

Case studies of Community-based MPAs in Japan

Izumi TSURITA (PhD Student, University of Tokyo, Japan)

Mitsutaku MAKINO (Fisheries Research Agency, Japan)

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The characteristics of MPAs in Japan

MPAs in Japan are ...

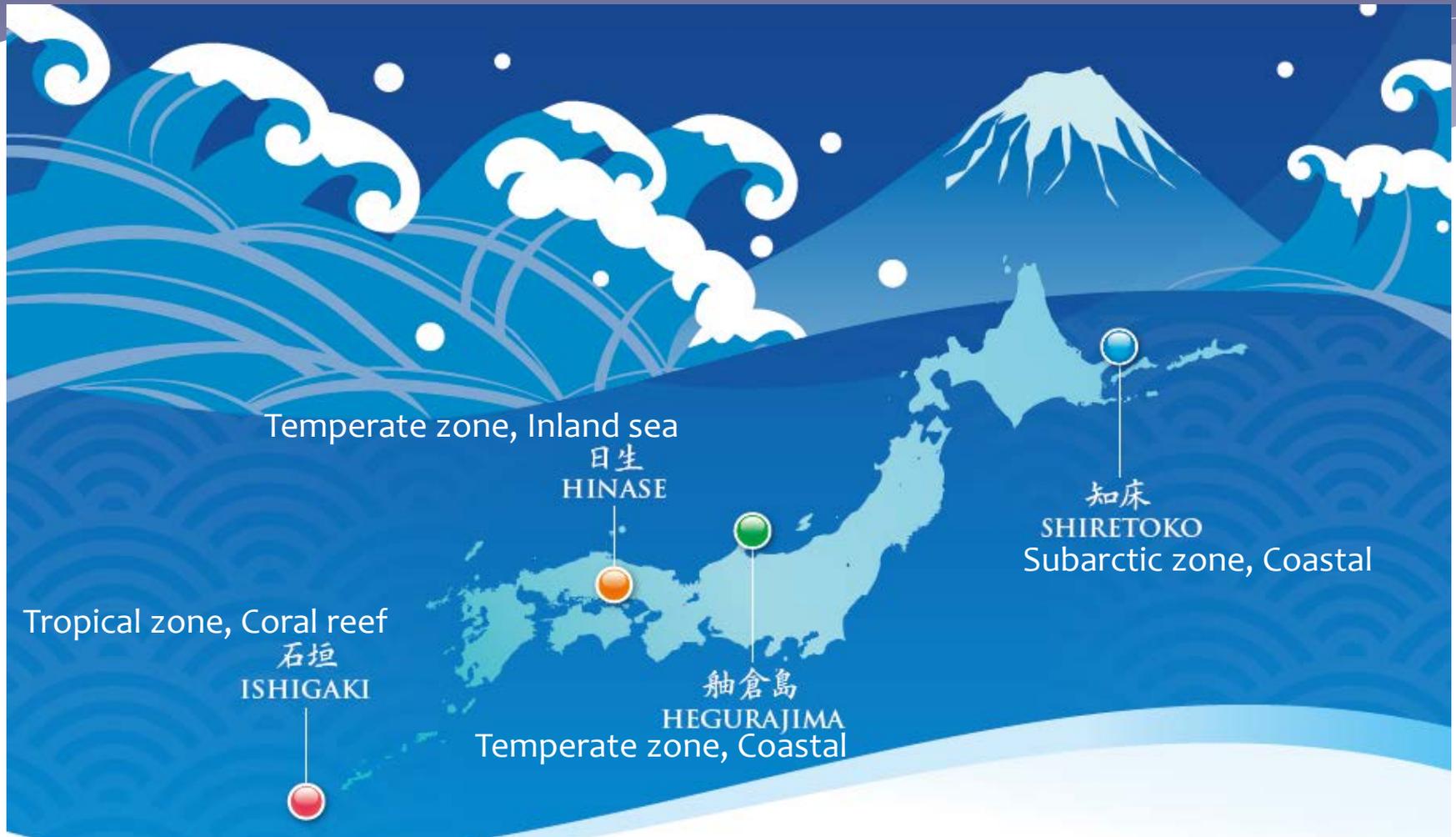
Marine areas designated and managed by law or other effective means, in consideration of use modalities, aimed at the conservation of marine biodiversity supporting the sound structure and function of marine ecosystems and ensuring the sustainable use of marine ecosystem services.

