

Fisheries of Japan – 2008 / 2009
Fisheries Policy Outline for FY2009
(White Paper on Fisheries)

This document reports the state of fisheries and the policy taken during FY2008 based on the provisions of Article 10 (1) of the Fisheries Basic Act (Act No. 89 of 2001) and the policy to be taken in FY2009 based on the provisions of Article 10 (2) of the same Act.

Main Points of the White Paper

◆ Expanding efforts to enhance fisheries to secure the stable supply of fishery products

- The role of Japan's fisheries is to stably supply the people with fishery products. However, fishery production has declined due to such factors as a slump in resource levels and a decline in overseas fishing grounds for Japan. Japan's fishery production structure has also grown more vulnerable on a decline in the number of fishery workers, their aging, and deterioration of fishery business management. The portion of fishery products provided through the market has declined on the upstream sector's growing leadership in pricing of fishery products and an increase in fishery product imports. At the same time, we now see the emergence of such problems as the falling sales competitiveness of domestic fishery products, consumers' shift away from fish, and a slump in fish prices.
- In order to improve the capacity to supply domestic fishery products, Japan should develop fishery resources and a rich marine environment to nurture them, a vigorous work environment where undertakers of fisheries and sound fishery operators are trained and secured, a system where fishery products are processed and efficiently distributed according to consumer needs, and technologies supporting each of these.
- It is important to step up these measures to enhance fisheries to secure the stable supply of fishery products.

◆ Building the future of fish eating that nurtures children through family efforts and cooperation to develop food for children and through enterprise, regional community, and school efforts to support a new environment for what children eat.

- In recent years, children have growingly shifted away from fish against the backdrop of environmental changes including shorter cooking times and the growing trend for children to eat alone. It is feared that children's shift away from fish will affect their healthy growth and damage the sound development of Japan's fisheries industry in a long run.
- Fishery experts' provision of food preparation methods and other information, food processing and distributing companies' efforts to reduce home cooking burdens, fish producers' provision of added value, and other efforts are required to increase reasons to cook at home. Efforts are also required to promote families to eat together at home.
- It is necessary for local communities to enhance their alliance and unity to provide local fishery products for school lunches.

◆ Promoting the management of fishery resources and the conservation of the marine environment. Securing fishery workers' business stability and developing a vigorous work environment. Improving fishing villages' living conditions, enhancing their disaster prevention capacity and promoting the use of regional resources to build fishing villages.

- Half of the fishery resources in the waters surrounding Japan have declined to low levels. Resource restoration plans should be implemented steadily. The living environment for aquatic animals and plants should be improved for sea and inland waters. It is important to promote the international management of resources including those in international waters. Controls should be enhanced on foreign fishing boats in Japanese waters.
- Japan should train undertakers of fisheries and develop a vigorous work environment for fishery workers. Fishery business stabilization programs will be implemented to secure fishery workers' business stability. It is important to improve profitability through structural reforms of fishing boats and fisheries.
- Fish processing, distribution, and consumption measures should be developed to secure the stable supply of fishery products. Efforts to secure the safety of fishery products and consumers' confidence in such safety are important.
- It is important to improve living conditions for fishing villages and enhance their disaster prevention capacity. It is also important to take advantage of regional resources to demonstrate multiple functions of fishing and farming villages and invigorate local communities.

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