

Timeline of Minamata Disease History (1889–2007)

Date	Event (Reference Note: Media publication titles are written in <i>romaji</i> in italics. English titles are given in parentheses where available. English titles in quotation marks indicate translator's unofficial translation.)
1889 Apr.	Official designation of Minamata Village upon nationwide adoption of Village system. (pop. 12,040)
1906 Jan. 12th	Shitagau Noguchi establishes Sogi Electric Co. in the Village of Okuchi, Isagun, Kagoshima Prefecture. (capital: ¥200,000)
1908 Aug.	Nippon Carbide Co. begins manufacturing at Minamata plant. Sogi Electric supplies Electric Power.
Aug. 20th	Sogi Electric and Nippon Carbide merge and form Nippon Nitrogen Fertilizer Co., Ltd. (hereafter called N.N.) with capital of ¥ 1 million.
1912 Dec. 1st	Minamata Village is re-designated as Minamata Town.
1915 Apr. 4th	N.N. begins construction of new ammonium sulfate plant with capacity of 50,000 tons at a site along Umedo Bay.
1932 May 7th	N.N. Minamata begins first stage operations acetaldehyde compound acetic acid facilities.
1935 Sep.	N.N. Minamata produces 50% of nation's acetic acid. Production techniques for acetaldehyde established around this time.
1941 Nov. 3rd	N.N. Minamata begins first production of vinyl chloride in Japan.
1946 Feb.	N.N. resumes production of acetaldehyde compound acetic acid facilities.
1948 Oct.	N.N. Minamata (affiliated) Hospital opens as the town's first general hospital.
1949 Apr. 1st	City system adopted, becomes Minamata City. (pop. 42,270)
Oct.	N.N. Minamata resumes vinyl chloride production.
1950 Jan.	N.N. Minamata becomes Shin Nippon Chisso Fertilizer Co., Ltd. (hereafter called SNC)
1953 Sep.	Minamata City Hospital opens.
1956 Apr. 21st	A 5-year-old girl, resident in Tsukinoura, Minamata, is admitted to SNC Hospital with symptoms of damage to the nervous system.
May 1st	The director of SNC Hospital reports to the Minamata Public Health Center, organized by Kumamoto Prefecture, on an influx of patients with similar nervous system damage symptoms - first official recognition of Minamata Disease.
May 28th	With the cooperation of the Public Health Center, Minamata City, the local medical association, the municipal hospital, and SNC Hospital, a municipal committee for the investigation and treatment of the "Minamata disease" is organized. [Later re-organized as the Minamata Strange Disease Action Committee.]
July 27th	Eight patients hospitalized at SNC Hospital are placed in isolation wards on suspicion of Japanese Encephalitis.
Aug. 3rd	Kumamoto Prefecture asks Kumamoto University for investigation on the cause of the unidentified disease in Minamata. Kumamoto Prefectural Department of Health sends a telegram about the increase of patients with symptoms of nervous system damage to the Ministry of Health of Welfare.
Aug. 30th	Four patients from the isolation wards in Minamata Municipal Hospital and one patient from the Tsukinoura area are moved to Kumamoto University Fujisakidai Hospital, Kumamoto City.
Nov. 3rd	Preliminary reports from the Study Group suspect a "heavy metal as the causative agent of this non-infectious disease."
Dec. 1st	The Committee officially lists 54 people (17 deceased) as Minamata disease patients.-official list up.
1957 Jan. 17th	Minamata Fisheries Co-op requests SNC to either stop discharging wastes into the sea, or install a sewage disposal facility and prove that the wastes, particularly acids, are non-toxic after treatment.
Feb. 25th	SNC Minamata replies: 1. There have been no changes in waste contents since 1948. 2. The PH value of the wastewater will be controlled and a sedimentation pool will be constructed. 3. Waste channels will be cleaned. 4. A joint investigation will be undertaken to determine reasons for declining haul.
Feb. 26th	The Study Group reports the necessity of a ban on fishing in the Minamata Bay area.
Mar. 26th	The Minamata Strange Disease Action Committee holds the first meeting [The council later renames itself the "Committee for Measures against the Strange Disease, then Committee for Measures against Minamata Disease."]
Apr. 4th	Dr. Hasuo Ito, Director of Minamata Public Health Center undertakes the first laboratory experiments on animals. One cat fed seafood from Minamata Bay shows symptoms on the tenth day. (The first reproduction of the symptoms.)
May	SNC Minamata sets up their own Study Organization on Minamata Disease.
Aug. 1st	The Minamata Strange Disease Victims' Mutual Aid Society is established. (Leader: Eizo Watanabe. Later renamed the Minamata Patients and Families' Mutual Aid Society and hereinafter referred to as the Mutual Aid Society)
Aug. 16th	Kumamoto Prefecture makes inquires to the Ministry of Health and Welfare on the possible implementation of Article 4, item 2 of the Food Sanitation Act.
Aug.	Minamata Fisheries Co-op announces self-regulation on local fishing to the members.
Sep. 11th	The Ministry of Health and Welfare replies to Kumamoto Prefecture: There are no grounds that all fish and shellfish in Minamata Bay are contaminated, therefore Article 4, item 2 of the Food Sanitation is not applicable.
Oct. 15th	The Committee recognizes 12 new victims (3 deceased) as Minamata disease patients to a total of 66.
Oct. 26th	The Science Research Group of the Ministry of Health and Welfare reports that selenium, manganese, and thallium are suspected as the toxic substances.
Dec. 13th	Kumamoto Prefectural Department of Health instructs the mayo of Minamata City and the director of the Minamata Public Health Center to request people engaged in fisheries to exercise self-regulation concerning consumption of fish and shellfish while teh dredging of the polluted bottom sediment of Minamata Bay along with the improvement of Minamata Port is carried out.

1958	July 14th	SNC announces the company's position on Minamata disease: The levels of selenium, thallium, and manganese in effluents are below standard, therefore the results of experiments performed on cats cannot conclude that the disease derives from these three substances.
	Aug. 7th	The municipal public health department undertakes on-site investigations at Modo upon notification by the city and the municipal hospital that new victims are appearing.
	Aug. 15th	The Special Council in Minamata City Council decides to promote voluntary restrictions on fishing and consumption of fish and shellfish from the Minamata Bay area. The Committee visits patients and cautions against the consumption of seafood from the Bay.
	Aug. 21st	Guidelines which strictly forbid fishing activities in the Bay area are presented to fishery related organizations by Kumamoto Prefecture.
	Sep.	SNC changes the route of the acetaldehyde effluent channel from Hyakken Port to Hachiman Pool; effluents are now discharged into the mouth of Minamata River.
	Dec. 2nd	The Municipal Hospital opens a wing for the tentative use of Minamata Disease patients and 11 patients are hospitalized.
1959	Jan. 16th	The Minamata Food Poisoning Special Committee of the Ministry of Health and Welfare Food Sanitation Investigation Council is established.
	Mar. 26th	The Minamata Strange Disease Action Committee recognizes that fishermen of Hachiman, Minamata City are victims of the disease. Continuous outbreaks of the disease occur around the mouth of Minamata River.
	July	The Strange Disease Research Laboratory is set up in the technical department of SNC Minamata.
	July 8th	The Special Committee for Measures against Minamata Disease is set up in the prefectural assembly.
	July 14th	The Minamata Disease Special Wing is completed at the Municipal Hospital. 29 patients are hospitalized at public expense.
	July 21st	Director Hosokawa of SNC Hospital begins experiments with cats, administering direct infections of vinyl chloride and acetaldehyde effluent.
	July 22nd	Kumamoto University Study Group presents an official report based on the researches by Prof. Takeuchi and Assistant Prof. Tokuomi: "The Minamata disease is a disease of the nervous system caused by the consumption of seafood caught near Minamata. It is strongly suspected that mercury is the causative agent." Organic mercury comes under suspicion for the first time.
	July 31st	The Fisheries Retailers Association of Minamata refuses to purchase any fish or shellfish caught by Minamata Fisheries Co-op.
	Aug. 5th	SNC, at a meeting of the Special Committee of the prefectural assembly, rejects arguments of organic mercury poisoning, stating that it is just an assumption based on no actual proof. SNC promises to build full wastewater disposal facilities by March 1960.
	Aug. 6th	Minamata Fisheries Co-op and the Fisheries Retailers Association of Minamata demonstrate against SNC Minamata. Negotiations begin towards compensation for the fishing industry. Fisheries representatives ask for: (1) ¥100 million in compensation; (2) complete removal of contaminated sludge from the area; (3) purification facilities.
	Aug. 29th	Minamata Fisheries Co-op and SNC accept and sign a mediation proposed by the mayor and officials of Minamata City.
	Sep. 28th	Mr. Takeharu Oshima, executive director of the Japan Chemical Industries Association rejects the organic mercury theory, instead proposes a theory of explosives as a cause.
	Oct. 6th	Cat Number 400 of the SNC Hospital laboratory shows symptoms.
	Oct. 17th	An Indignation Rally sponsored by the Prefectural Fisheries Association demands SNC accept contents of the mediation package: (1) plant operations are to stop until the completion of purification facility; (2) compensation to the fisheries industries. SNC rejects proposals. Second Fishermen's Riot begins. Police are dispatched to quell disturbances.
	Oct. 21st	The Ministry of International Trade and Industry orders SNC to put an immediate stop to effluvial discharges at Hachiman and to change the route of channel to Hyakken Port as well as to complete wastewater purification facilities by the end of the year.
	Nov. 1st	SNC begins skimming the water of Hachiman Pool and returning it to the acetylene generator facilities.
	Nov. 12th	The Minamata Food Poisoning Special Committee of the Ministry of Health and Welfare Food Sanitation Investigation Council reports to the Ministry of Health and Welfare that Minamata Disease is due to the consumption of a large amount of fish and shellfish which inhabit the Minamata bay area. Damage to the central nervous system is caused by poisoning, the main agent being a type of organic mercury compound. The Special Committee is dissolved the following day.
	Nov. 25th	Minamata Disease Patients Families Mutual Aid Society requests ¥3 million per patient in compensation. (total: ¥224 million)
	Dec. 17th	The Prefectural Fisheries Association and SNC accept and sign proposals by the Shiranui Sea Fisheries Dispute Mediation Committee.
	Dec. 25th	The Ministry of Health and Welfare sets up the Screening Council for Minamata Disease Patients.(temporarily)
	Dec. 30th	The Mutual Aid Society and SNC agree to sign Health Damage Compensation Contract.
1960	Apr. 12th	Prof. Raisaku Kiyoura of Tokyo Institute of Technology presents a Theory of Amino Poisoning.
	July	Minamata Fisheries Co-op sets a voluntary restriction zone which prohibits fishing within 1,000 meters from Minamata Bay.
	Sep. 29th	Prof. Makio Uchida reports that he has extracted organic mercury crystals from shellfish caught in Minamata Bay.
1961	Sep. 14th	The Ministry of Health and Welfare reorganizes the Screening Council for Minamata Disease Patients into the Screening Committee for Minamata Disease Patients supervised by the Kumamoto Prefectural Dept. of Public Health.
1962	Apr.	The Minamata City Fisheries Co-op lifts the ban of fishing except in Minamata Bay.
	Nov. 29th	16 patients are diagnosed as having congenital Minamata Disease.
1963	Feb. 16th	Prof. Katsuro Irukayama presents a report stating that "organic mercury chloride was extracted from the mercury sludge sample taken from the acetaldehyde acetic acid facility of SNC Minamata."
	Feb. 20th	The Kumamoto University Study Group makes its public official report concerning the causes of Minamata Disease: "... causative agents of Minamata Disease are methyl mercury compound extracted from shellfish caught in the bay and taken from sludge from the SNC plant. However, the extracted substances are slightly different in structure.
1964	Mar. 31st	Official notification of the ordinance for the establishment of the Kumamoto Prefectural Screening and Certification Committee for Minamata Disease Patient. (formerly the Screening Committee for Minamata Disease Patients).
	May	The Fisheries Co-op lifts all restrictions concerning fishing in Minamata Bay.

