Topics: Fisheries in FY2009

1. Effective Use of Unused Fish: *Mottainai*

○ When fishery products undergo the distribution process, some fish are not used for human consumption or are traded at low prices due to the uneven size of the catch or too small a product quantity to form one lot for distribution. In recent years, there have been growing moves to try to effectively use such "unused fish."
○ Effective use of unused fish complies with the spirit of *Mottainai*[*1] in terms of not wasting food and using resources to the fullest.
○ In order to increase fishers' earnings and to raise Japan's seafood self-sufficiency rate through expanding its consumption of fishery products, active efforts should be made by people concerned in each phase, from production to distribution and consumption of fishery products.

*1 *Mottainai is* a Japanese phrase which Wangari Maathai, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004, advocated to spread as a universal slogan for protecting the environment. The phrase is often translated as "waste not, want not."

Effective use of unused fish by a wholesale market
[Nagasaki Prefecture]

A wholesale market has opened a restaurant serving unused fish, and also started selling processed products made of unused fish via the Internet, both of which have been well reputed by users.

Increase of earnings through use of unused fish
[Shizuoka Prefecture]

A supermarket has sold fixed net catches including unused fish that have been bought from a fishery cooperative, thereby increasing fishers' earnings. This effort is also well reputed by consumers due to the outstanding freshness of the products.

Effective use of unused fish with new processing technology
[Ibaraki Prefecture]

Purse seine fishers and a fishery processing company have collaborated to develop new processed products made of unused fish for school meals and restaurants.

Product development using unused fish parts
[Kagoshima Prefecture]

Stock company K has developed a new product by effectively using the flesh attached to the backbone of filleted farmed fish.

2. Raising Japan's Self-sufficiency Rate regarding Fisheries Products for Human Consumption through Fast Seafood (Fast Food + Seafood)

○ Many conveyor-belt sushi bars have intensified their efforts to actively use local fishery products and reduce food scraps.
○ Hamburger chains have provided seafood burgers using domestic fishery products as ingredients in response to consumers' increased preference for healthy, safe and reliable food.
○ It is necessary to increase Japan's seafood self-sufficiency rate by stimulating consumption of domestic fishery products.

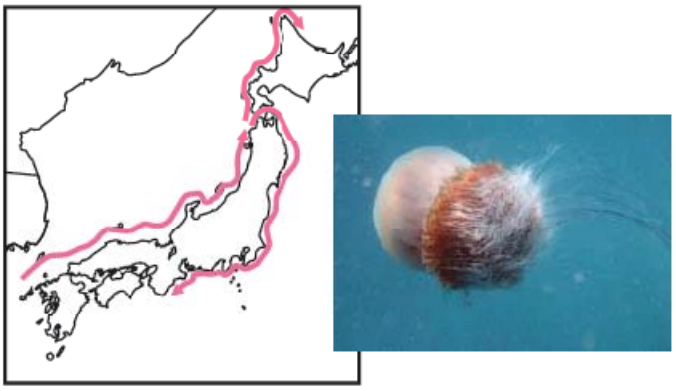
Conveyer-belt sushi bars with various forms of entertainment

Squid hamburger

3. Infestation of Giant Jellyfish

○ The infestation of giant jellyfish in FY2009 was characterized by its large scale, early timing, and extensive area.
○ The massive infestation occurred because a number of conditions favorable for jellyfish outbreaks emerged as a result of environmental changes in the Yellow Sea and the East China Sea.
○ The Fisheries Agency took measures such as paying the cost required for monitoring of area and status of the infestation and providing such information, promoting the introduction of improved fishing gear, exterminating giant jellyfish using a jellyfish cutter or an underwater pump for exterminating giant jellyfish in the sea, and processing the jellyfish on land for disposal or effective use. In addition, Japan strengthened cooperation with neighboring countries, in order to advance the level of infestation prediction technology through a joint monitoring survey with China and South Korea.

Giant jelly fish caught in a set net



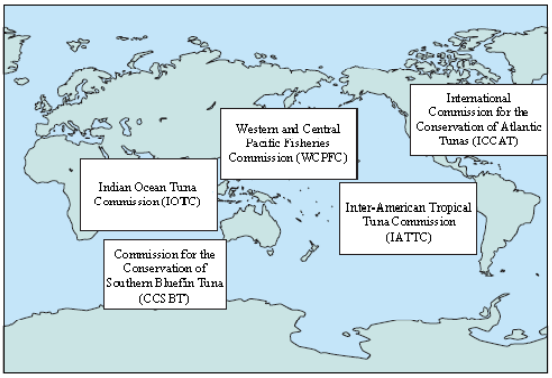
Drift route of giant jellyfish in 2009

Source: Fisheries Agency, Japan Fisheries Information Service Center.

4. World Trend of Conservation and Management of Tuna Resources

○ The amount of Japan's tuna catches ranked the highest in the world in 2007, accounting for 14% (248,000 tons) of the world's total tuna catches. Also, Japan is the largest tuna consumer in the world, being supplied with 473,000 tons of tuna (the total amount of Japan's catches and imports).
○ Japan is a member of all of the five regional fisheries management organizations (RFMO) in the world.
○ With regard to bluefin tuna, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) strengthened their conservation and management measures.
○ At the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) held in Doha in March 2010, the proposal to list Atlantic bluefin tuna in CITES Appendix I was rejected. However, considering the fact that a number of countries supported the listing, Japan regards that the RFMOs' resource management is insufficient.
○ As the world's largest tuna consumer, Japan is not in a position to import tuna that are not caught in compliance with RFMO rules. It is important for Japan to demonstrate international leadership with a view to prevent overfishing.

