

Our Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake



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 supporting via sustainable businesses implemented by leveraging Mitsui’s capabilities. 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 core 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.



Our Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake

Medium- to Long-Term Response

To achieve reconstruction of the stricken area, Mitsui considered it necessary to create a business that dovetails with its core business and takes community needs into consideration. In June 2011, we set up a Domestic Business Development Department within our Corporate Planning & Strategy Division, which will utilize the Tohoku Office as its response center when striving to provide sustainable support and pursuing coordination with relevant headquarter business units.

- 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

Medium- to long-term response

Mitsui & Co., Ltd. Environment Fund

Our support for reconstruction assistance activities and research that took into consideration global environmental issues, which had been carried out under the rubric of a “restoration grant” in fiscal 2011 and fiscal 2012, has been carried out within the framework of a general grant since fiscal 2013. This is what we aimed to support on an ongoing basis as an important issue, along with the particular fields of activity and research, which is the subject of environment fund efforts for reconstruction that require support over the medium to long term. We have contributed to restoration in a wide range of fields, such as building a mechanism for the realization of a sustainable community and recovery of reconstruction and autonomous features of life in the affected areas, technical assistance for drip hydroponics with low environmental impact, and construction of the base of supply stability of locally produced seedlings for greening in the affected areas.



Mega-solar power generation business – Verification Tests of remotely-operated LED streetlights

Since August 2013, a 3.6-megawatt solar power generation plant build by Mitsui has been in operation within ‘the Okumatsushima “Kizuna” Solar Park’, an area designated by Higashimatsushima City as a “Future City”, a model environmentally-sound city of the future. In the public parking lot, which is designated as a disaster-preparedness base, carport solar power generators, which can be used to provide emergency power in the event of a disaster, are installed. In the summer of 2014, additional solar power generation plants will become operational in Natori City, Miyagi Prefecture and Koriyama City, Fukushima Prefecture. Moreover, 36 LED street lamps have been installed at Takagi Woods Athletic Park and verification tests are being conducted by remotely operating the 36 LED street lamps with energy saving control.



The Mega – solar power generation plant in Higashimatsushima city



Kesenuma marine food Processing Industrial Area

Marine food processing, a core industry in Kesenuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, suffered devastating damage as a result of the tsunami and widespread fires triggered by the March 11 earthquake. Mitsui, in cooperation with Sumitomo Corporation, is working to contribute to the early recovery of the industry through creative initiatives in collaboration with the Miyagi Prefectural Government, Kesenuma City and local chambers of commerce. The aim is to create a marine food processing area to spur job creation and the development of new business by providing support to the Kesenuma Shishiori Processing Cooperative, which was launched in the summer of 2012 by local marine food processors, through initiatives that include the establishment of a joint business to provide the functions necessary for the modernization of the industry, and the reestablishment of sales routes severed by the disaster.

Sendai Aquarium (provisional name)

Mitsui, together with Kamei Corporation, Yokohama Hakkeijima Inc., Yurtec Corporation, Kahoku Shimpo Publishing Co., Sendai Mitsukoshi Ltd. and Organization for Promoting Urban Development, has commenced construction of the Sendai Aquarium (provisional name). Located in Takasago Central Park in the hinterland of Sendai Port, the new facility will be one of the largest aquariums in the Tohoku region. Visitors will be able to enjoy a relaxing encounter with the Tohoku marine environment and marine creatures in approximately 100 display tanks. The aim of the project is contribute to the revitalization to the regional economy by creating a new symbol of recovery, a venue for gatherings of local people, and tourism resource for the Tohoku region.



An image of the large-scaled tank that will be installed in Sendai Aquarium (provisional name)

Documentary "Textbook for our Future – For Our Children" of the Recovery Assistance Media Team broadcast on BS channel 12

Mitsui is supporting the production and broadcasts of the documentary series "Textbook for Our Future – For Our Children" broadcasted weekly on BS12ch TwellV, a television broadcaster operated by a Mitsui subsidiary. The episodes, which feature residents of disaster-stricken areas speaking about their day-to-day lives, convey how individuals are working together in an effort to overcome hardships ensuing in the aftermath of the devastating 3.11 earthquake and tsunami. Through the documentary series, the program continues to inform viewers about the current state of affairs in the disaster zone, while providing a means of communicating the strength and goodness of the Japanese people to future generations.



