

## Revitalization of regional community and regeneration of regional economy through conservation of Oriental White Storks – Footsteps of Toyooka

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### 1. Living together with Storks

In September 2005 the Oriental White Storks, which became extinct once in Japan, flew high in the skies of Toyooka. Since Toyooka was the last natural habitat for Oriental White Storks, we have taken various efforts to reintroduce this bird. It is our strong belief that ‘rich environment which can support such a big bird like Oriental White Storks is a good environment for us humans too’.

In Toyooka, we have promoted various projects to conserve biodiversity, such as conversion of farming method from the conventional one to environmentally friendly farming, creation of biotopes from fallow paddy fields and installation of fish path in the paddy fields. By creating a city with rich environment and rich biodiversity, we aim to create a symbiotic relationship between environment and economic activities. We term this symbiotic relationship as ‘ecological economics’ and have developed a ‘Municipal Strategy for Environment and Economy’ to compile our best practices and success stories.

These comprehensive efforts to regenerate rich natural and cultural environment under the flagship of Oriental White Storks has spread in China through JICA’s Grass Root Technical Cooperation project.

Habitat for White Oriental Storks in Toyooka is envisaged to be registered as wetland of international importance under Ramsar Convention. Our unique natural and cultural environment has been formulated over long period of time through numerous generations. We strongly believe that it is our responsibility to nurture it and pass it on to our future generations.

### 2. International environmental cooperation between China and Japan through Storks conservation

Andong zhen, Zhejiang sheng where JICA implements its Grass Root Technical Cooperation Projects, has been a wintering spot for migratory birds which comes from Siberia. Although there were many Oriental White Storks among these migratory birds in

the past, these birds are disappearing due to the rapid economic development followed the Chinese Economic Reform. Andong zhen, which functions as a production base for organic vegetables for Ningbo city, has promoted a progressive approach in the field of agriculture.

Last year, Ningbo city was designated by the central government as a Coastal Development Area for creating a symbiotic relationship between economic activity and environment, as well as national wetland park and agro-ecological zone.

### 3. Reintroduction of Oriental White Storks in China (Andong zhen, Zhejiang sheng)

The government staff from Andong zhen visited Toyooka in February 2011 and they were very much impressed by Oriental White Storks in paddy fields and the civic engagement to conserve this bird species. Upon their return, the local government has decided to introduce the approaches taken in Toyooka for conservation for Oriental White Storks and its environment.

This year Andong zhen government have developed a curriculum and text for environmental education in primary school to support the consumption of organic vegetables produced in agro-ecological zone. Next year these curriculum and text which were developed from the environmental education program implemented in Toyooka, will be put into practice in the primary school.

We hope that in the future these programs will be spread to whole Andong zhen through the cooperation between China and Japan and these environmentally friendly approaches will contribute to well-being of Chinese people.