(Definition by Marine Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2011 accepted by the Headquarters for Ocean Policy in 2011)

The characteristics of MPAs in Japan

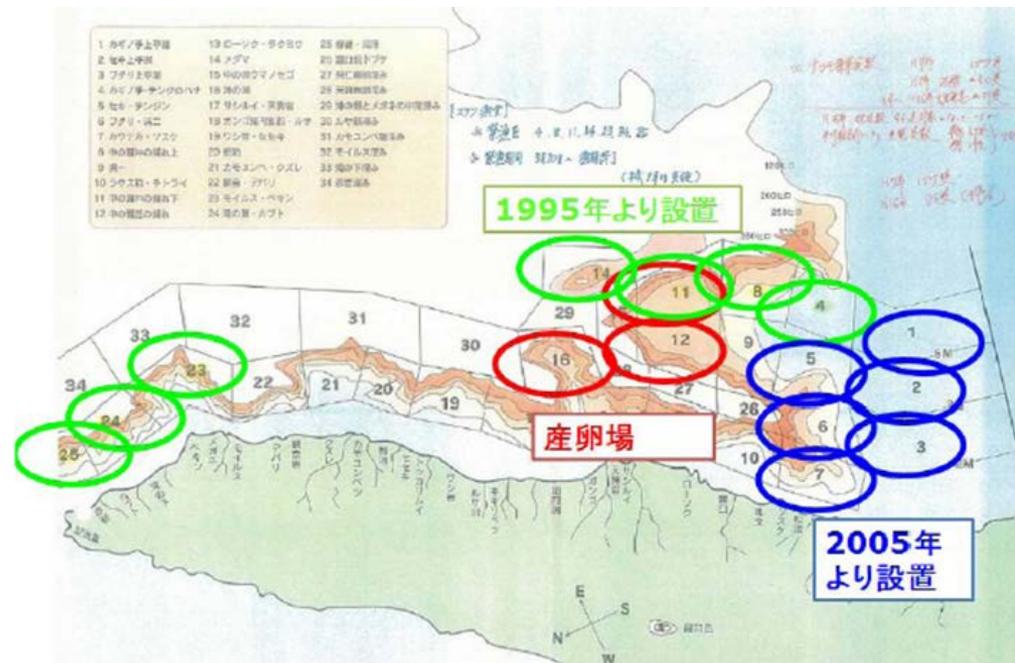
- * MPAs in Japan ...
 - * **conform to various existing systems,**
 - * including Natural Parks Act (Natural Park), Wildlife Protection and Proper Hunting Act (Wildlife Protection Area), Act on Protection of Cultural Properties (Natural Monument), Act on the Protection of Fishery Resources (Protected Water Surface), and Fishery Act (Common fishery right area).
 - * around **1161 MPAs** are identified (Yagi et al. 2010)
 - * with most of them having **fishery resource management objectives,**
 - * sustainable use of fishery resource has traditionally been attempted.
 - * it is recorded in the “chronicles of Japan” that **in the year 689** fishing was banned around the Muko Sea in Settsu region, which is **one of the world’s oldest MPAs** (Kagami 2012) .
 - * under either a **government-based or community-based management** approach (Tsurita and Matsuda 2013).

Four good practices of Community-based MPAs in Japan



Shiretoko

As part of the Shiretoko World Heritage Management Plan, voluntary no-fishing areas were established by the fishers to conserve and to sustainably use walleye pollack resources. Through such activities, increased awareness by the fishers to protect the sea was observed. Moreover, after the area is registered as a World Heritage, the local economy improved as more tourists visited the area.



