

December 19, 2002

All 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum Session Conveners on Shiga Day

Dear Conveners,

Greetings from SHIGA, Japan !

This is a letter, to the conveners and all participants of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum in Shiga Prefecture, to introduce Shiga Prefecture, recommend accommodations during the Forum, and offer ways to enjoy your stay in Shiga.

Shiga Venue, Otsu City  
[Map of Otsu](#) (You can enlarge in PDF document)



## 1 Shiga and Lake Biwa - Mother Lake -

The 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum will be held in Shiga, Kyoto, and Osaka the three prefectures of the Lake Biwa-Yodo River Basin, Japan's representative basin. This forum will be the first held in the Asian Monsoon region, based on the region's special characteristics and reflecting the concepts of Integrated Water Resources Management and Basin Management.

Shiga prefecture is located east of Kyoto Prefecture, which features Lake Biwa, the water source of the Lake Biwa-Yodo River Basin. Lake Biwa is by far the largest and oldest lake in Japan. Originating four million years ago, it is also one of the most ancient lakes in the world, and is home to a rich ecosystem, including over 50 indigenous species. Lake Biwa supplies water for 14 million people, in Shiga, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe and other areas. People express their appreciation of Lake Biwa by calling it "Mother Lake". From ancient times, people received grace from Lake Biwa, as well as fought against flooding, and all the while trying to protect Lake Biwa and other water resources.

In the Lake Biwa-Yodo River Basin, the Lake Biwa Comprehensive Development was implemented from 1972 to 1997. The project enabled water resources development for downstream Osaka and Kobe regions, and at the same time, enabled upstream region's development of flood control, water utilization, water and nature conservation by a unique system of role and cost sharing among national and local governments in the Lake Biwa-Yodo River Basin.

From there, Lake Biwa-Yodo River Water Quality Conservation Foundation was established for basin-wide water quality improvement by the government and residents of Lake Biwa-Yodo River Basin. Many other actions to meet new

challenges for comprehensive conservation of Lake Biwa (for example, conservation of water quality, and conservation of the natural environment) are also in progress by role sharing and partnership among various stakeholders including governments, residents, NPOs, and the academic community.

In 2000, the Shiga Prefectural government launched the Mother Lake 21 Plan (Lake Biwa Comprehensive Environmental Conservation Plan). This plan of action involved everybody in the three fields of “Water Quality Improvement”, “Increasing the Soil Recharge Capacity”, “Preserving the Natural Environment and Scenic Landscapes” in order to preserve Lake Biwa’s grace for generations to come. For example, the plan establishes the means for restoring the quality of Lake Biwa’s water back to late 1960s’ levels in the next 20 years. That is, water quality will be restored to a stage before the appearance of the red tides and water-bloom. This also enhances residents’ activities in each river basin area, which flows into the Lake.

Please refer to the following URLs for more information;

Lake BIWA

[http://www.pref.shiga.jp/biwako/koai/english/eng\\_top.htm](http://www.pref.shiga.jp/biwako/koai/english/eng_top.htm) (English)

Shiga Tourist Federation - A Journey to Lake Biwa

<http://www.kankou-shiga.or.jp/english/> (English)

Mother Lake 21 plan

<http://www.pref.shiga.jp/biwako/koai/mother21/top.html> (Japanese)

Shiga prefecture has contributed greatly to world water and lake issues. For example, proposing and hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on the Conservation and Management of Lakes in 1984, hosting of 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the Conservation and Management of Lakes in 2001, supporting of UNEP-International Environmental Technology Centre located in Shiga, and cooperation with international institutes and developing countries through International Lake Environment Committee Foundation. There was also, in April of 2000, G8 Environment Ministers’ Summit held, and in 2002 April, Nail Basin Initiative Minister’s Meeting was held supported by WWF3 secretariat and Shiga Prefecture.