1965	Jan. 1st	SNC changes its name to "Chisso Co., Ltd." (hereafter called Chisso)
	May 31st	Yunoko Hospital, affiliated with Minamata Municipal Hospital, opens. In Niigata, Drs. Tadao Tsubaki and Yukiaki Ueki report to the Dept. of Public Health of Niigata Prefecture that "patients of mercury poisoning from an unknown source are appearing in scattered areas downstream along the Agano River and coastal regions." The official outbreak of Niigata-Minamata Disease.
1966	June	Chisso Minamata upgrades purification with a complete acetaldehyde effluent processing circulation system.
1967	June 12th	13 members from three households of Niigata-Minamata Disease patients file suit at the Niigata District Court demanding ¥44.5 million from Showa-Denko Co. Japan's first pollution compensation trial.
1968	May 18th	Chisso Minamata stops production of acetaldehyde by the acetylene method.
	Sep. 26th	The Japanese government officially recognizes that Minamata Disease as a pollution and that "causative agents ... are methyl mercury compound produced in the acetaldehyde acetic acid facilities of Chisso Minamata."
1969	Feb.	Minamata Bay area is designated as special zone by the former Water Quality Control Act. The regulation of discharging methyl mercury by former Factory Effluent Control Act starts.
	Apr. 15th	The Yunoko Branch of Minamata Daiichi Elementary School opens within Yunoko Hospital as an educational facility for congenital Minamata Disease patients.
	Apr. 25th	The Minamata Disease Compensation Processing Committee is established.
	June 14th	112 members out of 28 families within the Mutual Aid Society file a suit at the Kumamoto District Court ask for a total of approx. ¥640 million in compensation. (The first Minamata Disease lawsuit.)
	Dec. 15th	The "Law Concerning the Relief of Pollution-Related Health Damage" is promulgated. (Effective Feb. 1, 1970)
	Dec. 17th	A general meeting of the Examination Committee for the Designation of the Pollution Caused Disease (Ministry of Health and Welfare), decides to use the term "Minamata Disease" in consideration of its history and common recognition in Japan and abroad.
	Dec. 20th	Ministry of Health and Welfare designates Minamata City, Tanoura-machi, Ashikita-machi, and Tsunagi-machi (Ashikita-gun) of Kumamoto Prefecture; and Izumi City of Kagoshima Prefecture as "pollution-affected areas" in accordance with the Law Concerning the Relief of Pollution-Related Health Damage (the "Old Law").
	Dec. 27th	The Pollution-Related Health Damage Certification Council is established in Kumamoto Prefecture. The Kumamoto Prefectural Screening Council for Minamata Disease Patients is dissolved in accordance with prefectural ordinance.
1970	Jan. 21st	The Pollution-Related health Damage Certification Council is established in Kagoshima Prefecture.
	May 27th	The party which relies on the government concerning compensation, and the Families Mutual Aid Society, along with Chisso, accepts a proposal by the Minamata Disease Compensation Processing Committee an a reconciliation agreement is reached.
	Aug. 18th	8 officially unrecognized patients request further investigation on the certificating system to the Minister of Health and Welfare.
1971	July 1st	Environment Agency is established as an independent organization.
	Aug. 7th	Deputy Director-General of the Environment Agency gives notification concerning the Law Concerning the Relief of Pollution-Related Health Damage. The Minister of Environment withdraws the screening result of the 9 unrecognized patients by the Certification Council. (All of them are officially recognized by Kumamoto Prefecture in Oct. 6 and by Kagoshima Prefecture on Oct. 8.)
	Sep. 29th	The Niigata District court decides in favor of the plaintiffs.
	Oct. 5th ~ Nov. 1st	Kumamoto Prefecture, in addition to health examinations for fishermen and their families around Minamata Bay, conducts a survey of 55,776 residents. Particular attention is given to the families of fishermen.
	Oct. 11th	A patients' group (later called the "Independent Negotiation Group") begins compensation negotiations with Chisso.
	Nov. 14th	The Citizens' Network, Council for the Emotional Support of Minamata, is formed. It presents as its goals: (1) an early resolution of the compensation issue; (2) improvement of the pollution victims relief system; (3) reclamation processing of the mercury contaminated sludge; (4) replacement of the term "Minamata Disease"; (5) revitalization of the city's economic structure; (6) lobbying concerned organizations to encourage new enterprises to locate in Minamata.
	Dec. 28th	The Central Council for Environmental Pollution sets up the Mediation Committee for Minamata Disease Compensation. A "mediation request" asks the committee's assistance and it begins mediation.
1972	Feb. 2nd ~Mar. 15th July 1st	Kumamoto Prefecture conducts its second health survey on 11,784 residents of the Bay area. The Environmental Dispute Coordination Commission is established, reorganized from the Central Council for Environmental Pollution.
	Dec. 15th	"Meisuien", a social welfare institute for the severely handicapped opens. 13 congenital Minamata Disease patients are admitted.
1973	Jan. 20th	141 members of families affected by Minamata Disease file a suit against Chisso at Kumamoto District Court, asking for ¥1 billion 680 million in compensation. (2nd Minamata Disease Suit)
	Mar. 20th	The Kumamoto District Court decides in favor of the plaintiffs. (1st Minamata Disease Suit)
	Apr. 27th	The first 30 mediation participants sign compensation agreements with Chisso.
	May 22nd	The Kumamoto University 2nd Study Group of Minamata Disease reports that fish and shellfish in and around Minamata Bay are still unsafe and large consumption could lead to the disease.
	May 27th	Minamata Fisheries Co-op again places voluntary catch restriction in Minamata Bay.
	July 9th	5 patients groups, except the 2nd lawsuit group, sign compensation agreements with Chisso.
	Sep. 28th	In Minamata City, a petition reaches 72 % of qualified voters who demand a name change for Minamata Disease.
	Oct. 1st	The Mayor of Minamata City presents the petition to the Director-General of the Environment Agency and other concerned authorities, regarding the name change for Minamata Disease.
	Nov. 20th	30 Fisheries Co-ops along the Shiranui Sea Zone sign compensation agreements with Chisso. (¥2 billion 280 million in total compensation)
	Dec. 6th	3 Fisheries Co-ops in Izumi, Azume, and Nagashima in Kagoshima Prefecture sign compensation agreements with Chisso. (¥729.6 million in total compensation)

	Dec. 25th	The second Minamata Disease Lawsuit Group sign compensation agreements.
1974	Jan.	Kumamoto Prefecture sets up the dividing nets which close off the mouth of Minamata Bay and prevent the spread of contaminated fish.
	June 4th	Minamata City and Chisso sign the Pollution Control Agreement.
	Aug. 29th	The fiscal year 1974 Minamata Disease Required-Observation Patients Research and Treatment Project is enacted. Later called the Minamata Disease Certification Applicants' Research and Treatment Project, it is a One-year project and renewed every year.
	Sep. 1st	The "New Law" (Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Law) goes into effect.
	Dec. 13th	Suit is filed in Kumamoto District Court by 406 certification applicants alleging illegal negligence.
1975	Mar. 14th	103 patients and family members file charges against Chisso for unlawful bodily injury and homicide to Kumamoto Prefectural Police.
	Apr. 1st	Yunoko Branch of Minamata Daiichi Junior High School is established at Minamata Municipal Hospital for the education of congenital patients. Minamata Fisheries Co-op stops fishing within the Minamata Bay. (during the operation of the Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project: till March 31, 1990)
	May 12th	Minamata City begins health survey of 37,145 residents (fiscal year 1975 through 1981)
	Sep. 6th	Kumamoto Prefecture, Minamata City, and Minamata Fisheries Co-op give notice of Self-imposed Restriction on Fish Catches in Minamata Bay.
1976	May 1st	Kumamoto Prefecture establishes Minamata Disease Diagnosis Center next to Minamata Municipal Hospital.
	May 4th	The former president and the former Minamata factory director of Chisso are indicted by Kumamoto District Court for professional negligence resulting in wrongful injuries and death.
	Dec. 15th	"Illegal negligence decision is rendered in favor of the plaintiffs": The delayed certification procedures by the administration is ruled illegal.
1977	May 31st	Minamata City and Chisso sign "detailed" parts of Pollution Prevention Accords.
	July 1st	The Environment Agency issues "The Promotion of Minamata Disease Countermeasures": (1) Criteria for determining Minamata Disease; (2) Certification procedures conducted by the prefecture.
	Aug. 1st	Kumamoto Prefecture establishes Minamata Disease Counseling Office in Kumamoto Prefecture Minamata Disease Diagnosis Center.
	Oct. 1st	A system is set up to screen at least 120 applications out of 150 examined applicants each month.
	Oct. 11th	Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project begins. Dividing nets are extended in order not to spread contaminated fish outside the Minamata Bay.
	Dec. 16th	Establishment of "The Citizens' Movement to take Steps in dealing with Minamata Disease, the Revitalization of Minamata and Ashikita Areas, and the Regeneration of Chisso Minamata". (abbreviated to Minamata Citizens' Movement). The Association is made up of representatives from each faction of Minamata City Council, three economic groups, labor organizations, and political parties: 27 groups in total.
	Dec. 25th	Minamata Citizens' Movement holds a general rally - over 1,200 participate.
	Dec. 26th	A temporary injunction concerning sludge dredging is submitted to the Kumamoto District Court by residents of Minamata.
1978	Apr. 12th - 13th	The Mayor of Minamata, and Representative and members of the Citizens' Movement, file a petition on behalf of 27,000 people to the prefecture and the national government. The petition demands: (1) full relief measures for Minamata; (2) environmental restoration; (3) revitalization of the Minamata and Ashikita areas; (4) special legislation concerning the regeneration of Chisso.
	June 20th	Cabinet reaches consensus on Minamata Disease Countermeasures.
	July 3rd	The Deputy Secretary General of the Environment Agency gives notification of the new "Promotion of Minamata Disease Certification Procedures" in high-probability cases.
	Oct. 1st	Establishment of the National Institute for Minamata Disease.
	Nov. 8th	4 applicants rejected for Minamata Disease Certification file a suit to Kumamoto District Court.
	Dec. 15th	Applicants file a suit on the delay of certification procedures to Kumamoto District Court.
	Dec. 19th	Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly approves Kumamoto Prefectural Bonds to Chisso.
	Dec. 27th	First Prefectural Bonds for loans issued to Chisso amount to ¥3 billion 350 million.
1979	Feb. 14th	Law Concerning Provisional Measures for the Promotion of Administrative Work on Certification of Minamata Disease enacted.
	Mar. 28th	Second Minamata Disease Lawsuit decision in plaintiff's favor - both parties appeal.
1980	Apr. 16th	Call for a temporary injunction against sludge dredging in Minamata Bay is rejected.
	May 21st	85 applicants for certification as Minamata Disease patients file a suit against the national and prefectural governments and Chisso for damage compensation in Kumamoto District Court (3rd Lawsuit).
	June 6th	Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project resumes.
	Sep. 18th	Patients begin refusing official health examinations.
1981	July 1st	Director of Environmental Health Department, Environment Agency notifies: Conditions for the Determination of Infantile Minamata Disease including Intrauterine Organic Mercury Intoxication.
	Nov. 20th	The national government, after the concerned ministers of Minamata Disease meeting, decides the 3-year-continuation of Prefectural Bonds to Chisso. (from the fiscal 1982 to the fiscal 1984)
	Dec. 19th	Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly approves the Prefectural Bonds to Chisso is unavoidable.
1982	Oct. 28th	Kansai Lawsuit: 40 plaintiffs in Osaka file a suit.