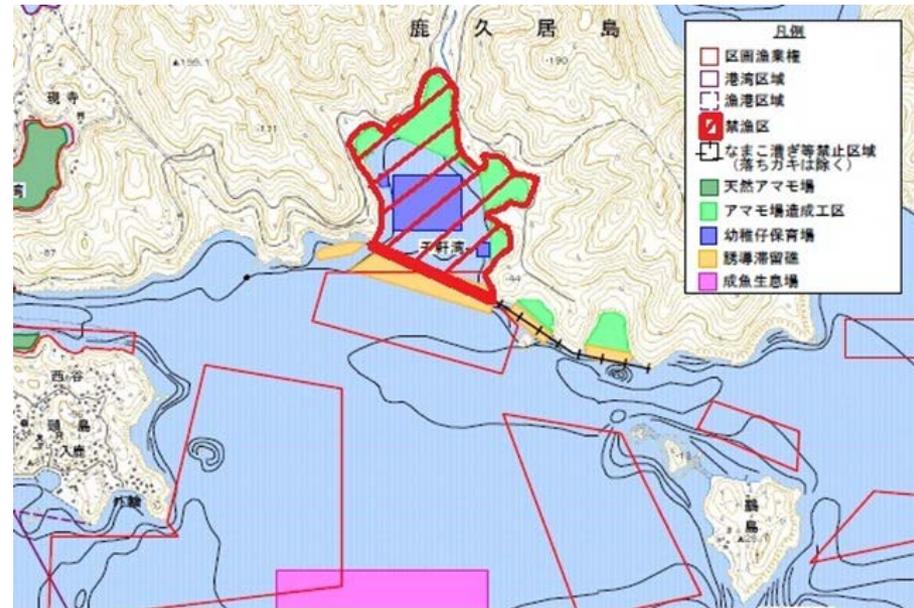
Hegurajima

In order to preserve the traditional practice of free-diving that Ama fishers started around 1650, the local community (Amamachi community association) has been active in establishing the fishing ground for Ama free-diving fishing and no-fishing area. Through resource management of abalone and turban shell, the positive effects on sustainable resource use, maintenance of community solidarity, and the preservation of Ama culture are anticipated.



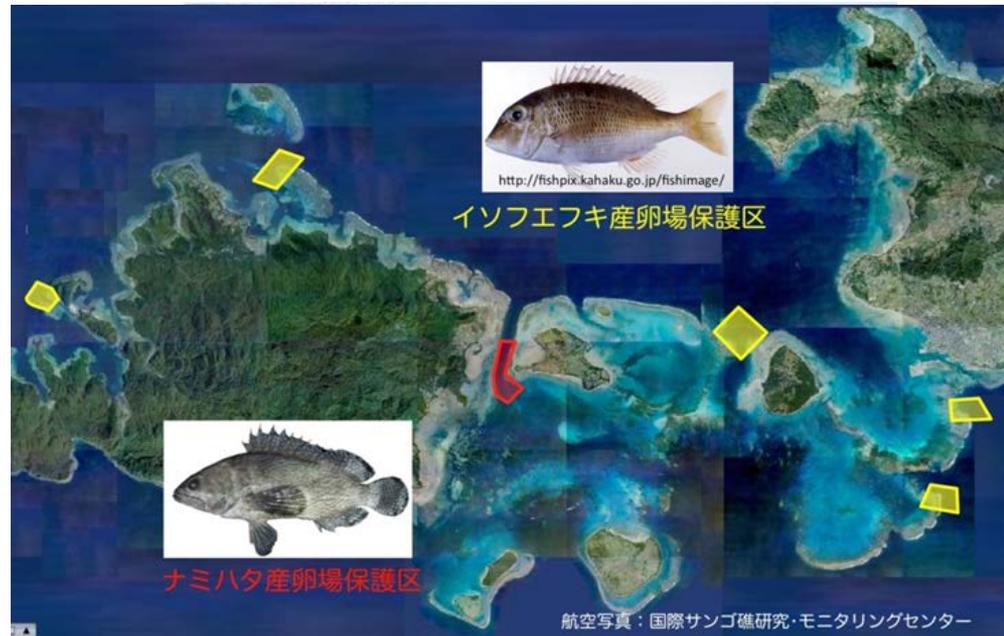
Hinase

For 30 years now, Tsuboami fishers, who practice traditional small-scale set net fishing, have been encouraging eelgrass restoration. In the eelgrass seeding area, **recovery and distribution increase of eelgrass beds, increasing trend of the specific fish species, recovery of scenic diversity and ecosystem function** are observed. Historical background on the development of fishery, markets and fish food culture that match the society, combined with these fisher's knowledge, awareness, mutual trust and humanity, are resulting in the **expansion of activities and multi-stakeholder collaboration**. In 2014, a no-fishing area was established around the area.



Ishigaki

To recover coastal resources, important fish species (emperor fishes and groupers) are under strategic conservation by the voluntary no-fishing area of the fishers (Fisheries Cooperative Association of Yaeyama). Avoiding the catch concentration **resulted in keeping the fish price stable**. Fishers are also participating and collaborating in a multi-stakeholder committee to recover the coral reef. These activities brought about **changes in perception and also improved human relations** among the fishers.



Summary

How can livelihoods be sustained or adversely impacted in both the present and future through MPAs?

- * **The community based MPAs by the fishers are one of the effective ways to realize habitat protection and sustainable use of resources (livelihoods) in Japan.**
- * However, **biodiversity conservation cannot be guaranteed by such MPAs alone** (e.g. limitations on human and financial resources).
- * Depending on the characteristics of the ecosystems and social backgrounds in question, **it is important to promote integrated management by adequately combining various MPA systems and conservation measures** through the collaboration of sectors such as the environment, tourism, and development.

THANK YOU