UNEP-IETC <http://www.unep.or.jp/Ietc/Intro/index.asp> (English)

ILEC <http://www.ilec.or.jp/> (English)

For these reasons, we believe Shiga is the best venue for “IWRM” and “Water for Peace” sessions. We heartily welcome your visit to Shiga.

## 2 7 Good reasons to choose Shiga as base and lodging during 3<sup>rd</sup> WWF

### 2-1 Reason(1)

Otsu City - Capital City of Shiga - with Blue Lake and Mountains.

Otsu city, the place where Shiga Day (March 20-21) is held, is the capital city of Shiga Prefecture, and is located 10 minutes from Kyoto by train. Otsu was once the capital city of Japan before Kyoto. Even after Kyoto became the capital, Otsu has been an important city, because of its proximity to the Lake Biwa-Yodo River, and its consequent strong connection with Osaka and Kyoto. Otsu is rich in historical heritage and vibrant traditions, as seen in Enryaku-ji Temple, one of UNESCO’s World Culture Heritages.

Please refer to the following URLs for more information;

Otsu City <http://www.city.otsu.shiga.jp/english/index.html> (English)

Otsu City (Koto-net)

[http://www.city.otsu.shiga.jp/kotonet/index\\_eng.html](http://www.city.otsu.shiga.jp/kotonet/index_eng.html)(English)

## 2-2 Reason(2)

Waterfront, State-of-the-art Conference Facility

Biwako Hall and Otsu Prince Hotel, Shiga Day session venues in Otsu city face Mother Lake, a beautiful location, with state-of-the-art convention facilities.

### 2-2-1 Facing Mother Lake

Lake Biwa is Mother Lake of Lake Biwa-Yodo River Basin, it is the symbol of this basin oriented conference's sites. Both Biwako Hall and Otsu Prince Hotel face Lake Biwa. You can talk about water while looking at on shore of water!

We believe you will be able to enjoy brilliant sunrises, fresh air from the lake, and strolls on the lakeshore between sessions.

### 2-2-2 Beautiful and convenient facility

Biwako Hall and Otsu Prince Hotel have both recently been constructed and is in close proximity to many commercial facilities.

[Biwako Hall] <http://www.biwako-hall.or.jp/> (English)

State-of-the-art Performing arts hall opened on 1998.

Houses the Main Theatre(1848 seats), Theatre(804 seats), Ensemble Hall(323 seats), and conference room(50 seats).

The scenery of Lake Biwa from the Foyer will surely be memorable.

There will be held 2 Opening Plenary and some sessions.

[Otsu Prince Hotel] <http://www.princehotels.co.jp/link/english/otsu.html> (English)

38 story hotel. Each guest room offers a wonderful view of Lake Biwa and the surrounding hills.

There are 14 convention rooms (smaller rooms have 50 seats, larger rooms have 1000) in the conference center in Hotel.

Sessions and one Closing Plenary will be held there.

### 2-2-3 Reason(3)

Convenient Transport to Kyoto, Osaka by Public Transportation

As you may know, the train system is very reliable and convenient (running every 7-8 min).

How to move by Public Transportation

[Otsu→Kyoto]

Otsu Prince Hotel (10 min, free shuttle bus March 19-21 only, hotel free bus or local paid bus(200yen) on other days) to Otsu station,

Otsu station(10min, train) to Kyoto station,

(Fare card is included into the registration fee for those who registered for sessions for more than 4 days !)

Kyoto station (20 min, subway,) to Kyoto International Conference Hall.

(Fare card is supplied by Kyoto-City, for participants.)

Thus, you can commute to other sessions in Kyoto in about one hour.

Note: in morning - commuting hours - you should allow more time due to rush hour.

[Otsu→Osaka]

Otsu station(45min, local train) to Shin-Osaka station,

(One Bullet train coupon, Kyoto to Shin-Osaka, is included into the registration fee, for participants registered for 4 days or more.)  
Shin-Osaka station(30-45min) to GrandCube Osaka by the shuttle bus.(free, March 18-19)  
Note: in morning - commuting hours - you should allow more time..