1983	June 13th	Sludge dredging of the Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project begins in the 1st District.
	July 20th	Compensation for the delay of certification procedures is decided in favor of plaintiffs.
1984	May 2nd	Tokyo Lawsuit: 6 plaintiffs in Tokyo and Kanagawa file a suit.
	Dec. 25th	The national government, after the concerned ministers of Minamata Disease meeting, decides the 3-year-continuation of Prefectural Bonds to Chisso. (from the fiscal 1985 to the fiscal 1987)
1985	Mar. 19th	Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly approves the continuation of Prefectural Bonds to Chisso followed by the national government's decision.
	Aug. 16th	Second Lawsuit decision in favor of 4 plaintiffs (1 rejected). Effective Aug. 30.
	Nov. 28th	Kyoto Lawsuit: 5 plaintiffs in Kyoto file a suit.
	Nov. 29th	Waiting Fee Lawsuit decision of the lower court. The national and prefectural governments appeal to the Supreme Court.
	Dec. 12th	Sludge dredging of the Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project begins in the 2nd District. (Myojin district)
1986	Mar. 27th	Court rules in favor of plaintiffs in the Minamata Disease Certification Suit. Defendants appeal.
	June 28th	Enforcement of the Special Medical Project.
	Oct. 6th	Sludge disposal of the Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project begins in Marushima and Hyakken Waterways.
1987	Mar. 30th	Third Minamata Lawsuit Decision: Court decides in favor of plaintiffs except those who were certified by the administration – first recognition of administration responsibility. Both parties appeal.
	July 20th	Sludge dredging of the Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project in Marushima Port begins.
	Dec. 4th	The national government agrees with a three-year (fiscal 1988 – 90) succession of Prefectural Bonds loans to Chisso.
	Dec. 22nd	Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly grants a successive issue of bonds to Chisso totaling ¥44 billion 189 million.
	Dec. 25th	Sludge dredging of the Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project ends.
1988	Feb. 19th	Fukuoka Lawsuit: 8 plaintiffs in Fukuoka Prefecture file a suit.
	Feb. 29th	Former Chisso President and concerned people are found guilty of professional negligence resulting in death – final appeal dismissed.
	March	Sludge dredging of the Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project in Marushima Port, and Marushima & Hyakken waterways ends.
	Aug. 26th	Kumamoto Prefecture, in cooperation with Minamata City Fisheries Co-op, takes a large catch of contaminated fish from Minamata Bay.
	Sep. 4th	Minamata Disease Negotiating Body begins sit-ins in front of Chisso Minamata main gate calling for direct negotiations.
1989	Jan. 25th	Kumamoto Prefecture Special Committee on Fish & Shellfish in Minamata Bay is established.
	Mar. 25th	With the support of Hosokawa, the governor of Kumamoto Prefecture, Okada, the Mayor of Minamata, Minamata Disease Negotiating Body and Chisso sign a relief agreement and sit-ins are discontinued.
	June 19th	The 2nd large-scale catch of organic mercury contaminated fish in Minamata Bay takes place over till Jun.22. 225 fishing boats go fishing.
1990	Feb. 27th	The Prefectural Committee on Minamata Bay Fisheries Products nominates 16 types of fish which show mercury contamination beyond the national standard and suggests: 1) postponing the removal of dividing nets scheduled in March; 2) follow-up survey on a flow of mercury; 3) purchase of specified fish in Minamata Bay; 4) Effective usage of fishing area; 5) counter-measures for the fishing industry.
	Mar. 14th	Minamata Fish Retailers' Association continues boycott of fish taken from Minamata Bay.
	Mar. 31st	The prefectural Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project is completed at a total cost of ¥48 billion 500 million.
	May 23rd	Minamata City publishes "Mercury concentrations in infants' hair and umbilical cords: a Decade's Research" and declares no present danger of Infantile Minamata Disease.
	Sep. 12th	9 groups of victims establish the Association for an Early Resolution to Minamata Disease Issues.
	Sep. 28th	Tokyo District court recommends reconciliation as means of reaching an early settlement.
	Oct. 1st	One defendant, National Government, refuses to consider out-of-court negotiations. Defendant Kumamoto Prefecture agrees to this settlement.
	Oct. 4th	Kumamoto District Court recommends reconciliation towards the resolution of the Third Minamata Disease Lawsuit concerning certification and disease analysis. Later Kumamoto Prefecture and Chisso accept and National Government refuses.
	Oct. 5th	Chisso accepts the recommendations of Tokyo District Court.
	Oct. 12th	Fukuoka High Court recommends out-of-court settlements concerning the Third Minamata Disease Lawsuit part 1, stressing the responsibility of the administration and urging National Government to make a political judgment. Kumamoto Prefecture concurs.
	Oct. 18th	Fukuoka District Court recommends out-of-court settlements concerning the Minamata Disease lawsuit in Fukuoka.
	Oct. 29th	The national government, considering the recent proposals for out-of-court settlements, announces that it is difficult to decide to accept them at this time.
	Nov. 9th	Kyoto District Court recommends out-of-court settlements concerning the Minamata Disease Lawsuit in Kyoto. Kumamoto Prefecture accepts and National Governments doesn't.
Dec. 18th	The national government agrees with a three-year (fiscal 1991 – 93) succession of Prefectural Bonds loans to Chisso.	
Dec. 21st	Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly grants a successive issue of bonds to Chisso.	

1991	Apr. 10th	Fisheries Agency investigates fish and shellfish in the whole of the Yatsushiro Sea in order to check the ratio of mercury. They report that some fish are polluted beyond standards, but that they are basically harmless to the human body, because the average ratio of mercury contamination is below standard.
	Apr. 25th	Kumamoto Prefecture started experiments on cats fed on fish from Minamata Bay the previous year. Even in cases where large amounts are administered on a long-term basis, none of the affects of Minamata Disease are observed.
	Apr. 26th	The Supreme Court's ruling on Compensation for Waiting Fee Lawsuit: the decision in the second trial is reversed. The case is sent back to the Fukuoka High Court.
	June 22nd	Environment Agency announces a Survey on the Development of the Comprehensive Research Methods for Minamata Disease (with Itsuzo Shigematsu, Chief Executive Director of X-Ray Research Center as leader), in which they deny that poisoning induced by long-term ingestion of small amounts has a harmful effect on human body.
	Dec. 26th	Kumamoto District Court rejects Claim to Prohibit Fishing in and on the outskirts of Minamata Bay.
1992	Feb. 7th	Court decision on Tokyo Minamata Disease suit: National Government and Kumamoto Prefecture are not responsible according to the National Compensation Law; however, they are politically responsible. 42 out of 64 plaintiffs are judged as being affected by organic mercury. Chisso is sentenced to compensate each with ¥4 million.
	Feb. 14th	Dissatisfied with the Tokyo District Court decision, all plaintiffs, as well as Chisso, appeal to the Tokyo High Court.
	Mar. 31st	Niigata District Court decision on the Second Law Suit for Niigata Minamata Disease: the national government is not to blame; 88 out of 94 plaintiffs are recognized as victims; Showa Electric Company is sentenced to pay a total sum of ¥578 million in compensation.
	Apr. 7th	Dissatisfied with the Niigata Minamata Disease Second Law Suit Decision, Showa Electric, as well as 91 plaintiffs, appeal to Tokyo High Court. (Apr. 13)
	May 1st	Minamata Disease Victims Memorial Service organized by Minamata City is held after 24 years. About 1,000 people including victim's families, patients, and citizens are present and pray for the lives taken by Minamata Disease.
	June 26th	Kumamoto Prefecture establishes Comprehensive Measures of Minamata Disease.
	Aug. 6th	Fukuoka High Court decision on the Claim to Prohibition of Fishing in and on the outskirts of Minamata Bay: the appeal from the plaintiffs is rejected.
	Dec. 7th	Osaka District Court suggests reconciliation to the Kansai Minamata Disease Law Suit Group (56 people).
1993	Jan. 4th	Opening of Minamata Disease Municipal Museum with the aim of introducing the history and present conditions of Minamata Disease using panels and videos, as well as handing down a lesson to the next generation.
	Feb. 6th	Citizens' Group for the settlement of Minamata Disease issues and the support for the regeneration of Minamata (hereinafter called Citizens' Group) declares its foundation and holds a general meeting in Minamata Public Hall. 194 organizations or individuals participate.
	Mar. 4th	Kumamoto Prefecture Special Committee on Fish & Shellfish in Minamata Bay holds a general meeting in Kumamoto City, in which they agree to study how to remove the dividing nets in Minamata Bay gradually. The number of fish which are mercury contaminated decreased from 16 to 10 varieties.
	Mar. 6th	The first open-public meeting of Citizens' Group is held in Minamata Cultural Hall to which about 1,000 people attend. They agree to the active participation for the quick settlement of Minamata Disease issues and to a special measure to support Chisso.
	Mar. 22nd	Citizens' Group (Mayor of Minamata City and about 20 other representatives) submits an appeal with about 25,000 signatures to the Environment Agency, concerned ministries and agencies, Legislators from Kumamoto Prefecture, and all political parties.
	Mar. 25th	Kumamoto District's decision on the second group of the 3rd suit on Minamata Disease (238 people as plaintiffs): administrative responsibility is blamed for neglecting its duty to prevent the outbreak of Minamata Disease and its expansion according to the Food Sanitary Law, Water Quality Protection Law, and Effluent Regulation Law.
	Mar. 29th	Kumamoto Prefecture Minamata Bay Pollution Prevention Project Monitoring Committee (Director Motoo Fujiki, Professor of Tukuba University) is held in Kumamoto City. They announced that the dredging of the polluted sediment did not cause damage such as indirect contamination of water quality and fish. Then, they dissolved the committee, submitting the report on the investigation and research into the dredging project to the Governor of Kumamoto Prefecture.
	May 1st	The 2nd Minamata Disease Victims Memorial Service. About 500 people participated.
	Aug. 26th	Kumamoto Prefecture Special Committee on Fish and Shellfish in Minamata Bay reduces the variety of polluted fish from 10 to 9.
	Nov. 19th	The national government agrees with a three-year (fiscal 1994 - 96) succession of Prefectural Bonds loans to Chisso.
	Nov. 26th	Kyoto District Court's decision on Minamata Disease Kyoto low suit: part of the blame goes to the national government and the prefectural government, so that ¥ 3 million to 7 million should be paid to 33 out of 46 plaintiffs by the administrative organizations as well as Chisso. Chisso is solely responsible for compensation to 5 out 46 plaintiffs.
	Dec. 16th	Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly grants a successive issue of bonds to Chisso.
	1994	Feb. 23rd
May 1st		The 3rd Minamata Memorial Victims Memorial Service is held. Mayor Yoshii first apologizes as the mayor of Minamata, saying that "We have not taken enough measures for the victims who have been discriminated against without any reason."
July 11th		Court decision on Kansai lawsuit for Minamata Disease: the national and prefectural governments are not to blame for compensation in terms of the negligence of taking measures on regulation; Chisso is sentenced to pay ¥ 3 million to ¥ 8 million to 42 out of 59 plaintiffs.
Sep. 9th		Concerned ministers in the cabinet agree to a financial measure which includes the reduction of the rate of interest to Chisso and new prefectural bonds composed of funds.
Sep. 21st		Issue of the Prefectural Bonds to Chisso to be redeemed earlier, ¥62 billion 597 million.
Oct. 25th		Kumamoto Prefecture Special Committee on Fish & Shellfish in Minamata Bay reduces the kind of polluted fish from 4 to 2.
Dec. 27th		Minamata Ashikita Promotion Fund Foundation is set up.
1995	Mar. 10th	The Council for Measures against Minamata Disease in the ruling party presents an interim report, which aims for the settlement in reconciliation, to the Policy Regulating Council.
	Mar. 31st	The application deadline for the Comprehensive Measures of Minamata Disease.
	Apr. 20th	The removal of the dividing nets in the Nanatsuse Sea Area starts.
	May 1st	The 4th Minamata Disease Victims Memorial Service is held on the Minamata Bay Reclaimed Land (Approx. 500 people attend).
	Sep. 28th	The Final Solution Scheme for settlement with cash benefits to the victims' organizations and to the patients (¥ 2.6 million for each unaided patient)
	Oct. 2nd	Minamata Disease Patients 'Peace' Association officially accepts the Final Solution Scheme.
	Oct. 3rd	Modo Minamata Disease Patients Fellowship accepts the Final Solution Scheme.

