

Aichi prefecture's efforts to save Nagara River

What to do in order to restore Nagara River

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What is Nagara River?

Total length is 166km

Area of river basin is 1985km²

There was no dam before Nagara River estuary dam.

Nagara River used to be called “The River of Treasure” because of its richness.

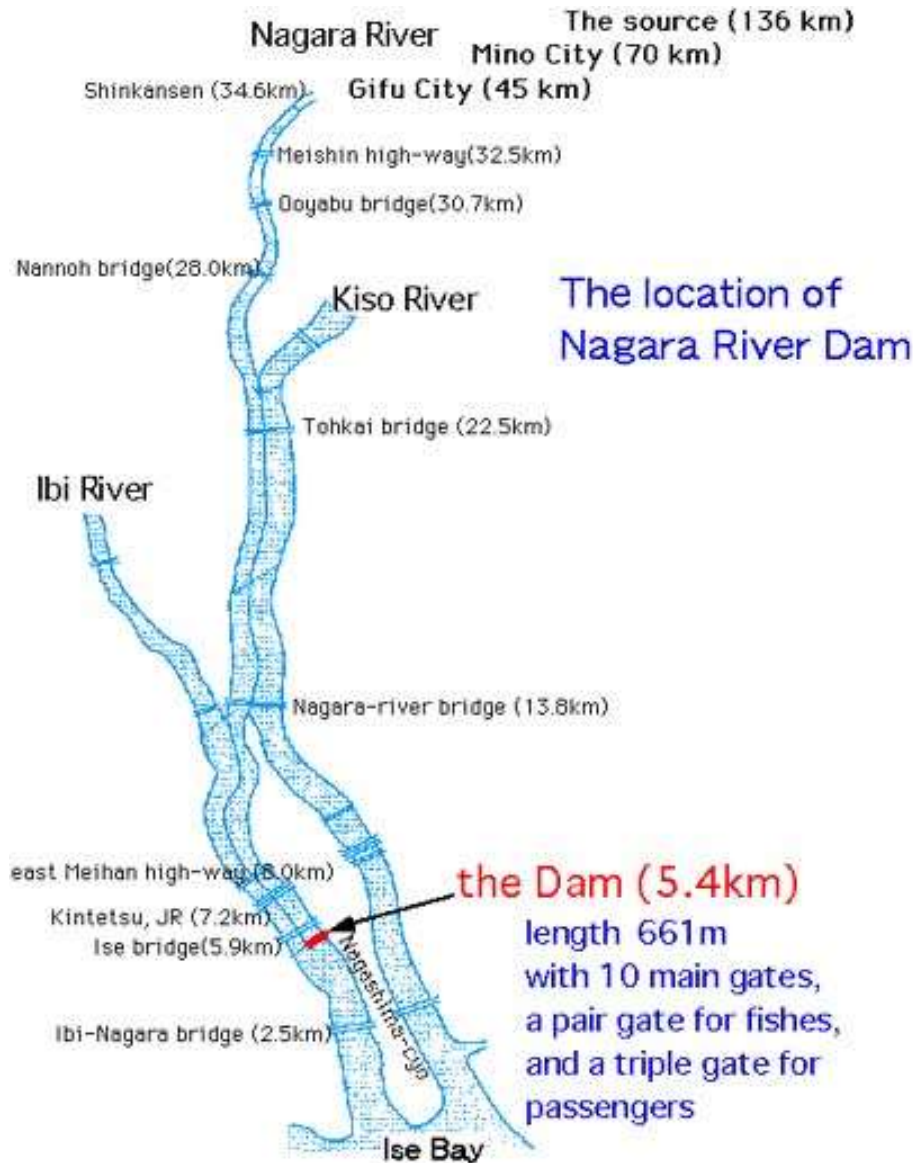
There are 3 major rivers and the natural mouths of the 3 big rivers were regulated by engineers from the Netherlands 100 years ago.





Fishermen used to enjoy a good fish catch before the dam operation began, but not anymore.





In spite of many people's protests, the dam was constructed.

What is the Nagara River Estuary Dam?

- *The project was made in 1968.
- *Construction started in 1988.
- *Operation of the dam started in 1995.

What are its purposes?
flood protection? water use?
Stopping salt damage?

Currently, according to the national government, the main dam function is the separation of fresh and salt water for water use.

Since the dam's operation began, the ecosystem and river-dependent industries were severely impacted. The impact was on both clam and freshwater fisheries.



This is the Nagara River Estuary Dam.



There are fish ladders at both sides of the dam, but their effect doesn't seem to be big enough to sustain the ecosystem .



Many people wanted to save The Nagara River and the protests have not stopped for nearly 3 decades.



River Policy Network was established by river lovers in 2003

- To exchange key information for achieving sustainable river policies by a network of citizens, NGOs and government bodies (in Japan & worldwide).
- To coordinate various groups and individuals on river issues.
- To promote the discussion over river policies on serious dialogues among citizens, NGOs, researchers, government officials and so on.
- To share the latest river information via website, newsletters, symposiums.

