

IASC Regional Asia Meeting

Theoretical implication of current social problems in Japan to the studies of the commons

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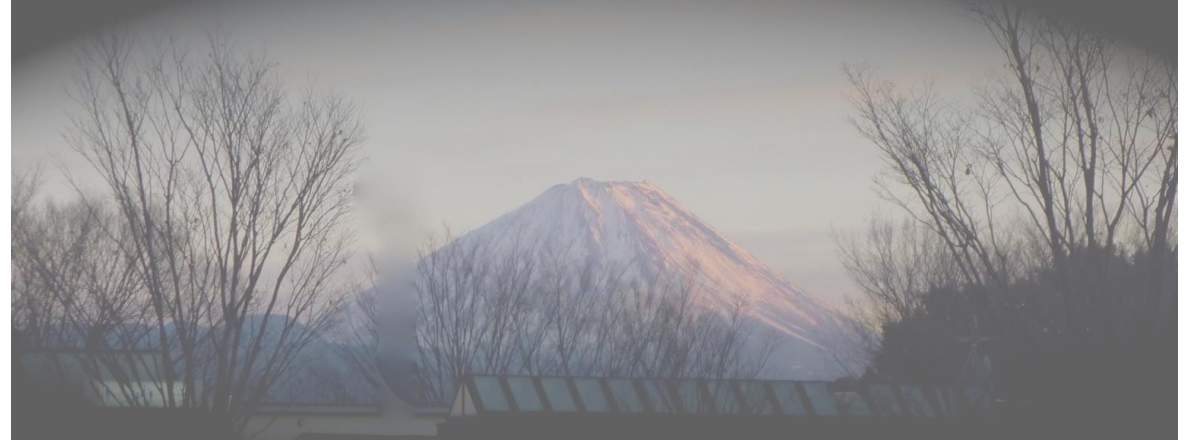
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Bangkok, Thailand, July 14, 2018



Japan faces challenges

- Unprecedented challenges:
 - “declining population”,
 - “declining birthrate and aging”,
 - as well as environmental, energy, resources, housing, medical, educational problems.
- These challenges will soon be shared by most of other countries, even developing countries.
- Some of the efforts to tackle the problems may contribute to prepare countermeasure for other countries in the near future



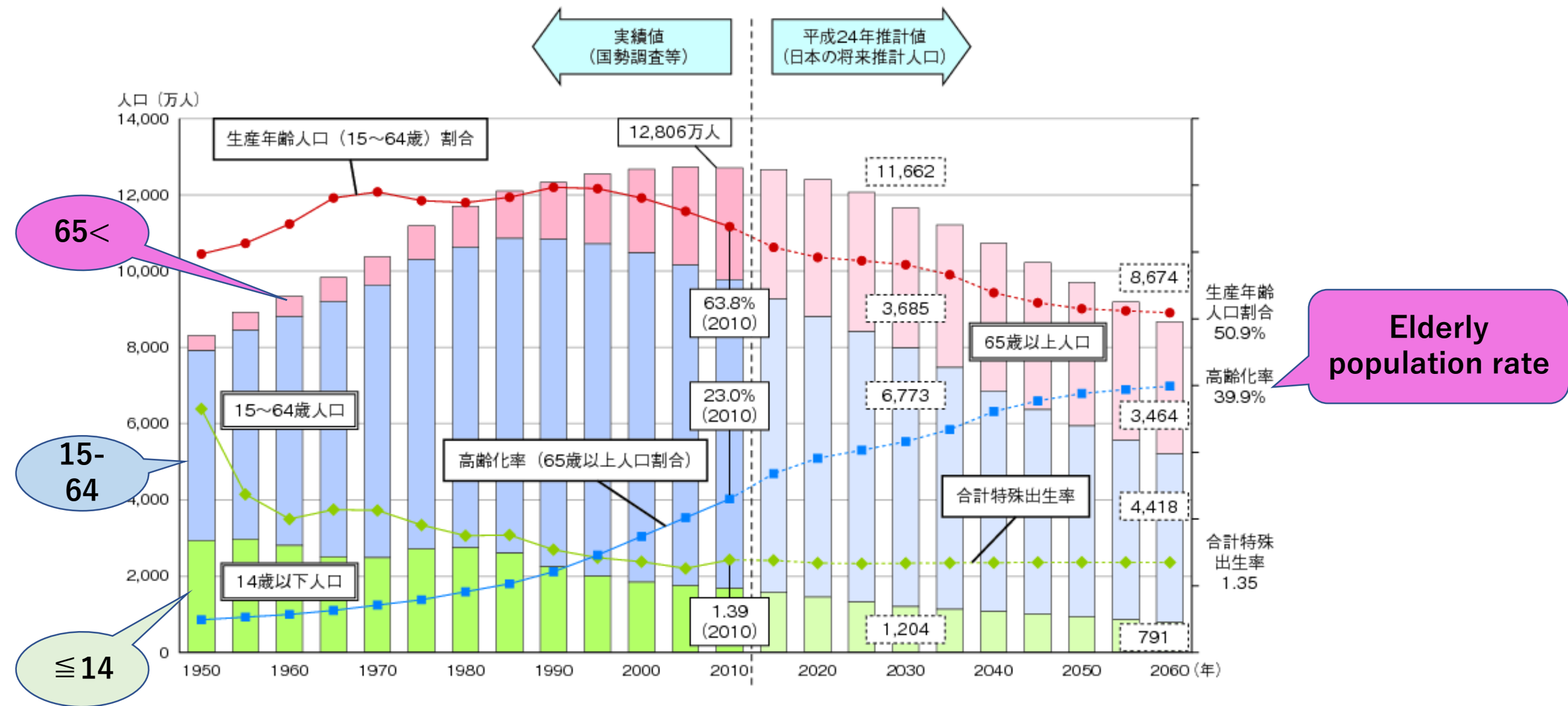
*Source: Komiyama (2007)