	Oct. 5th	Minamata Disease Fishermen's Unaided Patients Association accepts the Final Solution Scheme
	Oct. 12th	Minamata Disease Patients Association accepts the Final Solution Scheme.
	Oct. 30th	Zenkokuren decides to accept the Final Solution Scheme. 5 patients groups all accept the scheme proposed by the national government.
	Dec. 11th	'Niigata' Minamata Disease Joint Struggle Meeting and Showa Electric sign the agreement of uncertified patients.
	Dec. 15th	Both in the meeting among the concerned ministers related to Minamata Disease and the cabinet meeting, the Final Solution Scheme to relieve the Unaided Patients is passed. The Prime Minister, Murayama, states regret in the Prime Minister's Announcement on the solution of the Minamata Disease issues for the first time on behalf of the government.
	Dec. 20th	Kumamoto Prefecture Governor, Fukushima expresses regret on the solution of the Minamata Disease problems in the regular assembly in December.
1996	Jan. 5th	Kumamoto Prefecture sets up Support for the Settlement of Minamata Disease Issues Foundation, which will be the window for loans to Chisso for the payment of compensation.
	Jan. 22nd	Beginning of the acceptance of the application for the Comprehensive Measures of Minamata Disease in Kumamoto, Kagoshima, and Niigata prefectures.
	Feb. 19th	Concerning the complete removal of the dividing nets in Minamata Bay, Kumamoto Prefecture Special Committee for Fish & Shellfish in Minamata Bay (chairman: Hiroshi Tsukahara, professor emeritus of Kyushu University) reports that the concentration of mercury in seven kinds of fish examined is within the legal standard. They suggest to the prefecture, "It is appropriate to remove the dividing nets." However, this declaration of safety forms an exception to two other written opinions; because the committee members from both the national government and Kagoshima Prefecture object to the removal of the nets, saying that it is too early.
	Feb. 21st	Based on the Final Solution Scheme proposed by the national government, Minamata Disease Patients 'Peace' Association and Chisso conclude an agreement concerning a lump sum payment and settlement of the dispute.
	Feb. 23rd	Minamata Disease Fishermen's Unaided Patients Association and Mado Minamata Disease Patients Fellowship exchange an agreement with Chisso. The 2nd Lawsuit for 'Niigata' Minamata Disease, which demands compensation of ¥5.1 billion to Showa Electric and the government, and the defendants are reconciled. They also prepare an agreement setting out to receive ¥2.6 million in compensation each.
	Apr. 30th	Minamata Disease Patients Alliance concludes the agreement with Chisso on the settlement and the lump sum compensation.
	May 1st	The 5th Minamata Disease Victims' Memorial Service is held on the reclaimed land of Minamata Bay, and the director-general of Environment Agency and the president of Chisso participate for the first time, and deliver words of prayer to those taken by Minamata Disease.
	May 19th	Zenkokuren concludes an agreement with Chisso on the settlement of the dispute and a lump sum payment. Accordingly, all the organizations which are to be compensated conclude the agreement.
	May 22nd	Plaintiffs groups, asking for compensation, such as the Third Lawsuit for Minamata Disease in Fukuoka, Kumamoto, Osaka, and Kyoto are reconciled with Chisso. The plaintiffs withdraw the suit against the government and Kumamoto Prefecture.
	May 23rd	Reconciliation between Tokyo Minamata Disease Lawsuit Plaintiffs, Chisso and the government, Kumamoto Prefecture lawsuits under trial at Tokyo High and District Courts are withdrawn. The withdrawal of Zenkokuren's lawsuit is completed. Iwatare, Director-General of the Environment Agency holds a press conference. He makes an apology, concerning political and administrative responsibility.
	June 24th	Kumamoto Prefecture begins intensive fish and shellfish hauling within the Minamata Bay partitioned by the dividing nets.
	July 1st	Acceptance of applications for the Comprehensive Measures on Minamata Disease, based on the Final Settlement Scheme for Unaided Minamata Disease Patients, is completed in Kumamoto and Kagoshima prefectures.
	Aug. 28th	Kumamoto Prefecture announces the result of the survey, concerning the mercury levels in the fish and shellfish within the Minamata Bay area and Nanatsuse area conducted in the first half of fiscal 1996 year. The mercury levels in both areas are below the national regulatory levels for four consecutive surveys, starting from the second half of 1994.
	Sep. 27th	Fukuoka High Court decision on the Waiting Fee Lawsuit is withdrawn: "the Governor made his best effort to avoid delaying certification procedures". Administrative responsibility is exempted. First Trial at Kumamoto District Court Decision seeking compensation for all plaintiffs is withdrawn.
	Oct. 10th	Dissatisfied with the Fukuoka High Court decision, all the plaintiffs for the Waiting Fee Lawsuit appeal to the Supreme Court.
	Nov. 11th	Japan-Indonesia Seminar on the spread of the Experiences of Minamata Disease organized by Water and Green Planet Conservation Committee is held in Jakarta, Indonesia in cooperation with the Environment Agency. Some Minamata Disease patients participate and report on the outbreak of Minamata Disease and its damage to the local community.
1997	Feb. 25th	Kumamoto Prefecture Committee on Fish and Shellfish in Minamata Bay gives unanimous approval of a policy that the dividing nets be removed, if mercury levels of fish and shellfish are below the national standard in the survey of the first half of the fiscal 1997 year. The committee is dissolved on the same day.
	May 1st	The 6th Minamata Disease Victims' Memorial Service is held at the Minamata Memorial completed in the previous fall. Approx. 550 people including Ishii, Director-General of the Environment Agency attend.
	July 29th	"Regarding the Dividing Nets deployed in January, 1974, the safety of the marine products of Minamata Bay, and their continuous safety have been confirmed. Also the citizens of the prefecture have reached consensus on the removal of the Dividing Nets. Therefore, the nets are to be removed", Kumamoto Prefecture Governor Fukushima announces the Minamata Bay Safety Declaration, declaring removal operations begin in August.
	Aug. 21st	Kumamoto Prefecture commences Dividing Net removal operations.
	Sep. 19th	Issue of the Prefectural Bonds to Chisso to be redeemed earlier, ¥72 billion 682 million.
	Oct. 14th	The removal operations of upper sea level Dividing Nets is completed.
	Oct. 15th	The Minamata Fisheries Co-op resumes fishing operations in the Minamata Bay for the first time in 24 years. (Minamata Bay is now open to general public as fishing grounds. Buy-Back of fishing hauls by Chisso ends.)
	Nov. 1st	Kumamoto Prefecture Minamata Bay Environmental Monitoring Committee is established.
1998	Feb. 12th	Japan-Philippines Seminar on the spread of the Experiences of Minamata Disease organized by the Water and Green Planet Conservation Committee is held in Manila, the Philippines in cooperation with the Environment Agency. The citizens of Minamata, including Minamata Disease
	Feb. 13th	The Minamata General Moyainaoshi Center-Moyai Center, which has been being constructed based on the Final Solution Scheme proposed by the national government opens. 3 Moyainaoshi Community Centers projected by the final plan are completed.
	Feb. 24th	Kumamoto Prefecture reports the result of a survey on the fish and shellfish in Minamata Bay to Kumamoto Prefecture Minamata Bay Environmental Monitoring Committee. It is the first survey after the removal of the Dividing Nets. Mercury levels in 7 species of fish and shellfish such as Black Sea Bream and Black Rock Fish are below the national provisional regulatory levels.
	Mar. 25th	The Minamata Fisheries Co-op begins testing operations of culturing mother pearls and pearl oysters in Minamata Bay.
	May 1st	The 7th Minamata Disease Victims Memorial Service is held at the Minamata Memorial. Approx. 400 people including Oki Director-General of the Environment Agency attend.

	Oct. 2nd	Kumamoto Prefecture reports the result of the survey, conducted in the first half of 1998, on the fish and shellfish in the Minamata Bay to the 2nd Kumamoto Prefecture Minamata Bay Environmental Monitoring Committee. Mercury levels and methyl mercury levels in 7 species of fish and shellfish are all below the national provisional regulatory levels.
1999	Mar. 4th	Japan-Thailand Seminar on the spread of the Experiences of Minamata Disease organized by Water and Green Planet Conservation Committee is held in Bangkok, Thailand in cooperation with the Environment Agency. Some Minamata Disease Storytellers and representatives of Minamata citizens, national, prefectural, and local governments participate, and report on the experiences of Minamata Disease.
	Mar. 16th	Kumamoto Prefecture Minamata Bay Environmental Monitoring Committee confirms that mercury levels in 7 species of fish and shellfish caught in the second half of 1998 are all below the national provisional regulatory levels.
	Mar. 31st	Kumamoto Prefecture Minamata Disease Diagnosis Center closes.
	May 1st	The 8th Minamata Disease Victims Memorial Service is held at the Minamata Memorial. Approx. 500 people including Manabe Director-General of the Environment Agency attend.
	May 4th	"Minamata Disease Environmental Problems Symposium" and "Minamata Disease Exhibition" organized by School of Chinese Environment Management are held in Qinhuangdao City, China with the presence of the delegation of Mayor Yoshii and other representatives.
	May 6th	Mayor Yoshii gives a lecture entitled "Experiences and Lessons from Minamata Disease" at the University of Beijing in Beijing, China.
	May 20th	Chisso announces the closing accounts in March, 1999. Proceeds are 143 billion 856 million yen (decreased by 9.5% compared to the previous term).
	May 27th	Minamata city is granted the right to host the 6th International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant in October, 2001 at the 5th international mercury conference.
	June 9th	The national government officially ratifies on the provision of financial aid to Chisso, with the tabling of a Cabinet memorandum of understanding. It stipulates; 1) The Prefectural Bonds" issued by Kumamoto Prefecture, will be abolished in June 2000. 2) After Chisso has paid compensation due to Minamata disease patients from its operating profit, any remaining funds are to be paid to Kumamoto Prefecture as loan repayments. Any portion of the debt that can not be repaid, as it falls due, will be paid to the prefecture by the Japanese government from the subsidies and grants, or regional finance, provisions of the general budget. The portion of the debt taken over by the national government is then to be repaid by Chisso at some point in the future. 3) The approximately 27 billion yen provided by the Japanese government to finance the lump-sum payments to uncertified victims is exempt from repayment. 4) Chisso should continue Self-help and also clearly announce the stockholders' Special Committee on the Countermeasures of the Environment in Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly approves the scheme on financial support to Chisso proposed by the national government.
	June 21st	Special Committee on the Countermeasures of the Environment in Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly approves the scheme on financial support to Chisso proposed by the national government.
	Oct. 20th	Kumamoto Prefecture Minamata Bay Environmental Monitoring Committee confirms that mercury levels in 7 species of fish and shellfish caught in the first half of 1999 are all below the national provisional regulatory levels.
	Dec. 4th	"Research Group on the Socio-Scientific Aspect of Minamata Disease" in the National Institute of Minamanta Disease collects reports.
2000	Feb. 8th	Cabinet meeting approves the support to Chisso to after the fiscal 2000 year.
	Feb. 18th	National Institute for Minamata Disease starts a nationwide survey on the residual mercury level in human hair.
	Mar. 16th	The joint team of the National Institute of Minamata Disease and the Brain Research Group of Miigata University announces that methyl mercury is hardly transmitted to the suckling through breast milk.
	Mar. 24th	Kagoshima Prefecture recognizes a male resident of Izumi as a congenital Minamata Disease patient.
	May 1st	2000 (9th) Minamata Disease Sufferers' Memorial Service. Environment Agency Director Shimizu, 600 in attendance. Sufferers'/Bereaved Families' Representative Mrs. Miyako Kawamoto, wife of late Teruo Kawamoto, addresses prayer.
	May 3rd	Research conducted by Health Sciences University of Hokkaido, Daiichi University College of Pharmaceutical Sciences, etc. concludes that the internal organs of whale and other seafood sold on the consumer market is contaminated with high concentrations of mercury.
	May 19th	<i>Watashi ni totte no Minamatabyou ("My Minamata Disease")</i> Editorial Commission releases <i>Minamata shimin ha Minamatabyou ni dou mukiattaka ("How Minamata Citizens faced Minamata Disease")</i> , a collection of real stories of Minamata residents.
	May 20th	Exhibit of 24 photos of Minamata taken by Takeshi Shiota between 1960-1970's held at Municipal Minamata Disease Museum (until June 4th).
	June 5th	Prefectural Government conducts final monitoring of marine life in Minamata Bay (until June 22nd).
	June 6th	Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly approves final patients' funding of over 1.4 billion yen (Total amount issued: 90 billion yen).
	June 23rd	Memorial plaque is laid by congenital Minamata disease sufferers on the grounds of former Yunoko schoolhouse.
	July 13th	Three Sufferers' groups, Minamata Disease Patients' Peace Association, Minamata Disease Patients Federation, National Federation of Minamata Disease Sufferers' Associations, jointly lodge a request for the expansion of the Minamata Disease General Measures' Medical Services to Environment Agency Director Kawaguchi.
	July 20th	Minamata/Tokyo 2000 photo exhibit held at Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Meguro Ward, Tokyo.
	Aug. 3rd	Chisso Corp. Minamata Factory drainage pipe at Hyakken, which originally carried contaminated water, is refurbished.
	Aug. 16th	Prefectural Governor formally apologizes to a man involved in mistake regarding his occupation on his Minamata Disease Certification application forms.
	Aug. 23rd	Study of 1000 hair samples from residents conducted by National Institute for Minamata Disease the previous spring reveal mercury levels below the national average, indicating no further effects from mercury contamination.
	Sept. 5th	Five Minamata disease Oral Historians object to content published in <i>Minamata Shimin ha Minamatabyou ni dou mukiattaka</i> .
	Sept. 20th	Dioxin levels in Ezo River determined to be four times the environmental limit.
	Oct. 13th	Mayor appeals to citizens to end prejudice sparked by controversy over <i>Minamata Shimin ha Minamatabyou ni dou mukiattaka</i> in City newsletter.
	Nov. 6th	Minamata disease Oral Historians give lectures to City staff in order to deepen their understanding of Minamata disease (until Nov. 7th).
	Nov. 16th	Chisso makes profit for first time in three years and is expected to earn 5.3 billion yen this fiscal year.
	Nov. 17th	Kumamoto Prefectural Government reconfirms the safety of Minamata Bay with final monitoring of mercury levels of marine life. Decision to conclude monitoring of Minamata Bay.
	Dec. 14th	Minamata disease patients' groups call on Environment Agency for the continuation of monitoring of mercury levels of marine life in Minamata Bay (and to Prefectural Government the following day).

