

Kitakyushu Field Trip

Professor ORI Akemi

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Dates: November 24 - November 26, 2025

A. INTRODUCTION

This field trip was organized to examine the evolution of Kitakyushu from a heavy-industrial hub to a global leader in environmental sustainability. The trip focused on 3 main pillars, which are the city's international environmental collaboration, the technical implementation of renewable energy, and the historical preservation of Japan's industrial revolution.

B. ITINERARY AND ACTIVITIES

Day 1: Nov 24 - Arrival and Mojiko Urban Survey



- 1. 3:00 PM: Arrival in Kitakyushu from Beppu, Oita.**
- 2. Site Visit: Mojiko Retro District**
 - Objective: Observation of Urban Revitalization and Heritage Tourism
 - Context: The visit to Mojiko is not only for its historical architecture, but also to study how the city manages Sustainable Tourism. Mojiko is the birthplace of Banana no Tatakiuri or Banana Auctions. But, more importantly, it serves as a case study in preserving Meiji-era history to drive modern economic growth without damaging the local environment.

- Evening: Group dinner and briefing on interview protocols for the Kitakyushu Environment Bureau.

Day 2: Nov 25 - Hearings with Kitakyushu Environment Bureau

1. Morning: International City-to-City Collaboration with Surabaya



- A hearing was conducted with the Kitakyushu Environment Bureau regarding the Kitakyushu and Surabaya City-to-City collaboration, also known as Green City Cooperation.
- The discussion focused on the history of environmental conditions in Kitakyushu, the formation of the collaboration, and the technical transfer of waste management between the two cities.

2. Afternoon: Sustainable Energy & Urban Policy



- The Bureau provided insights into the city's Solar Power initiatives and the integration of renewable energy into the urban grid.
- Further topics included Eco-Tourism or Sustainable Tourism as an educational tool and the concept of Urban Nature Kitakyushu, which addresses biodiversity and the mitigation of the urban heat island effect through green infrastructure.

Day 3: Nov 26 - Historical Documentation

1. Imperial Steel Works (UNESCO World Heritage Site):



- The first visit of the day was to the First Head Office of the Imperial Steel Works.
- This site provided the necessary historical context regarding the origins of Japan's heavy industry and the subsequent environmental challenges faced by Kitakyushu.

2. Kitakyushu Environment Museum:



- A 2-hour guided observation was conducted at the Kitakyushu Environment Museum.
 - The exhibits detailed the Miracle of Kitakyushu, documenting the transition from the mid-20th-century pollution crisis to the city's current status as a Green Frontier City.
3. Afternoon: Departure for Tokyo.

C. KEY FINDINGS

1. Historical Context: The visit to the Imperial Steel Works followed by the Environment Museum, established a clear chronological link between industrialization and the necessity for environmental policy.
2. Policy Scalability: The Surabaya collaboration demonstrates that local environmental frameworks developed in Kitakyushu are effectively being adapted for international urban contexts.
3. Integrated Sustainability: The hearings revealed that Kitakyushu's approach relies on a synergy between renewable energy technology (Solar), urban planning (Urban Nature), and historical education (Eco-Tourism).

D. CONCLUSION

The field trip successfully provided a comprehensive overview of Kitakyushu's environmental management model. The combination of official hearings and historical site visits allowed for a deep understanding of how public policy and industrial history intersect. These findings offer a robust foundation for analyzing urban sustainability and international city-to-city collaboration.