Donation to scholarship fund for orphans of fallen firefighters

Mitsui will contribute a total of ¥100 million over the five years from 2012 to 2016 to a scholarship fund, established by Shoubou Ikueikai, a public interest incorporated foundation, for orphaned children of firefighters killed while responding to the Great East Japan Earthquake. Countless emergency responders affiliated with fire departments lost their lives in the line of duty while engaging in relief and rescue operations in the disaster zone in the immediate aftermath of the calamity, with many leaving behind children. This scholarship provides support for those children to help them achieve their dreams for the future and expand their potential.



Participation in the TOMODACHI Initiative

Mitsui is participating in the TOMODACHI Initiative which seeks to provide education to the younger generation geared at encouraging them to work toward strengthening the Japan-U.S. relationship well into the future. The initiative is spearheaded by a public-private partnership involving the U.S. Government and the U.S.-Japan Council, a public interest corporation, while drawing its inspiration from the spirit of cooperation and friendship between Japan and the U.S. in Operation TOMODACHI, launched after the Great East Japan Earthquake to provide assistance in devastated areas through joint efforts of the U.S. military and the Japan Self-Defense Forces. For three years beginning in 2013, Mitsui contributions amounting to US\$1 million will be used in implementing the TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program, intended to facilitate exchanges among young professionals from Japan and the U.S.

The program provides ten American and ten Japanese outstanding young professionals from the business and government sectors with an opportunity to participate in a unique delegation exchange that broadens their perspectives in their professional fields, through meeting with young leaders and business entrepreneurs.

In 2013, the American delegation came to Hiroshima and Tokyo, and the Japanese delegation visited Seattle and Washington D.C.

For more details please see the TOMODACHI initiative website:



Our Response
to the Great
East Japan
Earthquake

LED streetlights donated to temporary housing complexes in the town of Minamisanriku

Whereas temporary housing complexes have been built in newly-cleared woodlands on high ground to provide safety from future tsunamis, many such developments still do not have streetlights to light roadways enabling access to the facilities and their surroundings. The lack of the lights is posing significant dangers to pedestrians and drivers after dark. Alerted to the situation by the Minamisanriku Volunteer Center, Mitsui has contributed 20 solar LED streetlight units to the town, in the hope of helping to ensure the safety and security of those living in the housing complexes.



Minamiaizu Midori no Tohoku Genki Camp for children held in Mitsui's forests in Fukushima Prefecture

In August 2012 and July 2013, a total of 115 children took part in the "Minamiaizu Midori no Tohoku Genki Camp" in "Tashiro Forest" in Fukushima Prefecture, which is one of Mitsui's forests. Three four-day, three-night camps were held to provide psychological support to children in Fukushima impacted by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, and were staffed by 30 employee volunteers from Mitsui and Mitsui Bussan Forest. A team of psychological and medical professionals along with a team of camp counselors specializing in outdoor activities planned the camp itinerary, which was geared toward assisting with the restoration of disaster-afflicted areas in Fukushima Prefecture. Meanwhile, Tokyo Gakugei University Professor Masayuki Kobayashi, a clinical psychology education specialist, acted as the chair of the camp's planning committee. Mitsui intends to continue making the best use of its forests toward lending support in regions hit by disaster.



Donation of wooden meeting house to the Kesen Carpenter Architectural Research Association in Rikuzentakata City

On March 2013, Mitsui donated a meeting house constructed from cedar harvested in the local Kesen region to the Kesen Carpenter Architectural Research Association in Rikuzentakata City in Iwate Prefecture.

"Kesen carpenters" comes from the Kesen region of Iwate Prefecture, highly regarded across Japan for their skills at building structures such as shrines, temples and houses, as well as woodworking. Mitsui offered its support toward building the association a new meeting house, to help with passing on the traditional techniques of these carpenters to future generations, by replacing the previous facility which was damaged in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Mitsui intends to continue providing support in this realm going forward, in the hope that Kesen Carpenter initiatives will revitalize the local forest products and industry that may also increase the local employment which will lead to the revival from the disaster.

