Having experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake, which struck on March 11, 2011, Mitsui formulated a basic policy on disaster recovery, comprising a host of activities through which the Company is providing necessary support to the affected region.

Basic Policy on Disaster Recovery

To ensure effective and swift assistance for the stricken region, we recognized the importance of understanding how the needs of the region would change over time as the situation evolved. We also understood the need to put in place a Companywide organization to consider and implement concrete support measures. Plotting our activities along a time axis, we segmented them into “emergency response” and “medium- to long-term response” efforts, the former focused on assisting restoration and the latter on leveraging Mitsui’s capabilities to offer support via sustained operations. With the aim of administering effective support, we created plans and proposals for responses in each category, centered on Companywide organizations.

Emergency Response

Immediately following the disaster, a quick response was needed to procure relief supplies, fuel, and other items. Based on the Guidelines for Disaster Relief, on the day following the disaster—March 12—we resolved to contribute monetary donations. On March 23, we established the Disaster Relief Study Group and the Great East Japan Earthquake Recovery Support Team, operating under the council’s supervision. These bodies promptly decided to organize volunteer and support activities extending beyond the scope of our regular business activities. We backed up this assistance by simultaneously conducting aid that falls within the realm of our core business, such as providing urgent imports of fuel and offering support to devastated companies.

Medium- to Long-Term Response

To achieve reconstruction of the stricken area, Mitsui considered it necessary to create a support business that dovetails with its regular business and takes community needs into consideration. In June 2011, we set up a Domestic Business Development Department within our Corporate Planning & Strategy Division to provide sustainable support involving the development of businesses with close community ties and serving to reinvigorate the region.

- Proposals and support will be offered to the municipal governments in affected regions working to revive agriculture or processed marine product industries or stimulate community development and tourism.
- Smart community proposals will be offered to cities looking to make themselves more earthquake resilient, more elderly friendly, or more environmentally sound.
- Biomass, mega solar, and other renewable energy ventures will be pursued.
- Initiatives such as constructing temporary housing or developing car sharing programs will be conducted in conjunction with municipal governments, regional companies, and NPOs.

With the aim of supporting the post-earthquake reconstruction effort through our business, we will conduct the following region-based, region-invigorating ventures into the medium-term to long-term.
Support Projects

(1) Responses implemented during the year after the disaster

- On March 12, immediately after the earthquake struck, we earmarked ¥400 million in support funding and promptly launched efforts to restore the stricken region and offer emergency assistance to the people affected. We sent solar LED lanterns, food supplies, disinfectants, and other items to evacuation centers and contributed monetary donations to aid other quick-response efforts to assist the affected region. We extended our support efforts to include Mitsui operations throughout Japan and overseas, calling for donations to the stricken region from affiliated companies and overseas subsidiaries.

- In August, we raised the amount earmarked for support funding to ¥800 million, based on the support needs of the stricken region. In addition, we contributed lumber from our Company-owned forests for the construction of a temporary library in the city of Rikuzentakata, in Iwate prefecture, a move designed to foster communication among children and provide books for them to read.

- Employees and directors also took part in voluntarily support activities. A donation drive raised ¥52 million in monetary donations, and some 600 people participated in volunteer activities, which are ongoing.

- In addition to stepping up our efforts to supply the Tokyo and Tohoku electric power companies with crude oil and low-sulfur heavy oil, we increased our supply of liquefied natural gas (LNG), chiefly from projects in which we participate.
Medium- to long-term response

Mitsui & Co., Ltd. Environment Fund

Following the disaster, this fund quickly ramped up its Restoration Grant, which funds restoration activities and research for three years at the longest that address global environmental issues. Including general assistance efforts, the fund made four solicitations for assistance projects. Selection criteria for Restoration Grant emphasized donations targeting reconstruction for disaster victims and prioritized residents and organizations from the stricken region, particularly organizations in Tohoku. As a result, out of 910 applications we decided to fund 98 restoration activities and research projects totaling ¥1,131 million. (Of this amount, Restoration Grant of ¥943 million was provided, spanning 77 projects.) In these ways, we contributed to a broad range of post-disaster restoration activities, spanning community restoration, temporary housing, radiation countermeasures, and reconstruction of the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries. Each year, Mitsui holds a networking event for organizations to which the fund has provided assistance. In fiscal 2011, this event was held in Sendai and themed “Creation and Cooperation,” in keeping with the Reconstruction Grant.

Car-sharing activities

Many vehicles were damaged by the disaster, affecting the mobility of people in the affected region. Mitsui supported reconstruction efforts by providing a car-sharing service in the city of Ishinomaki, Miyagi prefecture, to disaster victims as well as companies and NPOs involved in reconstruction activities.

Kesennuma Seafood Processing Region

Seafood processing is a core industry in the city of Kesennuma, Miyagi prefecture, much of which was devastated by tsunami and fires. In cooperation with Sumitomo Corporation, Mitsui formed a cooperative organization including the Miyagi prefecture, the city of Kesennuma, and local chambers of commerce to help reconstruct the industry through swift and creative initiatives. Local businesses formed a new cooperative and pooled their resources to provide the sophisticated functions necessary for the industry’s success. These efforts were aimed at creating new businesses and new employment in the seafood processing region.