RPN regularly holds events such as dam removal tours and invites international experts to inform the Japanese public about modern river policies. The latest visit in January 2013 was Mr. Alexander Zinke (Vienna), who motivated me to join the ERRC conference.

AkayaNo.2dam under removal



Arase Dam removal in Kumamoto

We are supporting Southern prefecture Kumamoto's river restoration efforts by providing the latest river related information in the world.
Arase dam served for hydropower use.



Arase dam removal started in 2012 and will continue until 2018.



What happened in Aichi?

- In 2011, Aichi Governor Mr. Ohmura and Nagoya city mayor Mr. Kawamura announced “**Environmental Manifestos**” which included
- Inheriting COP10’s philosophy (CBD event in Nagoya, Aichi in 2010.)
- River restoration based on watershed management
- Gate opening research at the Nagara River estuary dam

Aichi prefecture established the **Nagara river estuary dam review committee** to seek the dam's "optimized operation"

- All the discussion is open!!

- * All minutes are open on the website.

- * Citizens can attend and voice their opinions.

- * NGOs can broadcast the committee on Ustream.

All these practices are still very rare in Japan.

The Nagara river estuary dam review committee
(phase 2) consists of three groups with 10 experts in
total, which have roles as follows:

1) Water Use research group

To investigate the current water use and compare with the old plan.

To find alternative solutions for freshwater use if the gate opens.

2) Salt damage research group

To research about possible salt damage if the gate opens .

3) Environmental related issues research group

To investigate potential recovery of the ecosystem after the gate opens.

The Nagara river estuary dam review committee (phase1) concluded in 2012 that **the gate opening research at the Nagara River estuary dam should last at least 5 years.**

Receiving the report, the **Aichi governor called for the Japanese government to have a dialogue** to realize the gate opening research. But, the central government denied .

Besides, the Japanese government has not provided enough data to justify their decision yet.

The main reason for the operation is freshwater use, but only 16% of the water originally planned for is used and water demand will hardly increase in the region.

If you have a chance to **talk with Japanese government officials**, especially water management related ones, please advise them to have open dialogues with Aichi prefecture.

In this way all of us, including you, can join the discussion: seeking better solutions for water use, flood control, environmental protection, and protecting the fishing industries.

In January 2013 Members of the Aichi Prefectural Assembly invited an EU environmental consultant, Alexander Zinke to speak at a public symposium about the **EU's advanced river policies**, including river & coast restoration, its legal framework, flood protection strategy etc. based on watershed management

Photo at the symposium



The next day, the Nagara river estuary dam review committee asked Mr Zinke to inform Aichi Prefecture officials about “*Lessons learned - new policies and practices in Europe’s river management*”.



- We learned there is a similar case to the Nagara river estuary dam in Europe. The gate of the **Haringvliet estuary dam** in the Netherlands will be re-open in 2018.

After more than 20 years of discussions, even in Europe.

We must not give up!!

Recently, the Aichi governor, Mr. Ohmura announced the **restoration plan of Mikawa Bay** as Aichi's new ambition. A new committee established on July 2nd 2013, involves ocean researchers, a fishing industry's representative, the tourism industry, NGOs and so on.

Mikawa Bay is a bay of Aichi prefecture surrounded by the Chita and Atsumi peninsulas. Its area is approximately 604km².

Mikawa Bay lost large areas of tidal flat in 1970s'. Along with such development, Mikawa Bay lost its rich productivity.





Message from the Aichi governor, Mr. Ohmura

Dear friends in the EU.

I am Mr. Ohmura, the governor of Aichi prefecture located in the center of Japan. I would like to offer you my hearty congratulations on your successful holding of the European River Restoration Conference.

In January 2013, I attended the symposium titled “Lessons learned new policies and practices in Europe’s river management”, about the concepts and concrete practices of “**Integrated River Management in Europe**”. I strongly felt that Japan, which is often exposed to natural disasters such as typhoons and localized torrential downpours, should adopt measures based on “Integrated planning”.

In Aichi prefecture, where I serve as the governor, many excellent global companies, including Toyota Motor Corporation, are headquartered and form one of the biggest manufacturing industry centers in the world.

Aichi prefecture is called “The driving force of the Japanese Economy”.

This background means that Aichi should be responsible for realizing “**Harmony between the Environment and the Economy**”, which is the solution for real economic development, and although it is very challenging to achieve, I believe we can make it

Globalization has been rapidly expanding throughout the world. However, I believe **the real benefit of globalization** should be to share people’s wisdom and knowledge. I sincerely desire that this conference will generate important information for human beings, and that the wisdom and knowledge born in Europe will reach many countries in the world.

As one of Japan’s governors, I would like to be a liaison between the EU and Japan for achieving environmental and economic “Harmony” in order to leave a better environment for the next generation.

Thank you for your kind support and cooperation.