Thus, if you stay in Shiga, there is easy and convenient access to Osaka or Kyoto venue. And, riding a train is an interesting cultural experience!

#### 2-2-4 Reason(4)

Biwako Water Festival: place to meet Japan and local water and waterfriends!

"Biwako Water Festival"(Mar. 19-21, Free) will be held in Prefectural Gymnasium, Piazza Ohmi Hotel, and Nagisa Park just next door to the forum session venues. There are display areas, stage areas, and experience corners where presentations and exhibitions will be held by local NGOs, private companies, and other groups which work for water issues and their solution. They will be eager to meet you. Be sure to come to the "Biwako Water Festival", and touch our culture for yourself.

And we will prepare world dining area where you can enjoy world tastes and foods from Shiga.

You may even exhibit your own activity; there is no charge for exhibit space rental! 3 exhibition spaces are still available. Please contact Shiga committee Secretariat of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum for more information at [dc0001@pref.shiga.jp](mailto:dc0001@pref.shiga.jp)

#### 2-2-5 Reason(5)

Many Opportunities, Places, and Facilities to Visit, Exchange, Learn, and Enjoy!

In Shiga Prefecture there are many water related facilities and other cultural/historical interests. Taking this opportunity, please visit these facilities by participating in the Excursion Program, the Exchange Program below, or organize your original tours!

#### [Places to Visit]

Lake Biwa Museum: From perspective of Lake and Human interaction, the museum exhibits nature, culture, and the history of Lake Biwa and its watershed. Visitors experience a recreation of lake life in the tunnel aquarium, the largest freshwater aquarium in Japan.  
<http://www.lbm.go.jp/english/index-e.html> (English)

Aqua Biwa: This museum introduces flood control and water utilization in Lake Biwa-Yodo River Basin.

This museum stands next to Seta Weir, which regulates the amount of runoff water from Lake Biwa, built in 1905.

<http://www.aquabiwa.jp/> (Japanese)

Biyo Center: Research institution for water purification techniques of Lake Biwa-Yodo River Basin.

<http://www.byq.or.jp/> (Japanese)

Otsu City Museum of History:

This museum introduces the rich historical heritage of Otsu with its interesting collection of scale models, illustrations, and artifacts of Otsu City from 350 years ago.

<http://www.rekihaku.otsu.shiga.jp/index.html> (Japanese)

The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga:

You can see collections of Modern Japanese style paintings, and Works related to Shiga Prefecture, etc.

<http://www.biwa.ne.jp/~sg-kinbi/english/E-index.html>

(English)

[Excursion Program]

The Secretariat of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum is preparing technical tours visiting Shiga. <http://www.pref.shiga.jp/wwf3/english/excursion.pdf> (English)

Shiga Committee Secretariat of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum is preparing tours visiting Shiga, in January we will explain the courses in detail through official registration website pages. <http://regi.water-forum3.com/> (English)

[Exchange Program]

Local NGOs and citizens' groups will run an exchange program between those participating in sessions and local peoples. Through various activities you can experience the great nature around Lake Biwa. And you will be asked to participate in activities related to local water issues, and you will be able to meet and communicate with local people.

Detail <http://www.pref.shiga.jp/wwf3/english/exchange.pdf> (English)

You can ask more [dc0001@pref.shiga.jp](mailto:dc0001@pref.shiga.jp)

2-2-6 Reason(6) Hotel rate is less expensive

The Hotels below are official hotels in Shiga in Otsu-city and near Otsu city. You can also see details in the WWF3's Announcement or on the Website Page. The Hotel fees are less expensive than in Osaka or Kyoto.

On March 19-21, free shuttle buses will run between Otsu station to the Shiga venue (Biwako Hall and Otsu Prince Hotel) for your convenience. And on march 20-21, Biwako Hotel and Royal Oak Hotel will run Hotel buses to the venue for guests.

All other days, Otsu Prince Hotel, Biwako Hotel, and Royal Oak Hotel will run buses to train stations closest to each hotel, for guests who join sessions in Kyoto or Osaka.

