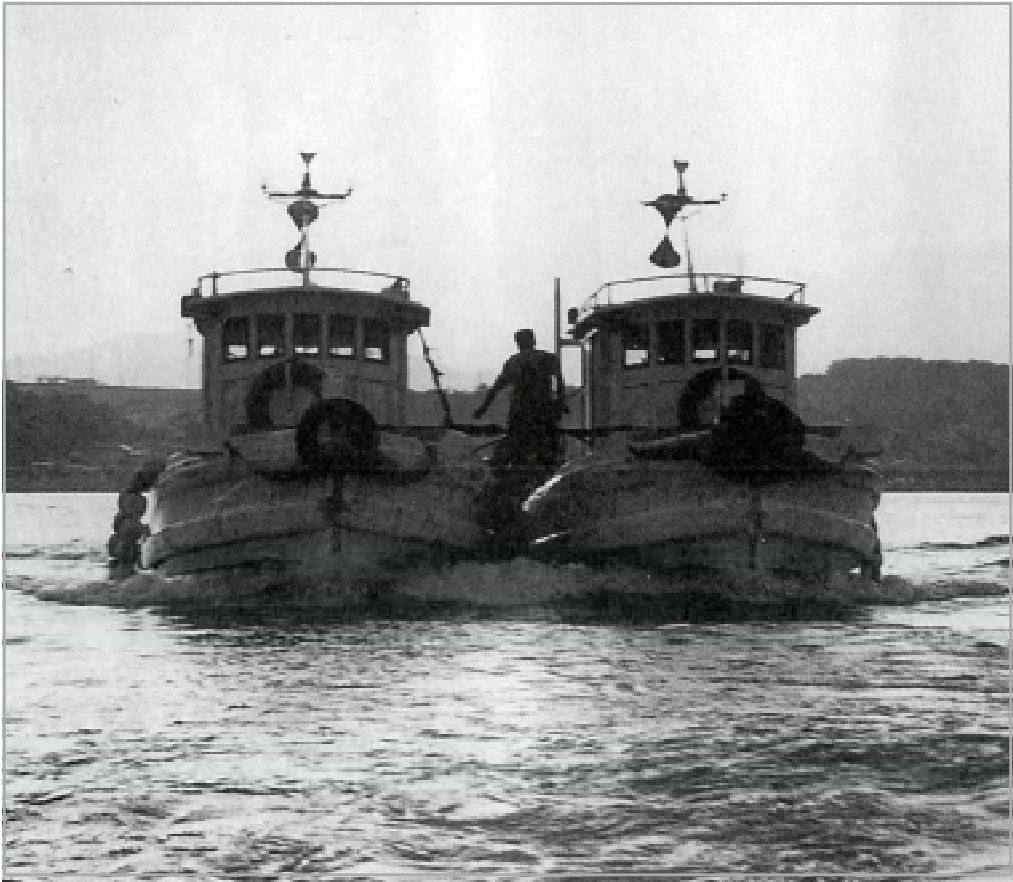


## 9.WHAT IS MOYAI NAOSHI?



**Moyai boats**

‘Moyai’ literally means to bind boats together or to do something together. We name cooperative community projects ‘Moyai Naoshi’, which stress tackling the Minamata disease issue, and facing, understanding, and working together here in Minamata where the relationships among people and between people and nature were once destroyed.

Around the time of the outbreak of Minamata disease, the Minamata disease patients had problems mixing with neighbors, because people thought the disease was contagious.

Even after the mercury in the wastewater discharged from Chisso was determined as the cause of the disease, the victims were ignored by those who were dependant on Chisso. The trial and compensation payments were considered a threat to the existence of Chisso.

In addition, the victims experienced discrimination and malicious slander in relation to the compensation payments. Among those who applied for certification, it was said that some were faking disease symptoms. Since the disease was caused by Chisso, on which Minamata was financially dependent, strikes broke out followed by hostility among the residents. Relations between people supporting different standpoints have been severed for a long time.

However, having overcome these misunderstandings and realizing that hostility accomplishes nothing, the administration, the citizens, and the victims of Minamata disease are taking actions together for the reconstruction of Minamata through talks and activities.