Dec. 18th	Three Oral Historians who experienced the atomic bombing of Nagasaki visit Minamata to meet with Minamata disease Oral Historians, pledging to pass the message of the misery of war and pollution to the next generation.
Dec. 26th	A 39 year-old woman in Izumi, Kagoshima is latest certified Minamata disease sufferer.
Dec. 28th	Prefectural Governor announces the continuation of monitoring of mercury levels in marine life of Minamata Bay in a press conference.
2001	
Jan. 11th	Learning the Lessons of Minamata Disease at Human Rights & Environment Symposium held in Kasuga City, Fukuoka.
Feb. 13th	Appeal rejected after reversal of the Minamata Disease Delay Reparations lawsuit.
Mar. 4th	Vietnam-Japan Seminar on Dissemination of the Experience of Minamata Disease (until Mar. 10th).
Mar. 7th	Former Environment Agency Director Sukio Iwatare dies of heart failure.
Mar.15th	Prefectural Government announces continuation of monitoring mercury levels in Minamata Bay to Prefectural Assembly.
Apr. 1st	National Federation of Minamata Disease Sufferers' Associations hold first General Meeting after establishment of NPO Minamata.
Apr. 17th	Delegation from the All-China Journalists' Association visits Minamata to meet with Minamata disease Oral Historians and tour Chisso Minamata Factory.
Apr. 19th	Kumamoto University holds educational seminar concerning the symptoms of Minamata disease and methylmercury poisoning entitled "Minamata Disease from a Medical Perspective" (once per week until Oct.: 13 times total).
Apr. 21st	Third Minamata Disease Memorial Address held in Yurakucho, Tokyo. Minamata disease sufferer Eiko Sugimoto spoke about her struggle with prejudice and discrimination.
Apr. 23rd	Minamata City erects sign at Hyakken drainage pipe, Shiomi District, the site where the Minamata disease incident originated.
Apr. 27th	Osaka High Court declares the responsibility of the national and prefectural governments in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit.
Apr. 30th	Chisso-Minamata Patients' Association sends petition to Environment Ministry, Kumamoto Prefecture and Chisso against their appeal of the court decision in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit.
May 1st	2001 (10th) Minamata Disease Sufferers' Memorial Service. Environment Minister Kawaguchi, 400 in attendance. Minamata Disease Oral Historian Eiko Sugimoto addresses prayer.
May 1st	Twenty-first Minamata Disease Mutual Aid Society independent memorial service at Otomezuka.
May 1st	Minamata Disease Mutual Aid Group member and congenital Minamata disease sufferer Shinobu Sakamoto submits over petition requesting not to appeal the court ruling in the Kansai Minamata Disease lawsuit to Environment Minister Kawaguchi in person.
May 2nd	Plaintiffs and attorneys in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit send their petition against an appeal to Prime Minister Koizumi.
May 5th	Saeki Town, Wake County, Okayama Prefecture hosts a joint Minamata-Saeki exhibit at Manabikan "Saesuta" (NPO Foundation Minamata Forum).
May 6th	Izumi Minamata Disease Association forms Minamata Disease Research group with doctors and researchers to seek out Minamata disease sufferers in Izumi.
May 7th	Plaintiffs and attorneys in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit send their petition against an appeal to Chisso Corporation Headquarters.
May 7th	Citizen Environmental Ambassadors visit Chinese Environmental Model City Zhangjiagang for a Minamata Disease exhibit.
May 8th	Plaintiffs and attorneys in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit deliver their petition against an appeal to Environment Ministry.
May 9th	National Government decides to proceed with appeal against Kansai court ruling.
May 9th	Plaintiffs and attorneys in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit deliver their petition against an appeal to Kumamoto Government.
May 11th	National and Prefectural governments, objecting to the ruling deciding their responsibility for neglecting to prevent the spread of Minamata disease, appeal to the Supreme Court. Chisso, however, accepts the court ruling and does not appeal.
May 17th	Mayor of Zhangjiagang and five other city officials visit Minamata and meet with Minamata disease Oral Historians.
May 18th	Chisso-Minamata Patients' Association submits petition to Environment Ministry and Kumamoto Prefecture to revoke their appeal of the Kansai court decision.
May 19th	Mercury levels in Minamata Bay fall below limits for the tenth consecutive year.
May 21st	National Institute for Minamata Disease begins research into the effects of mercury on the fetus from low-concentration, accumulated mercury in the mother.
May 29th	2001 Director's Meeting of the Chisso Financial Aid Association, established by the Ministries of the Environment, Finance, Internal Affairs and Communications, Economy, Trade and Industry, Cabinet Office, and Kumamoto Prefecture, agree upon an extension of 8.6 billion yen in financial aid for this year.
June 5th	Kumamoto prefecture recorded 149 cases of derogatory language in Minamata disease applicants' epidemiological surveys, Director of Environment & Lifestyle Development Furuta visits Minamata to apologize to sufferers' associations.
June 8th	Prefectural Minamata Public Health Office reports Minamata disease as food poisoning for the first time.
June 9th	Minamata Disease Information Center, affiliate of National Institute for Minamata Disease, opens in Myojin.
June 11th	Plaintiffs in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit and Kansai Minamata Disease Lawsuit Chisso-Minamata Disease Sufferers' Association call on Kumamoto Governor Shiotani to apologize for the incidents of derogatory language found in applicants' epidemiological surveys.
June 14th	Prefectural Minamata Public Health Office decides not to investigate Minamata disease as a case of food poisoning under the Food Sanitation Law.
June 19th	Outgoing mayor Yoshii announces the continuation of the Minamata Disease Oral Historian system.
June 23rd	Minamata City publishes <i>Minamata Disease: History and Lessons, 2000</i> , a booklet that untangles the history of Minamata disease.

June 27th	Members of the Korean Federation of Environmental Movement, the largest environmental NGO in Asia with 86, 000 members, visit Minamata to study Minamata disease.
July 1st	Heated debate at the NPO Foundation Minamata Forum information session over the display of photographs of deceased persons at the Minamata disease Exhibit to be held in October in Minamata.
July 10th	NPO Foundation Minamata Forum removes 38 photographs from exhibit at families' request; returns originals to Minamata Disease Peace Association, who opposed local exhibition.
July 19th	Discovery of new Minamata disease sufferers in Izumi City after mass examinations conducted by the Izumi Minamata Disease Association result in an initial 15 new certification applications to Kagoshima Prefecture.
Aug. 1st	Niigata Learning Center for Humans & the Environment, the Niigata Minamata disease museum, opens.
Aug. 23rd	Kumamoto Prefecture commences examination of fish caught in Minamata Bay in order to analyze mercury levels in local fish.
Aug. 24th	Twenty-five more families refuse to permit display of photographs of deceased relatives at Minamata Disease exhibit.
Sept. 1st	Fumiko Hiyoshi, the "mother of the Minamata disease movement", publishes <i>Minamatabyou kanja to tomo ni</i> ("Together with Minamata Disease Sufferers").
Sept. 1st	Kumamoto University Regional Alliance Forum holds symposium on current state of the Minamata disease issue and possibilities for the revitalization of Minamata at Moyaikan.
Sept. 8th	Minamata Exhibit at EXPO Japan 2001 in Kitakyushu depicts the tragedy of Minamata disease.
Sept. 22nd	Seventh Fire Festival is held to offer prayer to all life lost to Minamata disease.
Sept. 23rd	More families withdraw photographs of deceased members from Minamata disease exhibit; total 72 people's families withdraw.
Sept. 26th	Minamata Educational Tour Planning begins planning for study group to research whether the name "Minamata disease" should be changed or not.
Oct. 2nd	Ministry of the Environment publishes <i>Suigin Osen Taisaku Manyuaru</i> (Manual for Preventive Measures for Environmental Mercury Pollution and its Health Effects).
Oct. 12th	Minamata Forum holds the first Minamata disease exhibit to be held in Minamata.
Oct. 15th	Sixth International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant held in Minamata (500 people from 45 countries in attendance).
Oct.18th	Five congenital Minamata disease sufferers interact with participants of the International Conference.
Oct. 19th	National Institute for Minamata Disease and Munakata Suikokai General Hospital present their findings that methylmercury is generally not transmitted from mother to child through breastmilk at the International Conference.
Oct. 29th	Minamata Disease Mutual Aid Society and support group members submit request to the national and prefectural governments of Kumamoto and Kagoshima, calling for revision of the Minamata disease certification system, a study on relief for victims in the Shiranui Sea region, withdrawal of the appeal in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit, etc.
Nov. 2nd	Ministry of the Environment rejects request for tribunal for a woman whose application was denied by Kumamoto prefecture without investigation, seventeen years after her death.
Dec. 5th	Three Minamata disease sufferers' groups call on Environment Minister Kawaguchi for the continuation and expansion of the comprehensive Minamata disease medical care project and a reevaluation of their stance on Minamata disease symptoms, but are told that the Ministry's stance will not change.
Dec. 6th	The family of Dr. Hajime Hosokawa, who worked at Chisso factory hospital, which first publicly acknowledged Minamata disease, donates monetary funeral gifts to Hotto House.
Dec. 20th	A six percent increase in annual financial aid to Chisso is announced at 7.3 billion yen.
Dec. 27th	National Association of Minamata Disease Victim's Attorneys publish a five-part history documenting all legal proceedings.
Dec. 27th	Kagoshima Prefecture rejects all of 24 applications for Minamata disease certification (among these are participants in the Izumi Minamata Disease Association's mass examinations).
2002	
Jan. 8th	Minamata Disease Museum reports a record 46 000 visitors in 2001.
Jan. 12th	Seventh Minamata Disease Incident Research Symposium is held at Kumamoto Gakuen University.
Jan. 18th	Three new Oral Historians are added to Minamata Disease Museum program (Miyako Kawamoto, Sumiko Kaneko, Kenji Nagamoto).
Jan. 19th	Minamata Forum reaches an agreement with the Minamata Disease Sufferers' Peace Association to request permission from members before exhibiting photographs of their deceased family members.
Jan. 27th	Izumi Minamata Disease Association lodges objection to rejection of 17 people's applications to Kagoshima Prefecture.
Feb. 14th	Kumamoto Prefecture holds educational seminars about Minamata disease for its employees.
Mar. 4th	2002 Minamata Disease Sufferers' Memorial Ceremony Steering Committee established.
Mar. 5th	Number of visitors to the Minamata Disease Museum tops 300 000 since January 1993.
Mar. 5th	Alterations to the Criteria for Minamata Disease Certification and other related documents, the existence of which the Ministry of the Environment denied, were acknowledged.
Mar. 6th	Dr. M. Doi of Yokohama City University Faculty of Medicine, calls for immediate attention to the dramatic deterioration of physical condition among congenital Minamata disease sufferers.
Mar. 17th	Minamata Disease Research Society begins health inspections in particular regions of Izumi, Kagoshima.
Mar. 22nd	National network calling for the withdrawal of appeal in the Minamata disease lawsuit submits petition signed by 240,110 people to the Ministry of the Environment.
Mar. 22nd	Ministry of the Environment releases documents from a group of specialists discussing the criteria for Minamata disease certification from 1975 to 1977.
Mar. 25th	On the basis of the Pollution -Related Health Damage Compensation Law, Kumamoto Prefecture rejects six and withholds three of nine applications for Minamata disease certification.

Mar. 28th Thailand-Japan Seminar on the Dissemination of the Experience of Minamata Disease.

Mar. 28th Kumamoto Prefecture tightens its policy of cancelling applications for Minamata disease certification for difficult cases or plaintiffs involved in lawsuits.

Apr. 16th Miyako Kawamoto, widow of former Chisso-Minamata Disease Patients' Federation President Teruo Kawamoto, makes her debut as Oral Historian at Minamata Disease Museum.

