3 Symbiosis of Vehicles, People and Nature

3-1 Efforts for Motor Vehicle Recycling

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Because of the pressing needs of recycling in order to solve the problems of proper handling of motor vehicles at the end of their useful lives, and finding the space for their final disposal — the Automobile Recycling Law went into effect in January, 2005. Since then, government agencies, automotive industries, and consumers have all been participating in this solution, each sector making its own effort to build a system for a recycling-oriented society.

Fig. 1 Status of junked vehicles following enforcement of the Automobile Recycling Law

- Radiation (copper / aluminum) → brass & aluminum products
- Engine oil (oil) → ignition booster for boilers & incinerators
- Batteries (lead) → batteries
- Wire harness (copper) → copper products, etc.
- Coolant (alcohol) → ignition booster for boilers & incinerators
- Radiator (steel / aluminum) → ordinary steel products / aluminum products
- Chassis (steel) → vehicle parts / ordinary steel products
- Doors (steel) → vehicle parts / ordinary steel products
- Seats (urethane foam / fiber) → vehicle soundproofing materials
- Windows (glass) → glass wool, etc.
- Trunk (steel) → vehicle parts / ordinary steel products
- Suspension (steel / aluminum) → ordinary steel / aluminum products
- Rear bumper (resin) → bumpers
- Transmission (steel / aluminum) → ordinary steel / aluminum products
- Gear oil (oil) → ignition booster for boilers & incinerators
- Catalytic converter (precious metals) → catalytic converters

Fig. 2 Processing and recycling of junked motor vehicles: flow chart

- Radiator (copper / aluminum) → brass & aluminum products
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Source: Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, Inc.