Declining population and aging

- Total population:
 - 128,080,000 (peaked in 2008)
 - → 86,740,000 (in 2060)
- Elderly population (65 years old and over):
 - 29,480,000 (in 2010) → 38,780,000 (peaked in 2042) → 34,640,000 (in 2060)
- Elderly population rate (elderly population/ total population):
 - 23.0% (in 2010) → 25.1% (in 2013) → 39.9% (in 2060)



*Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2012)

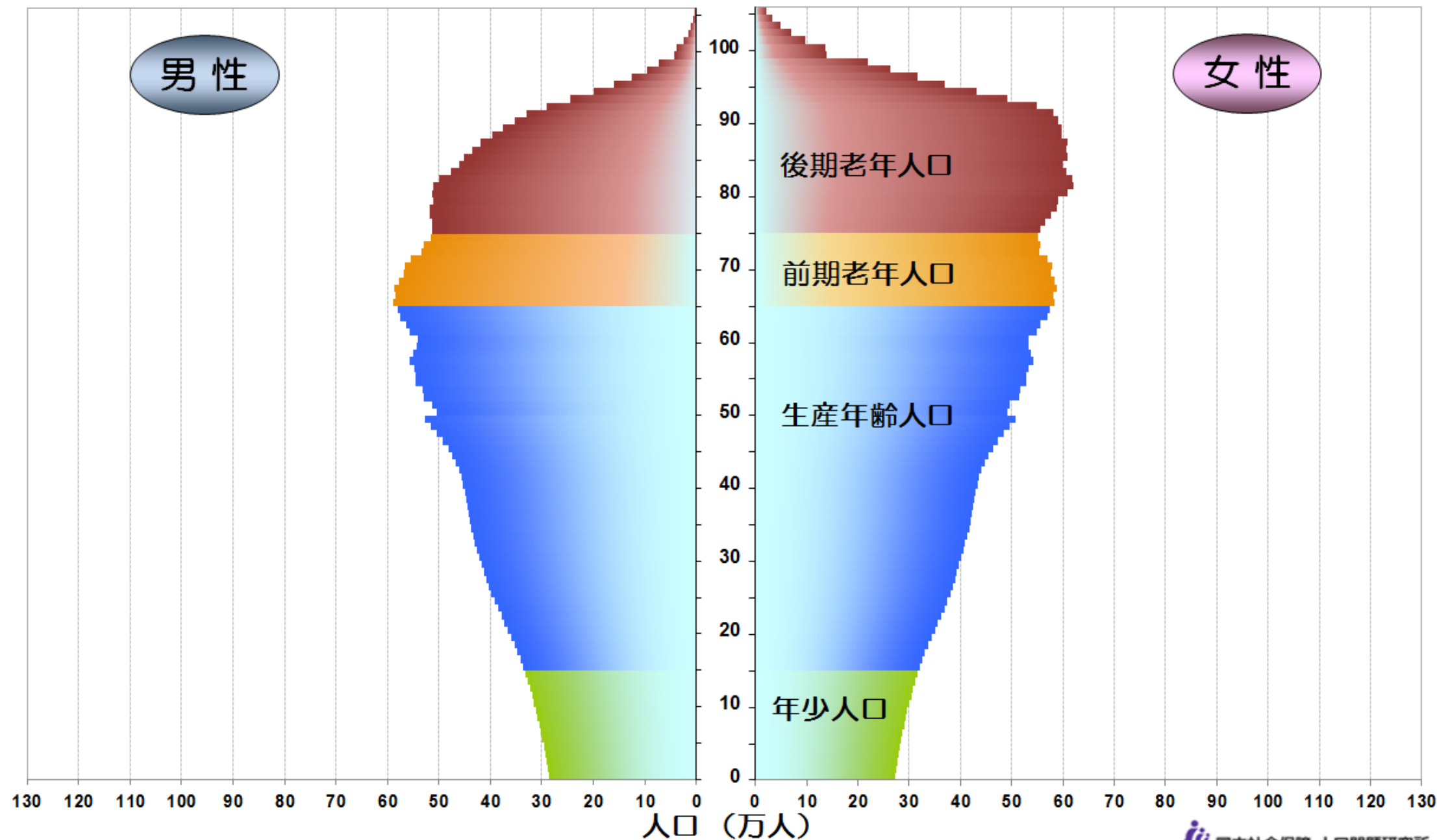


(出典) 総務省「国勢調査」及び「人口推計」、国立社会保障・人口問題研究所「日本の将来推計人口 (平成24年1月推計):出生中位・死亡中位推計」 (各年10月1日現在人口)、厚生労働省「人口動態統計」

2065

男性

女性



資料：1965～2015年：国勢調査 2020年以降：「日本の将来推計人口（平成29年推計）」（出生中位（死亡中位）推計）

Class Society of Japan

- More than 9 million “**neo under-class**” people were generated.
- 30% of men can not be married because of lack of income.
- “**Neo middle class**” has tendency not to go up but to drop to the lower classes.

*Source: Hashimoto (2018)



The homeless

Current structure of class society in Japan

Classes	Occupation	Percentage	Average annual income (2015)
Capitalist	the management, self-employed persons more than 5 employee	4.1 %	¥ 6,040,000
Neo-middle class	specialist, administration, office worker	20.6 %	¥ 4,990,000
Paleo-middle class	self-employed persons less than 5 employee	12.9 %	¥ 3,030,000
Working class (regular)		35.1 %	¥ 3,700,000
Working class (part-time)	mainly house-wives	12.6 %	
Neo under class (non-regular)	salesclerk, cook, waitperson, sanitation worker, etc.	14.9 %	¥ 1,860,000

*Source: Hashimoto (2018)

Change in household structure (1)

- Total number of households :
 - 53,330,000 (in 2015) → 54,190,000 (peaked in 2023) → 50,760,000 (in 2040)
- Average household size:
 - 2.33 (in 2015) → 2.08 (in 2040)
- Changes in the types of household from 2015 to 2040
 - Single (living alone): 34.5% → 39.3%
 - Couple: 20.2% → 21.1%
 - One parent and one child: 8.9% → 9.7%