Hotel name	Single (yen)	Twin (yen)	Travel Time To Shiga Day Forum Venue
Otsu Prince Hotel <a href="http://www.princehotels.co.jp/link/english/otsu.html">http://www.princehotels.co.jp/link/english/otsu.html</a> (English)	15,000	20,000	Venue
Biwako Hotel <a href="http://www.biwakohotel.co.jp/e-index.html">http://www.biwakohotel.co.jp/e-index.html</a> (English)	13,000	18,000	10 min by Hotel bus, shuttle bus or taxi
Royal Oak Hotel <a href="http://www.royaloakhotel.co.jp/">http://www.royaloakhotel.co.jp/</a> (Japanese)	18,000	20,000	15 min by Hotel bus or taxi
Hotel Blue Lake Otsu <a href="http://www.biwa.ne.jp/~bluelake/index.html">http://www.biwa.ne.jp/~bluelake/index.html</a> (Japanese)	7,700	14,700	10 min by shuttle bus or taxi
Otsu Shanpia Hotel <a href="http://www.shanpia.co.jp/hotel/otsu/otsu_room.html">http://www.shanpia.co.jp/hotel/otsu/otsu_room.html</a> (Jpn)	6,900	13,700	10 min by shuttle bus or taxi (0 min to Otsu station)
Kusatsu Estopia Hotel <a href="http://www.rihga-kusatsu.co.jp/">http://www.rihga-kusatsu.co.jp/</a> (Japanese)	8,000	14,000	10 min by Train to Otsu station and 10 min shuttle bus or

			taxi
Hotel Boston Plaza Kusatsu <a href="http://www.hotel-bp.co.jp/index2.html">http://www.hotel-bp.co.jp/index2.html</a> (Japanese)	8,100	18,500	10 min by Train to Otsu station and 10 min shuttle bus or taxi
Urban Hotel Kusatsu <a href="http://uh-urban.com/kusatu/">http://uh-urban.com/kusatu/</a> (Japanese)	7,700	-	10 min by Train to Otsu station and 10 min shuttle bus or taxi
Hotel New Saichi <a href="http://www.hotelnewsaiichi.com/">http://www.hotelnewsaiichi.com/</a> (Japanese)	7,500	-	8 min by Train to Otsu station and 10 min shuttle bus or taxi
Seta Urban Hotel <a href="http://www.seta-urban.co.jp/english/index.html">http://www.seta-urban.co.jp/english/index.html</a> (English)	7,200	12,500	8 min by Train to Otsu station and 10 min shuttle bus or taxi

#### 2-2-7 Reason(7)

Base for organizing your session in Shiga

Most importantly, if you organize your sessions and plenaries on Shiga Day, we believe it would be best if you stayed on site in Shiga! Although it is not difficult to commute from Kyoto or Osaka to Shiga in the morning, it would be much more convenient if you stayed in Shiga. For example, as Otsu Prince Hotel is the forum venue, you will be able to move from your Otsu Prince room directly to the conference room downstairs within one minute!

Travel distance from other hotels are listed above.

### 3 Useful information websites

For more information about SHIGA Prefecture and Otsu City

#### @ SHIGA Prefecture

Welcome to SHIGA <http://www.pref.shiga.jp/index-e.html> (English)

#### @ Map of Otsu (You can enlarge in PDF document)

<http://www.pref.shiga.jp/wwf3/english/guidemap.pdf> (English)

### 4 Making hotel reservations

Please use official hotel reservation system on WWF3 website.

<http://regi.water-forum3.com/> (English)

### 5 See you here in Shiga in March !

So, please think about staying in Shiga, and if appropriate, please forward this letter to the persons in your session or organization. If you would like information about Shiga, feel free to contact us in anytime.

We are looking forward to meeting you in SHIGA !

To contact us: Shiga Committee Secretariat of the 3rd World Water Forum  
<http://www.pref.shiga.jp/wwf3/> (Japanese)

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