater heat Promoted an environmental plan until 2020, and moving ahead with formulating a long-term vision for 2050 and beyond.
Response to new energies rather than relying on fossil fuels	
Response to a low-carbon society	
Monozukuri	
Responses to low-carbon, recycling societies, and society's needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched products that are environmentally-friendly, such as the APW vinyl window series that offers high thermal insulation performance, and recyclable zippers. Rebuilt the Kurobe Furumido Plant, constructed a plant for machine parts dedicated to zippers for the Machinery and Engineering Group Promoted active communication such as by using an external awards system
Further promotion of environmental measures in plants.	
Making the results of manufacturing "visible"	
Participation in the local community	
Utilization of Furusato-No-Mori (local recreation forests) and biotopes (community exchanges, training the next generation, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulated concepts for Furusato No Mori and water areas and created a development plan for five years hence. Helped plant black pines as wind breaks with local residents Employees provided environmental education at daycare facilities, etc. Using Center Park as the foundation of our educational tourism, we offered hands-on learning for school trips, etc.
Using Furusato No Mori as places to foster a desire to make forests together	
Rolling out school visits	
Not just industrial tourism, but towards educational tourism	
Urban development in Kurobe City	
Creating a system that utilizes local resources, and working with companies and city residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiatives towards creating low-energy homes and towns through passive design that utilizes natural energy Effective fusion of YKK Group personnel infrastructure with Kurobe community infrastructure
Achieving a Kurobe-style low-carbon lifestyle	
Promoting the achievement of a low-carbon compact city which does not depend on personal automobiles	



Kurobe River Alluvial Fan

Considering the Creation of a Sustainable Society from Kurobe

The YKK Group Stakeholder Dialogues have reached their tenth session. Stakeholders and employees assembled in the Kurobe Office, located in the city of Kurobe in Toyama Prefecture, where they looked back on previous dialogues and exchanged opinions on the theme of the "YKK Group Environmental Vision 2050." (Implemented on April 25, 2019)

Tenth Stakeholder Dialogue



Participants (from left to right)

- **Nature conservation group representative:** Yuki Ishikura (Manager of Interaction & Cooperation Promotion Department, Toyama Environment Foundation)
- **Business partner:** Akira Hirano (President & CEO, Hirano Komuten K.K.)
- **Participant from local government authority:** Emi Makino (Manager, Living Environment Section, Citizen Affairs Department, Kurobe City)
- **Consumer representative:** Rika Inagaki (Promoter of global warming prevention efforts in Toyama)

- **Facilitator:** Professor Noriyasu Kunori, Ph.D.
- **Foreign exchange student:** Bian Guanzhen (Department of Social Infrastructure Engineering, Graduate School of Engineering, Toyama Prefectural University)
- **Naturalist:** Kikuyo Matsuki (Vice Chairperson, Kurobe Gorge Naturalist Society)
- **Student:** Yuta Takegoshi (Department of Environmental and Civil Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Toyama Prefectural University)
- **Local resident:** Yoko Murata (Vice-Chair, Muratsubaki Promotion Society)

Repeated Dialogues Bear Fruit in a Range of Fields

In the first half of the dialogue, the contents of the previous nine sessions were summarized. Professor Kunori, who had served as facilitator from the first session, reflected that "each subsequent dialogue has broadened the themes and issues beyond what we expected." These dialogues, which began from expectations towards the YKK Group, have developed into major themes such as solving local issues and the creation of low-carbon cities, building on the various social trends of the time. The cumulative result of these dialogues sustained over a decade have moved both us and the region firmly towards the realization of a sustainable society.

Considering Contributions to a Sustainable Society with a View to Achieving the Environmental Vision 2050

The YKK Group has established a new vision, the YKK Group Environmental Vision 2050, which lays out our long-term initiatives towards the environment. In the second half of the dialogue, a workshop was held where participants shared opinions on how the YKK Group could work with local communities, what sort of future it wants to create, and how it will do so. (See pp. 9-10 for details of the Environmental Vision 2050.)

Laying out a Vision of the Future We Want to Achieve Together Based on "Uniquely Kurobe" Concepts

For the four themes of the YKK Group Environmental Vision 2050, each group shared opinions on what it wanted Kurobe to be like in 2050 and how to achieve this.

Responses to Climate Change

Kurobe, with its mountains, rivers, and sea, is an area rich in topographical variety. It would be good if we could make use of these features to collect electricity generated by geothermal power plants, hydropower from rivers, sea current energy, solar, and other sources, and achieve "local production and local consumption" of electricity in the Kurobe region. Considering the grid on a regional scale, will, I believe, lead to the realization of a compact city.

Sustainable Use of Water

To use water resources sustainably, we can consider the issue from three perspectives: (1) reducing the amount of water we use (not using water in the first place, or finding technologies to replace it); (2) reducing the environmental impact of waste water (recycling water); and (3) ensuring water resources (creating forests to stockpile groundwater, for example). I think it would be wonderful if the YKK Group could develop the technologies to achieve these, and we could bring about a "zero water factory" that neither uses nor discharges water in Kurobe.

Utilizing Resources

I believe it is becoming increasingly important to design products from the perspective of their lifecycles. I would like the YKK Group to bring about monozukuri that considers product consumption and disposal. Examples include the development of perfect "non-recycle products" that do not need recycling, or improving technologies and systems for sorting and recycling materials.

Coexistence with Nature

In addition to creating forests, which the YKK Group is putting its efforts into, there are environmental issues that need to be dealt with in Kurobe, such as the accumulation of sediment in dams and seashore erosion. I expect the Group together with its stakeholders to consider innovative methods and engage in solving these issues. In addition, I hope that Kurobe can make use of its location connected to Osaka and Tokyo by the Hokuriku Shinkansen and its beautiful natural environment to hold environment summits and other events in Kurobe or otherwise serve as a place to spread environmental measures.



Professor Kunori making his opening remarks



Looking back on past dialogues

Thoughts after Holding the Stakeholder Dialogues

These dialogues, which got their start in 2010 at the Kurobe Office based on the theme that "stakeholder dialogues are a forum to hold frank dialogues between a company and the related parties who are directly or indirectly affected by the company, and to consider together the upcoming society, including corporate activities," have now reached their tenth anniversary. I consider it quite notable that this project has continued for a whole decade. Looking back over these ten years, there has been a change from getting opinions regarding the company's environmental measures to "how we can create a better society with our stakeholders." The true value of these dialogues will come out in terms of how the YKK Group will connect with and contribute to the local community.



Participants and employees formed groups to share opinions and present their ideas



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