Apr. 24th Kenji Nagamoto becomes the first congenital Minamata disease sufferer to give lecture as Oral Historian at Minamata Disease Museum.

Apr. 25th Kumamoto Prefectural Board of Education plans for 165 Children's Eco Seminars for Grade Five students throughout the prefecture this year.

Apr. 27th Fourth Minamata Disease Memorial Address held in Yurakucho, Tokyo.

Apr. 30th Fifth No More Minamata Environment Award ceremony held at Moyaikan. Winners are a first-grade student from Shisui Junior High School and a Korean NGO.

May 1st 2002 (11th) Minamata Disease Sufferers' Memorial Service. Environment Minister Oki, 600 in attendance. Minamata Disease Oral Historian Sumiko Kaneko addresses prayer; Chisso President Kondo also in attendance for first time in six years, gives address.

May 3rd Hotto House President Takeko Kato establishes the Sasae Fund in order to provide total financial support to sufferers.

May 17th Kumamoto Prefecture creates guidelines for the handling of difficult cases in order to advance the Minamata disease certification project.

May 24th Childrens' Eco Seminars for Grade Fives start.

May 25th National Institute for Minamata Disease begins a project to uncover, collect and archive old Minamata disease-related documents over the next four years.

May 26th Toshio Osawa of Modo reaches Kyoto's Sanjo Ohashi, completing 500 km over two months along the historic Fifty-three Stages of the Tokaido from Tokyo to Kyoto collecting signatures to petition the national and prefectural governments to withdraw their appeal to the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit.

May 31st Director's Meeting of the Chisso Financial Aid Association, created by the Ministries of the Environment, Finance, Internal Affairs and Communications, Economy, Trade and Industry, Cabinet Office, and Kumamoto Prefecture, announce over 9 billion yen in financial aid to Chisso according to the revised Financial Support Measures policy to come from prefectural coffers.

July 2nd Minamata/Hiroshima exhibit held in Hiroshima to redefine the Minamata disease incident, the origin of pollution, in a city that was bombed with an atomic bomb (till July 7).

July 7th Yoshiharu Tanoue, who led the 1973 negotiations with Chisso in Tokyo, dies of pneumonia at age 72 in Minamata.

July 10th Japan Railroad Construction Company begin demolition of "Firefly House", once a support facility for Minamata disease sufferers and the last property needed in order to build the Kyushu Shinkansen Line from Yatsushiro to Kagoshima.

July 12th Environment Minister Oki rejects appeal by Ashikita woman (now deceased) for her application for Minamata disease certification that was previously rejected by Kumamoto Prefecture.

July 12th National Provisional Minamata Disease Certification Council completes its Minamata Disease Certification Project after 24 years (results: 439 applications; 33 certifications; rejected: 328; withheld: 78).

July 17th Three Minamata disease sufferers groups call on Environment Minister Oki for the continuation and expansion of the Comprehensive Minamata Disease Medical Care Project.

July 18th Records from a Minamata disease specialists' committee set up by the Environment Agency in 1991 as part of its Pollution Control Council, show the committee was considering a way to deny re-application to rejected or new applicants to reduce the 2900 uncertified applicants.

July 24th An internet database of Diet proceedings minutes search function is found to contain derogatory synonyms for Minamata disease.

July 26th National Diet Library, operator of the Diet proceedings records system, decides to investigate the search software containing approximately 1.3 million words, for any derogatory terms for Minamata disease.

July 29th Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly office disables the display of derogatory synonyms for Minamata disease.

July 29th Chairman of the Prefectural Assembly and the President of the company responsible for making the software containing derogatory synonyms for Minamata disease travel to Minamata to formally apologize to sufferers' groups.

Aug. 3rd Memorial service for Sakae Yasukawa, a long-time supporter through the uncertified Minamata disease patients' trial and Chisso negotiations, held in Bunkyo Ward, Tokyo.

Aug. 20th Ministry of the Environment plans investigation into the effects of trace amounts of methylmercury on children in Miyagi Prefecture from October to November.

Aug. 24th Pictures made by Minamata disease sufferers which reflect on life and celebrate marine life go on display at Shinsui Boardwalk for "A Good Nights' Catch".

Aug. 26th Soshisha Minamata Disease Center takes part in the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, SA.

Sept. 3rd Kumamoto Prefecture begins catching fish in Minamata Bay to investigate mercury concentrations (until Sept. 5).

Sept. 21st Eighth Fire Festival is held to offer prayer to all life lost to Minamata disease.

Oct. 1st Joining a reshuffled Koizumi Cabinet, Environment Minister Shinichi Suzuki declares "We must not allow Minamata Disease to fade from memory".

Oct. 11th New Environment Minister Suzuki visits Minamata as his first duty, going to Minamata Disease Information Center, Minamata Disease Museum, Meisuien, etc.

Oct. 11th Buddhist service held at Soshisha for the spirits of all life lost to Minamata disease.

Nov. 1st Kumamoto Prefecture sends examination recommendations and orders to five people who failed to undergo medical examinations for Minamata disease certification at designated medical facilities.

Nov. 4th National Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals rejects appeal by now deceased Ashikita woman for her application for Minamata disease certification that was previously rejected by Kumamoto Prefecture.

Nov. 8th Environment Minister Suzuki emphasizes no intention to reevaluate the criteria for Minamata disease certification established in 1977 by the Diet Environment committee.

Nov. 11th National network calling on the Prime Minister, Environment Minister and Kumamoto Governor to withdrawl their appeals in the Minamata disease lawsuit submits petition signed by 186, 578 people to the Cabinet Office.

Nov. 12th Oral Historians from Niigata and Minamata meet in for the first time at Minamata Disease Museum.

Nov. 13th	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) holds private talks in Tokyo to discuss the expiration of special financial aid to Chisso this year.	
Nov. 18th	Japanese language signboard for the reclaimed land area, which was torn down a year before, is replaced.	
Nov. 18th	Hotto House representative Takako Kato publishes <i>Minamata, Hotto house ni atsumare!</i> ("Minamata, Let's Get Together at Hotto House") to mark its third year in operation.	
Nov. 28th	LDP committee assigned to the Minamata disease issue, requests that special financial aid to Chisso be extended into next year.	
Dec. 8th	Kizuna no Sato Moyainaoshi Center invites Minamata disease Oral Historians from the Minamata Disease Museum to give lectures to preserve the memory of Minamata Disease in areas outside of downtown Minamata (once per month: 9 times).	
Dec. 10th	Kumamoto Prefecture retires Minamata Disease Certification Council Chairman Mr. Mishima (85), and instates Mr. Kato from the Fukuoka Institute of Health and Environmental Science.	
Dec. 13th	Government announces plans to extend special financial support to Chisso for another three years.	
Dec. 20th	This year's financial aid to Chisso reported at 7.2 billion yen, a four percent overall decrease.	
Dec. 26th	Group involved in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit protest the Kumamoto government for giving orders for medical examination to plaintiffs who did not undergo examination for Minamata disease certification.	
2003	Jan. 4th	Municipal Minamata Disease Museum 10th anniversary.
	Jan. 21st	Kumamoto Prefecture decides to label the four Minamata disease certification applicants who failed to undergo medical examination as having failed the examination and to be handled accordingly.
	Jan. 24th	Dr. Okashima (Jonan Hospital, 76) instated as Chairman of the Minamata Disease Certification Council; Dr. Uchino (Kumamoto University Faculty of Medicine, 57) instated as Vice-Chairman.
	Jan. 27th	Kansai-Minamata Friendship Society sends a written protest to the Kumamoto governor to retract the stance taken against the four applicants labelled as having failed their medical exams.
	Feb. 20th	Plaintiffs in the Kansai Minamata Disease lawsuit accuse former chairman of the Central Pollution Policy Board's Minamata Disease Specialists' Committee of perjury.
	Mar. 3rd	Kumamoto Prefecture denies 19 and withholds 8 of 27 Minamata disease certification applications.
	Mar. 3rd	Three plaintiffs in the second lawsuit who are members of the National Federation of Minamata Disease Sufferers' Associations whose Minamata disease certification applications were either rejected or withheld, lodge a protest to the Kumamoto government.
	Mar. 11th	Shigekatsu Senba, lead attorney for the first through third Minamata disease lawsuits publishes his book <i>Chinmoku no Umi</i> ("Sea of Silence") describing his 30-year involvement in the Minamata disease controversy.
	Mar. 21st	Unveiling of Citizens' Minamata Disease Conference Chairperson Fumiko Hiyoshi's "Memorial Lamenting Mercury Contamination of the Shiranui Sea" at Otomezuka (organized by Minamata City Mutual Aid Society).
	Mar. 26th	Spreading the Message of the Minamata Disease Experience seminar held in Tianjin, China. MD Museum Oral historian Sumiko Kaneko, Minamata Disease Patients' Federation Chairman Toshio Matsuzaki, Environmental Meister Junpei Kanazashi convey the lessons of Minamata disease.
	Mar. 29th	Screening of three 1970's films that depict Minamata and Minamata disease at Moyaikan.
	Apr. 7th	Two Minamata and Ashikita men who were certified Minamata disease sufferers by the second lawsuit, but whose applications were rejected by the Prefecture, lodge a complaint to the Governor.
	Apr. 20th	Fifth Minamata Disease Memorial Address held in Yurakucho, Tokyo. Focus on examining the lessons learned from the Minamata disease incident and thinking about current issues.
	Apr. 23rd	Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals rejects appeals made by two (now deceased) Ashikita residents whose applications were previously rejected by Kumamoto Prefecture.
	Apr. 24th	Minamata Disease Museum completes production of its first video/DVD of three Oral Historians (Messrs. Hamamoto, Hashiguchi, Sasaki).
	Apr. 30th	Sixth No More Minamata Environment Award ceremony held at Moyaikan. Winner is Hotto House, communal workplace for congenital Minamata disease sufferers and other handicapped persons.
	Apr. 30th	Three plaintiffs in the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit who were certified under law but were rejected by Kumamoto prefecture, lodge another objection.
	May 1st	2003 (12th) Minamata Disease Sufferers' Memorial Service. Environment Minister Suzuki, 600 in attendance. Kenji Nagamoto gives the prayer for sufferers and families as the first congenital MD sufferer to do so.
	May 22nd	Fifth Union Environmental Forum held by Union at Moyaikan.
	May 30th	Japan Society of Psychiatry and Neurology requests the Environment Ministry rerelease its criteria for determining Minamata disease circa 1977.
	June 4th	Twenty-eighth National Victims of Pollution Day (Tokyo).
	June 6th	Chisso-Minamata Disease Patients' Federation sends query to Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare and Ministry of the Environment expressing doubts about the recommendation for limited consumption by pregnant women of four types of fish with alleged high mercury concentrations.
	June 17th	Chisso-Minamata Disease Patients' Federation offers proposal for setting limits of fish consumption by pregnant women to Environment Ministry.
	June 18th	National Institute for Minamata Disease begins taking dictations of people's experiences with Minamata disease.
	June 24th	Prefectural Environment Center conducts a TV broadcast of Oral Historians lecture to elementary school in Aso.
	June 24th	A student from another school makes derogatory comment relating to Minamata disease to a Minamata student at a junior high school swimming meet in Kumamoto.
	June 26th	Leader of plaintiff's group for the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit and his wife request that the Kumamoto governor give them certification.
	July 1st	Environment Ministry responds to Chisso-Minamata Disease Patients' Federation's query by saying that the statement on the safety of Minamata Bay will remain unchanged.

