

A third party perspective on YKK efforts for the environment and society

○Regarding the fundamental management stance

I found that the YKK Group Cycle of Goodness philosophy, which was adopted when the company was established, continues to have deep influence on company management today. I hear that this philosophy has pervaded the YKK philosophy as business activities have expanded around the world and that this fundamental management stance is the source of the YKK Group's global business success now.

In contrast to many other Japanese companies that develop their corporate social responsibility at home first and then take it abroad, because the YKK Group's business strategy, including human resources and employment practices, is based on a global management foundation, its corporate social responsibility is also regarded at this level. The YKK philosophy has had years to permeate its activities worldwide and the realization of the essence of their corporate social responsibility is highly evaluated. In order to sustain and develop the roots of this kind of management from now on, I expect that the company will continue its efforts to implement further systematic improvements and to achieve greater awareness of the issues among its members.



Interview with Committee Chairman Watanabe

○Regarding the Environmental and Social Report 2004

I see from the President's message, that the Cycle of Goodness is the backbone of the company's strong stance toward responsible management for society. Furthermore, the 7 management principles, with fairness at the center, show that the company is committed to benefiting society through its stakeholder-oriented management and business activities.

One problem with the report this year, however, is that the ways that YKK intends to develop each of its efforts for society in line with these fundamental principles is not well defined, so the relationship with performance in regards to customers, society and employees in the later half of the report is unclear. First of all, the report needs to convey how YKK businesses will respond to each stakeholder and what their policies and positions toward them are, as well as the Group stance on accountability. Furthermore, explanation of how the management principles translate into actual activity and how concern for society is expressed through the business itself would make the report more complete.

A new results evaluation column was added to their overall plan and achievement results in the environmental report section, so it was easier to understand overall. In the part on environmental impacts, a main performance item was also added, making it more comprehensive. On the other hand, the YKK Group's global environmental management is unclear as, other than indicating that there is a promotion system, there is not much coverage of performance abroad, so

it is hard to evaluate actual environmental efforts at foreign business sites.

As for the environmental friendliness of the products, rather than just reporting on products developed ecologically, I expect that YKK will make efforts to increase the ratio of eco products and promote their use and understanding by consumers.

Finally, I hope that future reports will not only detail internal company efforts for the environment and society, but will also expand the interaction with stakeholders and users, who are members of society too, and consider them in the production of the report.

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Profile of Mizue Unno

After graduating from Chiba University Graduate School, she worked at a management consulting company until she founded So-Tech Consulting, Inc. in 1996.

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