Reportedly, the golden venus chub was once an abundant species in Japan, widely distributed from Shizuoka Prefecture to the northern part of Kyushu, and commonly seen in Hyogo Prefecture 30 to 40 years ago. However, the population of this species has since declined drastically to the extent that it is now classified in the category of IB in the Japanese Red List and in the category of A in the Hyogo Prefecture’s Red List. Such decline in population is attributable to the disappearance and deterioration of habitat environment, caused by: the invasion of alien species, including largemouth bass and bluegill; the increase of rivers and channels that are lined with concrete on three sides; and the progress of land consolidation projects involving the introduction of water pipes to replace traditional water supply and drainage canals, which resulted in the disappearance of unlined ditches that had provided a habitat for this species.

With special attention paid to this small rare freshwater fish species, which belongs to the carp family (Cyprinidae), we, at the Hyogo Waterfront Network, are working toward biodiversity conservation as part of region-wide environmental preservation activities carried out in cooperation with local residents. While we place emphasis on this small freshwater fish species, we feel that any living organisms, including birds and insects, can be a symbol of environmental efforts, as the presence of any rare species indicates, among other things, that a healthy, well-balanced ecosystem is maintained in the area.

We believe that the conservation of local biodiversity requires the awareness among residents that “a rich natural environment is the pride of the community,” as well as persistent efforts directed to “protect local nature.” In this sense, cooperative ties must be established among landowners, water rights holders, resident associations, local schools, governmental agencies, experts, NPOs and, of course, children, who play a leading role in the future.

Against this backdrop, we formulated the “Golden Venus Chub Preservation Association of Kobe” to promote various environmental activities, which is joined by representatives of:

- Local communities (land improvement districts, irrigation associations, resident associations, junior high schools)
- Governmental agencies (the Land Improvement Office of Kobe, Hyogo; and the Environmental Bureau and the Agricultural Administration Planning Division of the Industry and Agriculture Promotion Bureau, City of Kobe)
- Schools (the Science Division of the Research Association for Junior High School Education and the Biology Club of Hyogo Prefectural Agricultural High School)
- NPOs (the Waterfront Network)
We often hear the phrase, "Think Globally, Act Locally." We will remain committed to our environmental efforts with the belief that the combination of persistent efforts of local stakeholders will eventually lead to preserving biodiversity on a global basis.