Aug. 1st	Singer/actor Tsunehiko Kamijo records CD with songs expressing the sadness of Minamata disease sufferers.
Aug. 4th	Discovery that recipients of the Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Project over 70 years of age were receiving lump sum payments for high medical expenses under recent revision to the Medical Care System for the Elderly. Three MD sufferers' groups submitted petitions for the abolition of these lump sum payments to Kumamoto Prefecture.
Aug. 11th	Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Review Board rejects appeals made by one Ashikita and two Minamata residents whose applications were previously rejected by Kumamoto Prefecture.
Aug. 13th	Kansai Lawsuit plaintiff's leader and wife inquire about Kumamoto governor's decision not to "accept medical information collected by patients' physicians for certification documents.
Aug. 23rd	Mie Prefectural Environmental Education Center in Yokkaichi hosts "Minamata Exhibition", sponsored by Minamata City, Municipal Minamata Disease Museum.
Aug. 26th	Kumamoto Prefecture holds educational seminars about Minamata disease for 250 employees.
Sept. 24th	Newly appointed Environment Minister Yuriko Koike announces Supreme Court appeal of the Kansai Minamata disease lawsuit will not be withdrawn.
Oct. 1st	Kumamoto Prefecture denies seven and withholds three certification applications based on prefectural Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals report.
Oct. 22nd	After a request for the publication of prefectural Minamata Disease Certification Council meeting transcripts by Kumamoto University School of Medicine assistant in Feb. 2003, it was discovered that no such transcripts existed. Prefectural Access to Information Committee promises governor to produce transcripts and make them publicly available.
Nov. 20th	Three plaintiffs in the Kansai lawsuit whose applications for Minamata disease certification were rejected by Kumamoto prefecture, request an administrative review by the national Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals.
Dec. 8th	Two species of fish from Minamata Bay, the rockfish and bambooleaf wrasse, were found to contain mercury concentrations below the national limit of according to a prefectural survey conducted in September.
Dec. 10th	National Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals begins hearings into the cases of two Minamata women whose applications for Minamata disease certification were rejected by Kumamoto prefecture.
2004	
Jan. 14th	Case of former Central Pollution Policy Committee Minamata disease specialists' subcommittee chairman Dr. Igata, who was accused of perjury by plaintiffs and supporters in the Kansai lawsuit dismissed as of December 25th.
Jan. 26th	Kagoshima Prefecture rejects six and withholds three applications for Minamata disease certification.
Jan. 30th	Kumamoto prefectural Minamata disease Certification Committee decides to produce minutes for future meetings.
Feb. 29th	Environment Ministry rejects request for appeal by an uncertified Minamata man.
Mar. 2nd	Seminar on the Dissemination of the Experience of Minamata Disease held in Tokyo by the Ministry of the Environment to pass on the lessons of Minamata disease to the next generation.
Mar. 17th	Kumamoto Prefecture rejects six and withholds two Minamata disease certification applications based on Pollution-Related Health Damage Certification Council report.
Apr. 13th	Kumamoto Gakuen University publishes two Minamata Studies books.
Apr. 26th	Two requests for appeal are rejected by the national Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals.
Apr. 30th	Two organizations recognized as the Seventh No More Minamata Environment Awards.
May 1st	2004 (13th) Minamata Disease Sufferers' Memorial Service.
May 1st	Minamata Disease Mutual Aid Society hold 24th independent memorial service at Otomezuka.
May 6th	Researchers from universities including Kumamoto and Fukuoka Universities begin study of lifestyle of the handicapped.
May 12th	Kumamoto University professor Maruyama, et al. publish <i>Minamata no keiken to kioku</i> ("The Experience and Memory of Minamata").
May 31st	Plaintiffs and defendants in Kansai lawsuit submit proposals of resolution to Supreme Court.
June 6th	National Pollution-related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals rejects appeal of man sixteen years after his death.
July 2nd	Director Noriaki Tsuchimoto completes <i>Minamata Diary</i> , a film portraying present-day Minamata.
Aug. 6th	Kansai lawsuit supporters call for an investigation into the alleged perjury of Dr. Igata.
Aug. 18th	Japan Society of Psychiatry and Neurology demands Kumamoto and Kagoshima Universities release information on its Minamata disease research funding.
Aug. 25th	Environment Ministry requests budget estimate for local projects related to the 50th anniversary of the official recognition of Minamata disease.
Aug. 28th	Modern Noh drama <i>Shiranui</i> premieres before a local audience of 1300 at Ecopark.
Sept. 30th	Kagoshima Prefecture rejects four and withholds four certification applications based on prefectural Pollution-Related Health Damage Certification Committee report.
Oct. 8th	Kumamoto Prefecture rejects three and withholds two certification applications based on prefectural Pollution-Related Health Damage Certification Committee report.
Oct. 9th	Lawyers representing Dr. Igata meet with investigative committee, who decide not to pursue legal action against him.
Oct. 15th	Supreme Court hands down decision in the Kansai Lawsuit: both the national and prefectural governments' responsibility is affirmed.
Oct. 18th	Environment Ministry rejects proposal for review of Minamata disease certification criteria at parliamentary budget hearing.

Oct. 19th Attorneys and plaintiffs in the Kansai lawsuit negotiate with Kumamoto Governor Shiotani.

Oct. 21st Democratic Party decides to establish a "Minamata disease measures working team".

Oct. 25th Kagoshima Governor Ito comments on dual certification system.

Oct. 25th Minamata disease Izumi no Kai announces plan to submit mass-application for 130 uncertified sufferers.

Oct. 26th Kumamoto Governor Shiotani makes suspicious comments regarding the continuation of the current certification project.

Oct. 28th Seventy year-old Minamata woman becomes the first certification applicant since the Supreme Court ruling.

Oct. 29th Environment Minister Koike expresses desire to meet with Governor Shiotani to discuss her comments about the certification project.

Oct. 29th Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly Welfare Committee meeting yields opinions refusing the national certification project.

Nov. 2nd National Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals rejects three appeals based on current certification standards.

Nov. 7th Group of Minamata disease attorneys, which settled on a government compromise, call for a "victim's relief system" after the Supreme Court ruling in the Minamata lawsuit.

Nov. 8th Kumamoto Pollution-Related Health Damage Certification Council reveals that all members' terms had expired at the end of October.

Nov. 12th Kumamoto Prefecture releases proposal outline for Minamata disease victim's plan.

Nov. 13th LDP clarifies about split-up of Chisso Corp.

Nov. 18th Kumamoto Governor Shiotani tables plan for Minamata disease victims to Prefectural Assembly Welfare Committee.

Nov. 19th Komeito establishes Minamata disease subcommittee.

Nov. 20th Soshisha Minamata Disease Center holds 30th Anniversary "Future of Minamata" symposium at Moyaikan.

Nov. 21st Former National Victims/Attorneys Alliance evaluates Kumamoto's Minamata disease plan.

Nov. 24th Attorneys and plaintiffs in the Kansai lawsuit negotiate with Ministry of the Environment for the second time.

Nov. 25th Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly approves Minamata disease plan.

Nov. 26th Environment Ministry decides to set-up a third party to consider how to proceed with its responsibility for Minamata disease.

Nov. 29th National Institute for Minamata Disease holds discussion session concerning the collection and maintenance of Minamata disease-related documents.

Nov. 29th Kumamoto Prefecture submits its Minamata disease plan to Environment Ministry.

Nov. 30th 106 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto.

Dec. 2nd Izumi Minamata Disease Association submits the applications of 57 uncertified sufferers living along the Shiranui coast.

Dec. 3rd LDP Minamata disease Subcommittee members running in the prefectural election visit Minamata.

Dec. 5th Attorneys and plaintiffs in the Kansai lawsuit negotiate with Kumamoto Prefecture for the second time.

Dec. 8th Izumi Minamata Disease Association submits the applications of 29 uncertified sufferers living along the Shiranui coast.

Dec. 9th Environment Ministry and Kumamoto Prefecture hold their first conference on the Minamata disease plan.

Dec. 9th Environment Ministry proclaims its Minamata disease plan to Kansai lawsuit plaintiffs, including expansion of medical coverage and treatment expense coverage.

Dec. 9th Governor Shiotani makes a reconciliatory visit to four Minamata/Ashikita area congenital Minamata disease sufferers' residences.

Dec. 11th Environment Ministry Health Department Chief Takizawa makes first reconciliatory visits to Kansai lawsuit plaintiffs residences.

Dec. 16th Izumi Minamata Disease Association makes formal request for revision of certification standards to Gov. Shiotani.

Dec. 17th Minamata City Assembly Welfare Committee accepts petition for the relief of uncertified sufferers submitted by three sufferers' groups.

Dec. 20th Minamata City Assembly Special Environmental Pollution Committee compiles its proposal for a complete resolution in the Minamata disease issue to government.

Dec. 22nd 205 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto.

Dec. 22nd Environment Ministry and Kumamoto Prefecture hold their second conference on the Minamata disease plan in Tokyo.

Dec. 24th Izumi Minamata Disease Association submits the applications of 103 uncertified sufferers living along the Shiranui coast.

Dec. 24th Certification applications exceed 200 for the first time in 18 years in Kagoshima at 204.

Dec. 27th Kumamoto Prefecture sets up a discussion group in response to the discovery of levels of mercury exceeding national limits in marbled rockfish found in Minamata Bay.

2005 Jan. 14th Izumi Minamata Disease Association submits the applications of 75 uncertified sufferers living along the Shiranui coast.

Jan. 17th Izumi Minamata Disease Association collectively submits the applications of 27 uncertified sufferers living along the Shiranui coast to Kumamoto Prefecture for the first time.

Jan. 18th Kumamoto Prefecture requests the reinstatement of all twenty Prefectural Minamata disease Certification Committee members whose terms had expired.

Jan. 18th Environment Ministry Secretary makes his first visit since the Supreme Court decision in the Kansai lawsuit.

Jan. 19th Kagoshima Prefecture requests resources for funding of the Comprehensive Medical Coverage and Certification Committee projects from the Environment Ministry based on the Kansai Supreme Court ruling.

Jan. 20th Environment Ministry Secretary visits Kumamoto, meets with Governor Shiotani.

Jan. 29th Environment Ministry Health Department Chief Takizawa and Vice Governor of Kumamoto Kanazawa make reconciliatory visits to four Kansai plaintiffs who have returned to Kumamoto.

Jan. 31st Survey of methylmercury concentrations in marine life of Minamata Bay is resumed.

Jan. 31st Environment Ministry compiles basic guidelines for the formulation of a new Minamata disease policy proposal to be implemented by mid-March, based on research from government and related administrations.

Feb. 1st Environment Ministry explains its basic policy to the LDP Minamata disease Subcommittee.

Feb. 2nd Komeito Minamata disease subcommittee advises Environment Ministry and Kumamoto Prefecture to expedite research in order to formulate a new policy within the fiscal year.

Feb. 3rd Izumi Minamata Disease Association submits the applications of 31 uncertified sufferers to Kumamoto Prefecture via Minamata City.

Feb. 4th Environment Ministry Health Department Chief Takizawa visits Minamata, explains the basic policy to three sufferers' groups who had accepted the 1995 government settlement.

Feb. 4th Minamata City Council meets with three sufferers' groups who had accepted the 1995 government settlement for an opinion exchange session.

Feb. 5th Democratic Party Minamata disease measures working team meets with doctor who examines certification applicants in Minamata and Tsunagi for an opinion exchange session.

Feb. 5th Forty Kumamoto certification applicants form a new uncertified sufferers' group: Ashikita Minamata Disease Victims Association.

Feb. 7th Kagoshima Prefecture accepts 60 certification applications from Izumi Minamata Disease Association.

Feb. 8th Izumi Minamata Disease Association conducts first negotiations with Environment Ministry.

Feb. 14th 423 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto.

Feb. 15th Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly holds special meeting where it is unanimously decided to establish a special Minamata disease policy committee.

Feb. 20th Inauguration of Shiranui Minamata Disease Sufferers' Association.

Feb. 21st 426 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kagoshima.

Feb. 22nd Environment Ministry conveys to plaintiffs and attorneys that it has begun considering how to provide treatment costs to plaintiffs for first time since conclusion of Kansai lawsuit.

Feb. 24th Environment Ministry indicates need to consider regional revitalization as part of its policy proposal.

Feb. 28th 503 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto.

Mar. 3rd Ashikita Minamata Disease Victims Association submits request for relief to Kumamoto governor and Assembly chairman.

Mar. 8th Izumi Minamata Disease Association requests seven million yen per member in compensation from the Environment Ministry.

Mar. 10th Number of applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto and Kagoshima exceeds 1000 (1043).

Mar. 13th Seminar on the Dissemination of the Minamata Disease Experience held in Tokyo with a personal account by Oral Historian Sumiko Kaneko.

Mar. 14th Izumi Minamata Disease Association submits request of a lump-sum payment of seven million yen per member in compensation from Kumamoto Prefecture.

Mar. 14th Pollution-Related Health Damage Compensation Board of Appeals cancels Minamata disease certification application made by a 67 year-old man whose application was previously rejected by Kumamoto Prefecture.

Mar. 16th Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly Special Minamata Disease Policy Committee hears the Environment Ministry's new Minamata disease draft plan from Health Department Chief Takizawa.

Mar. 16th Environment Ministry announces that medical coverage under the new system will be provided only if certification applications are withdrawn.

Mar. 24th Environment Ministry suggests that the limits of medical coverage be abolished and the government cover full medical costs at LDP Minamata disease subcommittee meeting.

