

## **The 2001 Heavy Rain Disaster in Kochi Prefecture and Recovery Efforts**

In September 2001, extremely heavy rain caused severe landslides in southwestern Kochi Prefecture, including parts of Ashizuri-Uwakai National Park. While the disaster itself was natural, its impact was amplified by a number of choices humans had made here in the past.

[Captions]

From the 1950s to the 1980s, increasing tourism to the Tosashimizu area led to the start of several large-scale development projects. The resulting construction and pollution, combined with the widespread release of household wastewater into the sea, gradually worsened water quality in Tatsukushi Bay.

In the 1990s, natural forests in the nearby mountains were cut down and replanted one after the other.

Although seemingly unrelated to each other, the decline in water quality and the move from natural to planted forests both exacerbated the impact of the heavy rain disaster of 2001. Insufficient maintenance made some planted forests susceptible to landslides, which buried homes and fields, causing severe damage.

Many landslides also reached the sea and dumped vast amounts of dirt into the already polluted water, further disrupting the marine ecosystem and killing corals.

*Recovering from the disaster in Tatsukushi*

[Captions]

The people of Tatsukushi drew many lessons from the disaster of 2001, including the importance of cleaning the bay and removing excess mud to give marine life room to breathe again.

Local residents also started thinning the nearby forests regularly to make them healthier and more resilient.

The map shows how efforts to aid the recovery of the corals have had an effect.