

The 16th World Lake Conference Opening Ceremony
Governor Mikazuki's Keynote Address

Date: November 8, 2016

Venue: Discovery Kartika Plaza Hotel
Bali, Indonesia

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Hello, ladies and gentlemen.

I am Taizo Mikazuki, governor of Shiga Prefecture in Japan.

All the participants of the conference from around the world, I am happy to see you today.

It is my pleasure and honor to have the opportunity to speak to you at the 16<sup>th</sup> World Lake Conference.

This is my second time participating in the conference, following the previous conference in Perugia, Italy, and I have been very much looking forward to this opening day in Bali, an island which is home to rich culture and nature, such as world-famous lakes such as Lake Bratan.

Shiga proposed the World Lake Conference in 1984, and the first conference was held in Otsu, Shiga, and attended by 2,400 researchers, administrators, NGO members, and citizens from many countries.

This international conference, which took its first steps on the shore of Lake Biwa, the biggest lake in Japan, has continued for over 30 years, circulating through various countries and contributing to the resolution of lake-related problems around the world.

As Governor of Shiga, I would like to express my gratitude and deep respect for the efforts of everyone involved.

This 16<sup>th</sup> Lake Conference in Bali, Indonesia is the first time the conference is being held in Southeast Asia.

According to a survey of 41 countries around the world conducted by the International Lake Environment Committee, ILEC, the excessive development of resources is damaging lake environments on a global

scale.

Given this situation, it is very meaningful for relevant parties around the world to gather in one place and share their current issues and plans to solve them.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Indonesian government and those involved who have worked hard to host and organize this conference.

Now, I have heard that there will be forums and sessions on various themes starting this afternoon.

I look forward to active discussions.

In addition, I have heard that Indonesia has designated 15 lakes around the country as “important lakes”, including Bali’s Lake Batur, and focused efforts on maintaining and managing those lakes.

I have a high hope that the accomplishments from those efforts can be shared in this conference.

Now, please allow me to introduce to you Shiga and Lake Biwa.

Shiga is located in central Japan and has long prospered in the field of commerce, industry and agriculture, blessed by the water resources of Lake Biwa, the largest lake in the country.

Today, it is a transportation hub in Japan, situated about 100 km from international airports making it easily accessible for people around the world.

This locational advantage has resulted in a high density of manufacturing in Shiga, with the highest ratio of secondary industry in Japan.

Although many factories are located around the lake and 1.4 million people reside there, the water quality of the lake is kept in good condition.

Can you guess why?

The citizens of Shiga coexist with Lake Biwa and cherish their harmony with nature.

We are conscious of where the water we use goes and of our connection

to living things.

Businesses, residents, and administrations continue to work together as one to maintain a good environment.

Currently, water from Lake Biwa supports the lives and industries of 14 million people not only in Shiga but in other big cities such as Osaka and Kyoto as well.

In 2015, as the lifestyle of the people of Shiga, characterized by a gratitude for blessings of water and food was evaluated, Lake Biwa and its waterside vistas were recognized by the Japanese national government as “Japan Heritage.”

As you can see in this slide, there are many beautiful natural and cultural heritage sites around the lake.

With all these treasures, wonderful places surrounding Lake Biwa, we hope that many visitors enjoy their stay in Shiga.

I personally recommend “Biwaichi”: riding around Lake Biwa by bicycle.

Can you tell who is riding and enjoying biking in this slide?

He looks so fun, doesn't he?

Through experiential tourism, such as fishing in Lake Biwa and trekking in the surrounding mountains, many people will learn of and develop an affinity for Lake Biwa, and I believe that this is important for future conservation of the lake.

We have Indonesian and English language pamphlets about Shiga at our booth, so please stop by.

Lake Biwa has experienced hard times in the past.

In the 1960s and 70s, rapid population growth and industrialization led to an increase in the lake's inflowing load, which resulted in eutrophication.

In 1977, a freshwater red tide occurred in Lake Biwa for the first time. After learning that the main reason for the red tide was the use of synthetic detergents that contained phosphorus, housewives in Shiga began a movement urging people not to use synthetic detergent and to

use natural powdered soap instead.

This movement was called the “Soap Movement” and it spread around Shiga at once, prompting the government to also take action.

In response, the Shiga government enacted the Ordinance Concerning the Prevention of Eutrophication of Lake Biwa two years later in 1979, which banned the use and sales of synthetic detergents that contained phosphorus.

Furthermore, the Shiga government led the country by regulating phosphorus in wastewater from factories and working to lower inflowing loads.

The Soap Movement is a symbolic example of how the people of Shiga and the prefectural government worked as one to resolve challenges facing the lake.

Since then, in order to improve water quality, protect water sources and conserve the natural environment and landscape, the Shiga government has established the Lake Water Quality Conservation Plan and Lake Biwa Comprehensive Conservation Plan, or the Mother Lake 21 Plan, and collaborated with businesses, citizens and universities.

Last year, the national government’s Law on Conservation and Restoration of the Lake Biwa was also put into effect, defining Lake Biwa as a public asset and bolstering our efforts even further.

Especially in recent years, we are focusing our efforts on countermeasures to invasive plant species such as *oobanamizukinbai*, or water primrose, so I have big hopes for this year’s conference theme, “Lake Ecosystem Health and Its Resilience: Diversity and Risks of Extinction.”

Many people from Shiga, including Prefectural Assembly Chairman Noda and members of NPOs are here to participate in this Lake Conference.

Those of you from Shiga, please stand.

Thank you, please sit down.

We would be very happy if you, the participants at this Conference, could visit Shiga and see Lake Biwa and our efforts there.

The Earth is known as the water planet, but just 0.01 percent of all water is in rivers and lakes, which are easily accessible to people.

According to the United Nations, the world's population is predicted to be about 9.7 billion in 2050.

This is expected to increase water demand by 55 percent from current levels and raises the possibility of 3.9 billion people, or more than 40 percent of the world's population, suffering from severe water shortage.

Given this situation, the role and responsibility of regions which have lakes as a precious water source are growing larger around the world.

Lakes reflect the lives of the people and their industrial activities.

It is our mission to hand down the lakes, which support and enrich our lives, to the next generation in a clean condition.

Many people from around the world who are involved with lakes in various ways are here at this conference.

I have also heard that there are many people at this conference from around Indonesia, including those from regions which are home to the designated important lakes.

The ones who conserve our life-giving water are those who have lakes close to us.

Everyone, let us all start our efforts for the conservation of the environment from our own regions, and contribute to resolving global challenges.

Now, it's almost time for lunch, I'd better finish my presentation.

So, in conclusion, I look forward to your visit to Shiga and I hope that the 16<sup>th</sup> World Lake Conference is a great success.

Thank you.