Mar. 24th Kagoshima Prefecture delays commission of Pollution-Related Health Damage Certification Council members.

Mar. 26th Mercury levels in marbled rockfish in Minamata Bay are found to be unchanged since previous tests at 0.36 ppm, above the national limit.

Mar. 26th Kumamoto Gakuen University is slated to receive 100 million yen in funding over five years from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology for its Minamata Studies program.

Mar. 28th 552 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kagoshima.

Mar. 31st LDP Minamata disease subcommittee decides to divide the responsibility for medical coverage expenses in its new proposal: 80% to be paid by national government, 20% to be paid by prefectural governments.

Apr. 4th Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly Special Minamata Disease Policy Committee unanimously agrees to the Environment Ministry proposal regarding the division of responsibility for medical coverage expenses (80% to 20%, national to prefectural).

Apr. 4th Environment Ministry visits Minamata and Izumi to explain the new Minamata disease policy.

Apr. 5th Governor Shiotani meets with Deputy Minister of the Environment to discuss the implementation of the new Minamata disease policy.

Apr. 7th Environment Minister Koike officially announces the new Minamata disease policy outline.

Apr. 7th Kagoshima Governor Ito lauds the new Minamata disease policy as a "definitive step forward".

Apr. 23rd 1018 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto.

May 1st 2005 (14th) Minamata Disease Sufferers' Memorial Service.

May 9th Plaintiffs and lawyers in Kansai lawsuit call on Environment Minister Koike to consider revision of current certification criteria.

May 11th Environment Minister Koike holds first Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting, which she personally set-up in order to better understand the complicated issues surrounding Minamata disease.

May 17th Number of applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto and Kagoshima exceeds 2000 (2010).

May 19th Democratic Party Minamata disease measures working team holds meeting to discuss the formulation of an independent Minamata disease sufferers' relief program and on the Environment Ministry's current response.

May 19th Chisso Corp. reports its first profits in 34 years.

June 1st Thirty-six plaintiffs in the Kansai lawsuit become the first recipients of medical coverage since the new Minamata disease system came into effect.

June 3rd Minamata Disease Victims' Mutual Aid Society is formed.

June 14th Environment Minister Koike holds second Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting in Tokyo.

June 20th Environment Ministry makes request to reinstate absentee Minamata Disease Certification Council members.

June 21st One plaintiff in the Kansai lawsuit sends back his medical coverage handbook.

June 28th Environment Ministry holds information session for Kumamoto and Kagoshima Prefectures to explain the future of Minamata disease countermeasures.

July 4th Kumamoto Prefecture conducts supplementary mercury tests on marine life in Minamata Bay.

July 14th LDP Minamata disease Subcommittee advises the Environment Ministry to resume the Minamata Disease Certification Councils in Kumamoto and Kagoshima, which had been in recess due to absentee members, by mid-August.

July 21st Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting members visit local sites until the 26th.

July 29th 50th Anniversary of the Official Recognition of Minamata Disease Project Steering Committee created.

Aug. 6th Minamata Disease Mutual Aid Society holds conference on "the reality of Minamata disease victims".

Aug. 8th Kumamoto Gakuen University opens its Open Research Center for Minamata Studies in Hama-machi, Minamata.

Aug. 10th NPO Minamata publishes *Arata ni wakatte kita Minamatabyo no hanashi* ("New Understanding about Minamata disease").

Aug. 18th 50th Anniversary Project Steering Committee holds its first brainstorming session.

Aug. 23rd Completion of *Minamata: Waga furusato* ("Our Home: Minamata"), a film documenting the activities of congenital Minamata disease sufferers.

Aug. 25th City Councils of Minamata and five other neighboring towns submit request for the speedy resumption of the Certification Councils to Kumamoto Prefecture and Assembly, as well as to Environment Ministry and Kagoshima Prefecture.

Aug. 26th Environment Ministry requests 2.7 billion yen for its new Minamata disease project from next year's budget.

Sept. 5th 2004 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto.

Sept. 6th Environment Minister Koike holds fourth Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting in Tokyo.

Sept. 8th Izumi Minamata Disease Association applies for Human Rights protection from the Kyushu Federation of Bar Associations' Human Rights Commission, citing the national and prefectural governments of Kumamoto and Kagoshima and Chisso with human rights violations.

Sept. 16th Environment Ministry explains its new Minamata disease policy medical handbook to patients' group.

Sept. 16th Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association applies for Human Rights protection from the Japan Federation of Bar Associations' Human Rights Commission, citing the national and prefectural government of Kumamoto and Chisso with human rights violations.

Sept. 26th Izumi Minamata Disease Association begins sit-in protest in front of Chisso Corp. Minamata Headquarters.

Sept. 26th 3018 applicants for certification since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling in Kumamoto and Kagoshima.

Sept. 28th Environment Ministry and Kumamoto Prefecture hold information sessions in Minamata and Izumi for patients groups to explain the new medical handbook.

Oct. 3rd Fifty Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association members sue the national and Kumamoto governments and Chisso for 425 million yen (8.5 million per person) in compensation at Kumamoto court.

Oct. 4th Accepting the lawsuit brought forth by the Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients Association, Environment Minister Koike reiterates that she will not consider a revision of Minamata disease certification criteria.

Oct. 4th Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly Special Minamata Disease Policy Committee chairperson Mr. Sugimori visits the Environment Ministry to discuss resumption of talks about the revision of Minamata disease certification criteria and reactivation of the Certification Council.

Oct. 5th Environment Ministry holds information session for local residents to explain the new medical handbook.

Oct. 13th Applications for the new medical handbook begin in Kumamoto, Kagoshima and Niigata.

Oct. 14th Environment Minister Koike states that she will not seek an out-of-court settlement to the lawsuit brought against them by the Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association.

Oct. 16th Minamata Disease Mutual Aid Society and the Minamata Disease Victims' Mutual Aid Society hold a conference, *Minamatabyou jiken wo tou* ("Questioning the Minamata Disease Incident") to mark the first anniversary since the Kansai Supreme Court ruling.

Oct. 25th Environment Minister Koike holds fifth Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting in Tokyo.

Oct. 30th Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association holds convention to confirm its objectives in judiciary battle.

Oct. 31st Kumamoto Prefecture begins second investigation this fiscal year of mercury concentrations in marine life in Minamata Bay (until Nov. 11).

Oct. 31st Surviving the third reshuffling of the Koizumi Cabinet, Environment Minister Koike says she will continue with the current Minamata disease policy.

Nov. 8th 50th Anniversary Project Steering Committee holds its second session.

Nov. 11th Chisso Minamata disease Kansai Lawsuit group withdraws from 50th Anniversary Project Steering Committee.

Nov.11th Kumamoto Governor Shiotani calls on the Prime Minister to form a unified Minamata disease policy at a National Governors' Association meeting. Prime Minister does not respond.

Nov. 14th Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association makes its second suit in Kumamoto with 504 plaintiffs.

Nov. 28th Environment Minister Koike holds sixth Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting in Tokyo.

Nov. 29th Kumamoto and Kagoshima begin distributing new medical handbooks (first block: 366 people, distribution rate: 77%).

Dec. 7th LDP Minamata disease Subcommittee advises the Environment, Finance, General Affairs and other relevant Ministries to reduce the burden of financial responsibility of Kumamoto and Kagoshima prefectures.

Dec. 18th Japan Society of Psychiatry and Neurology requests the Environment Minister and Kumamoto and Kagoshima governors release the names of the doctors who accepted positions on the Certification Committee.

Dec. 19th Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association makes its third suit in Kumamoto with 136 plaintiffs.

Dec. 21st National and Prefecural governments and Chisso Corp. show they will fight the Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association lawsuit.

Dec. 22nd Government decides to discontinue planned three-year special financial support for Chisso due to the company's current success.

Dec. 24th Cabinet decides on a 2.75 billion yen budget for the Environment Ministry's new Minamata disease projects for next year.

Dec. 26th Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association has first hearing for lawsuit for the petition of state liability.

2006 Jan. 4th Kagoshima governor Ito criticizes the government for its delay in taking action in the Minamata disease incident.

Jan. 17th Environment Minister Koike holds seventh Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting in Tokyo.

Jan. 17th Kumamoto Prefecture reports that mercury levels in marine life in Minamata Bay are now below the national limits.

Feb. 7th Environment Minister Koike holds eighth Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting in Tokyo.

Feb. 9th Deputy Minister of the Environment Sumitani, commenting on the purpose of Environment Minister's personally-appointed "Meetings concerning Minamata disease", that it was not created to debate new criteria for Minamata disease.

Feb. 9th LDP Minamata disease Subcommittee recommends the Environment Ministry to reactivate the Certification Committees by May 1st, the 50th anniversary since the official recognition of Minamata disease.

Feb. 18th Spreading the Message of the Minamata Disease Experience seminar held by Environment Ministry in Tokyo.

Feb. 19th 50th Anniversary of the Official Recognition of Minamata Disease Project seminar held in Ashikita.

Feb. 22nd Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association makes its fourth lawsuit for the petition of state liability in Kumamoto with 186 plaintiffs.

Feb. 24th Shiranui Minamata Disease Patients' Association has second hearing for lawsuit for the petition of state liability.

Feb. 27th Minamata City Mayor Miyamoto visits Environment Ministry, requesting the attendance of the Prime Minister at this years' Minamata disease victims' memorial ceremony.

Feb. 28th Environment Minister Koike announces she will attend the Minamata disease victims' memorial ceremony this year.

Feb. 28th Spreading the Message of the Minamata Disease Experience seminar held by Environment Ministry in Minmata for environment administrators of Asian countries.

Mar. 2nd Environment Minister Koike holds ninth Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting in Tokyo.

Mar. 12th Minamata 50-Year Forum held at Moyaikan.

Mar. 17th Kumamoto Prefecture holds educational seminars about Minamata disease for government employees.

Mar. 20th Environment Minister Koike holds tenth Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting in Tokyo.

Mar. 22nd In a post-Cabinet meeting press conference, Environment Minister Koike maintains her position on the current system and policy.

Mar. 22nd Minamata Juku holds its first seminar at Minamata Disease Information Center.

Mar. 26th Kyushu Federation of Bar Associations' Human Rights Commission to gain facts about the effects of Minamata disease.

Mar. 29th Deputy Minister of the Environment Eda visits Minamata for an opinion exchange session with sufferers.

Apr. 25th House of Representatives declares, "On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Official Recognition of Minamata Disease, we vow to never repeat the tragedy of pollution".

Apr. 28th Prime Minister Koizumi: "The government feels a deep sense of responsibility and offers a frank apology" at the fifty-year milestone of Minamata disease.

Apr. 30th Inauguration of Minamata Disease Memorial at Ecopark Shinsui Boardwalk.

May 1st 2006 (15th) Minamata Disease Sufferers' Memorial Service held at Minamata Disease Memorial (1300 in attendance).

May 17th Minamata Juku holds its second seminar at Minnamata City Moyainaoshi Center.

July 13th Minamata Juku holds its third seminar at Fukuda Farms.

Sept. 7th Results from the first investigation of mercury in Minamata Bay marine life in 2006 reveals it to be below provisional limits.

Sept. 19th Minamata Disease Discussion Group meeting submits its recommendations to Environment Minister.

Sept. 22nd Environment Ministry forms a "Minamata disease Environmental Welfare Office" within its Environmental Welfare Department.

Sept. 26th Commenting on what action to take Minamata disease case, newly appointed Environment Minister Masatoshi Wakabayashi states "there is much we must learn from this long history".

Oct. 4th Kumamoto Governor Shiotani and Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly Special Minamata Disease Policy Committee chairman Mr. Nakahara appeal to Environment Minister and Deputy Minister to provide expedient relief for Minamata disease victims.

Oct. 11th Kumamoto Prefecture sets up a panel of experts to investigate the effects of Minamata disease.

Oct. 21st Minamata Disease 50-Year Exhibition at Minamata Disease Museum (until Oct. 29).
Minamata Moyai Day (Ecopark, until Oct. 22).
Minamata Message and Minamata Pledge presentations, Fire Festival, concert, etc.

Oct. 23rd Second round of Minamata Bay mercury tests in 2006 begin.

Dec. 31st "From the first fifty years of Minamata disease, to the next" at Ecopark until Jan. 1.

2007 Mar. 10th Kumamoto Prefecture resumes the Certification Committee after two and a half years.

Mar. 13th 50th Anniversary Project Steering Committee holds its fifth general meeting.

Mar. 15th First Minamata disease patient is certified in eight years.