

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

**Regarding the fundamental management stance:** When considering the issue of corporate social responsibility (CSR), a perspective on globalized economic activities has become necessary. The YKK Group has developed internationally since early on and ever since foundation, it has always emphasized "becoming local" and this can be said to be linked to CSR today. The results can be seen in the positive evaluations and commendations that YKK has received in every area where it does business. In particular, the long record of favorable assessments in North America and Europe, where employment is valued highly, can be said to result from having an excellent attitude.

One issue now is that the Cycle of Goodness and the corporate principles have become ordinary slogans. The question is whether the younger generation and employees in every country around the world are thinking these through in the same way. Furthermore, the YKK Group has been divided into fastening, architectural products, and machinery and engineering companies that are each developing their own independent management systems. Even with this separate company format, the YKK Group should continue to grow with a shared spirit. In the future, while each maintains its own unique business characteristics and vitality, unity as a group is also desirable. I believe that working on CSR at the global level is one means of reinforcing this unity.

**Regarding the Environmental and Social Report 2005:** Publication of an Environmental and Social Report every year shows the intention to make improvements in the details. I noticed that this year the report consciously emphasizes a global perspective and that efforts have been made to include more information about overseas business. In particular, much weight seems to have been placed on introducing numerous social contribution activities abroad, making it clear that YKK is trying to have strong roots in every part of the world along with those in Japan. In addition, I felt that the idea that YKK products and services themselves can contribute to society is also an important perspective, and their introduction, with their own section in the report about social activities, was easy to understand.

I believe that the YKK Group can further improve the contents and systematically report on CSR activities by working on the following points in the future.

### •Perspectives on the YKK Group's unique relationship with its employees

The fact that employees are also stockholders is a major feature of the YKK Group, which has never made its stock public. YKK does not simply share stock, but it also promotes the attitude that employees should have a strong sense of participation in management. Managers provide thorough reports about results to employees and talk together with them about the business. These efforts seem to be characteristic of the YKK Group. These most important stakeholders are the core force that is responsible for carrying out YKK business strategies. For this reason, consideration of employees exceeds just thoroughness with personnel affairs and occupational safety and hygiene. I hope that future reports will convey this way of thinking.



Interview with Committee Chairman Taie

### •Systematic reporting on regional activities

This report introduces examples of social contributions around the world, but it shows nothing more than the results of efforts. I want to know more about the plans that the YKK Group uses to pursue localism in every region of the world and how they are unified, as well as more about the details and systems of implementation.

### •Relationships between the strategies of the main two business areas and environmental and social efforts

At present, the differences and shared features of the efforts on behalf of the environment and society of two distinct businesses seem unclear. This issue is apparently already being considered and I hope that future YKK Group reports make it easier for outside readers to understand the relationships between the YKK Group businesses and their efforts for the environment and society.

Whether for global or domestic strategy, the environment and CSR are issues that cannot be ignored. I expect that the YKK Group will continue to build its efforts in these areas one step at a time.

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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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