



The world's largest grab dredger "Gosho"

Kojimagumi: Laying the ground for new collaboration

With over 100 years of experience in dredging and land reclamation, construction engineering company Kojimagumi is uniquely placed to meet Japan's infrastructure needs and help re-evaluate the country's approach to urban and harbor planning.

Almost 60 years on from the construction boom of the 1960s, Japan finds itself caught between the need to maintain existing buildings and lay foundations for new ones. Factors such as population decline and the country's susceptibility to natural disasters make the balance even harder to strike. Despite providing high-quality construction, Japanese companies are losing out to foreign competitors who can operate more decisively and at lower costs.

As Tokuaki Kojima, chairman of influential construction engineering company Kojimagumi, knows only too well, improving safety across Japanese territories is also about challenging false perceptions: "In land reclamation, it is very important for us to co-exist with the ocean and the key here is understanding. We worked with DEME, a Belgian company, on two projects in Singapore. They told us that it took them 20 years to get the message across that their projects are not destroying the environment and that in fact they create more sustainable environments. It is crucial for that message to get across: we are not dredging and moving sludge to harm the environment but, rather, we are helping the environment through our work. Dredging is crucial to safeguarding human as well as marine lives."

Kojimagumi's work, a large part of which is carried out in coastal environments, is es-

sential in preventing disasters such as flooding and in helping restore ports following strong weather events. The company's grab dredger vessels are both more economical and more efficient than those of countries such as the U.S.A., with the



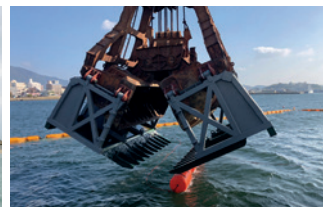
Clockwise from top left: "Gosho"; Disaster-prevention bucket; Project in Singapore; Hybrid grab dredger "381 Ryoseimaru"

hybrid 381 Ryoseimaru able to generate electricity as it operates. And while Japanese construction firms have been slow to embrace digital transformation, Kojimagumi's grab dredging vessels have autonomous operating capabilities, a fact that could prove crucial as the company looks to the future.

With projects recently completed in South Africa, Cameroon and Singapore, the next step is to move into the East Asian and

Southeast Asian markets, targeting countries with budgets for harbor and port construction.

As Mr. Kojima is keen to point out, however, operating on a global level requires more than just a strategy. Commercial success is about collaboration:



"I believe that the successful attainment of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals depends on creating partnerships between companies that have the same objective in realizing these goals."

Tokuaki Kojima,
Chairman,
Kojimagumi Co., Ltd.

"Building trust with customers is a very important factor in business. The first time we went overseas, we worked with China Harbor and established a good relationship with their employees. If you communicate well, you can understand each other. The relationship we built led to the project's success, and the same is true for the Belgian company we worked with. We were able to gain their trust by providing what they needed even before

they asked us. We have been able to come this far thanks to these kinds of relationships. When we talk about creating world peace, I believe that communication is key and that it leads to a much better society. I do not consider myself a 'smart' guy, and this is why I follow my heart. It is important to trust others."