Regional Fisheries Management Organizations for Tuna



Status of Tuna Resources

RFMO / Species	ICCAT	IOTC	IATTC	WCPFC	CCSBT
Bluefin tuna	Eastern Pacific: Low/decreased Western Pacific: Low/unchanged	—	—	Medium/unchanged	—
Southern bluefin tuna	—	—	—	—	Low/unchanged
Bigeye tuna	Low/unchanged	Medium/unchanged	Low/unchanged	Medium/decreased	—
Yellowfin tuna	Medium/unchanged	Medium/decreased	Medium/unchanged	Medium/unchanged	—
Albacore	Northern Atlantic: Low/increased Southern Atlantic: Medium/decreased	Medium/unchanged	—	Northern Pacific: High/unchanged Southern Pacific: High/decreased	—

Source: "FY2009 Current Status of International Resources," Fisheries Agency

5. Toward the Sustainable Use of Whale Resources

○ The International Whaling Commission (IWC) has become dysfunctional due to the endless argument over the utilization of whole resources between nations that support the sustainable use of whales and anti-whaling nations. Toward normalizing the IWC, discussions on the "Future of the IWC" were commenced in 2008 with an aim to reach a comprehensive agreement on it.

○ In February 2010, a report by the IWC Chair was released to the public, proposing a draft agreement framework to introduce provisional measures, such as allowing whaling activities under catch limits below present levels without defining the purpose of the whaling (e.g., commercial, research), for the next ten years.

○ In recent years, anti-whaling groups' obstructive actions against the Japanese fleet engaged in whaling for research purposes in the Antarctic Ocean have become a problem.

○ During the 2009/2010 research cruise, the anti-whaling group Sea Shepherd obstructed Japanese research vessels by throwing bottles containing butyric acid at the crew members, trying to tangle the propellers of the research vessels with ropes, and pointing laser lights, at the faces of crew members, which could cause blindness. Further, a sabotage vessel collided with a Japanese research vessel, and a Sea Shepherd activist unlawfully boarded a Japanese research vessel.

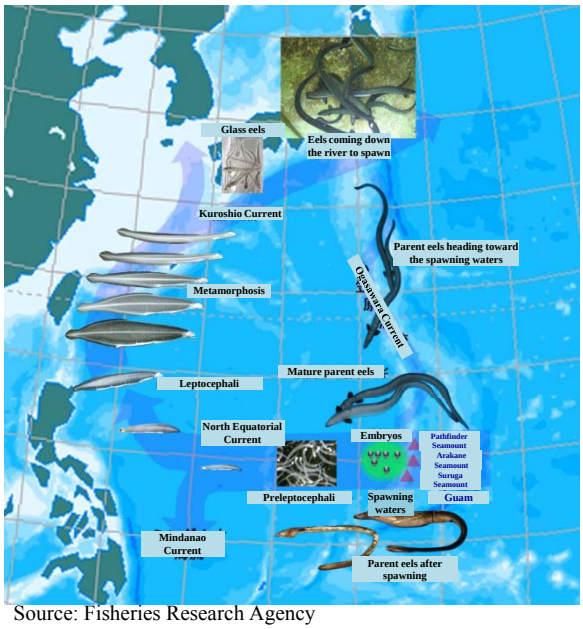
○ Japan should continue to request the relevant countries, including the country where Sea Shepherd's sabotage vessels are registered, to take responsible actions to prevent obstructions against Japan's legitimate research activities under Article 8 of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.

Sea Shepherd (on the right) obstructing a research vessel (on the left)

6. Eel Production not Relying on Natural Resources: Aiming for Closed-cycle Aquaculture

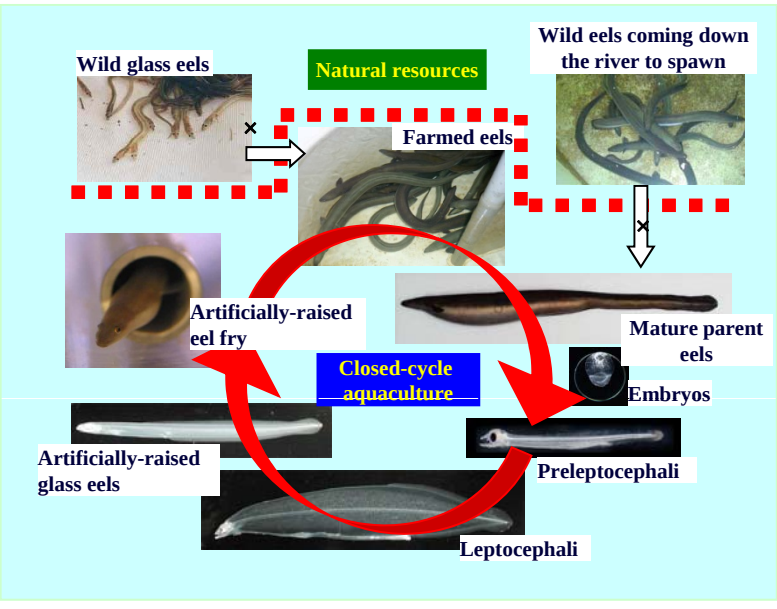
○ In 2010, the Fisheries Research Agency succeeded in closing the life cycle of eels, from spawning, hatching and rearing to spawning, under artificial rearing.

Spawning Migration of Eels



Source: Fisheries Research Agency

System of Closed-cycle Aquaculture



Source: Fisheries Research Agency