

## **Introduction**

Based on the acknowledgement that environmental measures are essential, Japanese Printing Industry takes continuous approaches with the slogan “the printing industry is the environment industry”.

Japanese environmental history is divided into two; one is the era of pollution problems. The other is the era of environmental protections on a global scale. In light of these histories,

I would like to state recent Japanese environmental legislations and printing industry’s environment approaches.

## **Growing social impact of environmental issues**

In 1950’s, post war years of spectacular economic growth, the Japanese economic social structure had been changed to industry-driven. Then, the large-scale production and the consumption period started. In this period, policies emphasizing the economy were taken and environment protections were not so considered.

As a result of these, the air pollution and the deterioration of water qualities became the serious environment contamination and escalated into large pollution problems which threatened human health.

These pollution problems had some features; influenced limited areas, sources of contaminants were easily specified, and possibilities to be restrained by short-term counterpart measures. Therefore regulations to control emission were introduced for each source and each contaminant, and brought a certain level of improvement.

After 1980’s countermeasures against global environment problems such as global warming, acid rain ozone destruction, depletion of natural resources have been strongly requested. Features of these problems are totally different from pollution problems; the extent of influence on global scale, wide range of contamination sources, and requirement of understanding and practice of personal lifestyle change.

Countermeasures for such problems are complicated and difficult, and need to be taken continuously.

In addition to these environmental issues, the material circulation “Reduce Reuse Recycle” requires everyone’s participation and continuous practices for the creation of a recycling society.

### **Governmental responses to complex environmental issues on global scale, including environmental legislation and regulations**

With this historical background, Japan repealed the basic law for environmental pollution controls, and enacted the basic environment law in accordance with three fundamental principles “enjoyment and future success of environmental blessings”, “creation of a society ensuring sustainable development with reduced environmental load” and “ active promotion of global environmental conservation through international cooperation”.

In this law, environment protection measures are implemented exhaustively, such as designing of environment basic plans, frameworks and regulations for environmental protections, green procurements, and environmental educations. These measures have controlled methods, economical methods and procedural methods, and each method is taken according to the substance of the measure. In these years, countermeasures become more complicated and need to last. Then methods with voluntary efforts are reflected in measures.

### **Printing industry’s approach to environmental issues**

The printing industry produces products by putting energy and raw materials and through many printing procedures. In the manufacturing process, we are placing burden on the environmental media, such as the air, the water and the earth, and also placing environment load on the ambient environment, noise, vibration and foul odor, and generating waste. There are differences depending on sizes of enterprises, types of printing, and varieties of process, however it is clear that we are one of the industries which burden on the environment.

JFPI considered “the printing industry is the environment industry” and undertook efforts in a law-abiding manner. However, voluntary efforts have intensified more than legislations in these days, and we are taking approaches to reduce environment burdens.

As one of voluntary efforts, the first is the formulation and implementation of action plans for the reduction of hazardous air pollutant. The government has ordered the dichloromethane emission limitation, and the printing industry accomplished the own target significantly and also achieved air quality standards.

The second one is the formulation and implementation of action plan for the VOC emission reduction to prevent photochemical oxidant which is one of the air environment problems. This effort is making gains and it would be possible to achieve the goal in the target year 2010.

Though these activities are requested by the government, there are also printing industry's voluntary efforts. JFPI promotes environment measures and familiarize printing industry's environmental activities. We established the environment blue-chip factory system, "Printing Service" green standards, "Green Printing-GP" recognition system to gain the public's and customer's understands.

The environment blue-chip factory system was established in 2002 and has been promoting printing factories to improve environmental performances.

"Printing Service" green standards was established in 2002 according to the Law on Promoting Green Purchasing. This standard is the core of printing industry's environmental activities, since this standard established detail regarding activities to reduce environment burdens, voluntary efforts, and ways to abide environmental law.

Therefore, this standard established not only green standards for printing products but also activity standards to reduce environment burdens for printing factories and environmental management standards to continue those activities.

Printing products which reached standards are provided as environment-conscious products, and our printing industry's activities to reduce environment burdens are highly recognized. Thus we have established the Green Printing (GP) recognition system.

Although we are providing many printing products based on this system into the market, the promotion of these printing industry's activities to the market and active participation of the printing industry and related industries are required. Also customer's and consumer's understandings and supports are absolutely necessary.

## **Conclusion**

Current global environment issues are the big concern for the printing industry. Various problems continuously arise, such as global warming issues, waste and recycling affairs, and chemicals controls. Just like business activities have no goal, there is no end for the environment activities.

Each country has different circumstances, so environment activities should be various. However, based on the common awareness that environmental problems are global scale issues, there should be some common activities for printing industries to contribute.

For these common activities, proactive exchange of the information is required to promote efficient and effective activities in all countries. Then printing industries in the world can contribute to the global environmental issues.

