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Autor: Funazaki, Tsuneyoshi / Izumi, Yasutaka
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Landscaping of Tokyo Wan Aqua-Line

Tsuneyoshi FUNAZAKI
Executive Director
Highway Corp.,
Tokyo, Japan

Tsuneyoshi Funazaki, born 1943
received his civil engineering
degree from the Univ. of Tokyo



Yasutaka IZUMI
Counsellor
Highway Corp.,
Tokyo, Japan

Yasutaka Izumi, born 1950,
received his civil engineering
degree from the Osaka Univ.



Abstract

The Tokyo Wan Aqua-Line (Trans-Tokyo Bay Highway, opened on December 18, 1997) is the last big project completed in Japan in this century and currently being the focus of both national and international attention. As a gateway to the capital Tokyo, it is exposed to the view of many people travelling on business or for sightseeing and recreation purposes. And it is also expected to become a valuable cultural heritage to be passed on to the next millennium. Furthermore, situated in the middle of Tokyo Bay, its construction needed great care to ensure the harmony with surrounding natural marine features and environments.

To satisfy these requirements, a special committee was set up to study the landscaping of the Tokyo Wan Aqua-Line in a series of meetings.

Not only was the Tokyo Wan Aqua-Line aimed to enhance the efficiency of marine traffic between Kawasaki City (Kanagawa Prefecture) and Kisarazu City (Chiba Prefecture), but it was also planned to be an integral part of the Tokyo metropolitan road network. Hence, its influence on economy and industrial affairs was expected to be considerable. In carrying out the landscaping studies, therefore, its basic roles were examined from various aspects such as traffic engineering, economy, industrial affairs, property values and psychological factors (symbolic function of the Tokyo Wan Aqua-Line).

As a result, "symbol", "harmony" and "quality" were defined as three conceptual terms representing the fundamental philosophy of landscaping i.e. "creation and harmonization of new metropolitan area toward the 21st century". The structures of the Tokyo Wan Aqua-Line including the bridge, Man-Made Islands and ventilation tower were all designed based on these conceptual terms.

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