 - Couple and children: 26.9% → 23.3%
 - *more than 40% during my childhood
 - Others (incl. three generations living together): 9.5% → 6.5%

Change in household structure (2)

- Change in terms of aging households during 2015 - 2040
 - Ratio of households of which the age of the head is 65 years old and over:
 - 36.0% → 44.2%
 - Ratio of male (65 years old and over) who live alone:
 - 14.0% → 20.8%
 - Ratio of female (65 years old and over) who live alone:
 - 21.8% → 24.5%

*Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (2018)
(<http://www.ipss.go.jp/>)

Problems of aging

- Dementia patients:
 - more than 7,000,000 (estimation by Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare)
- Dying alone:
 - one estimation- around 200,000 senior citizens will die alone annually.
 - around 4,000 senior citizens will die alone weekly
 - cf) Annual traffic accident fatalities: 4,000 persons

*Source: Menju (2017)



Three months after dying alone

Changing local communities (1)

- Ruins search map (website):
 - ex.) Akita Prefecture- 99 places are posted, such as mines and settlements.



Changing local communities (2)

- Number of schools closed in 2012 (Data of Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology):
 - 426 public primary school,
 - 119 public junior high school,
 - 62 public high school,
- ← though primary schools functioned as nodes and bases of the local communities.



Changing local communities (3)

- Depopulation → deterioration of transportation network (Data of Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism) :
 - 35 railway lines, or 674 KM, were abolished between 2000 to 2013
 - 1,600 KM of bus routes were abolished between 2006 to 2011
- Quality of life of the aged persons:
 - obviously has been decreasing for going to hospital and shopping

*Source: Menju (2017)



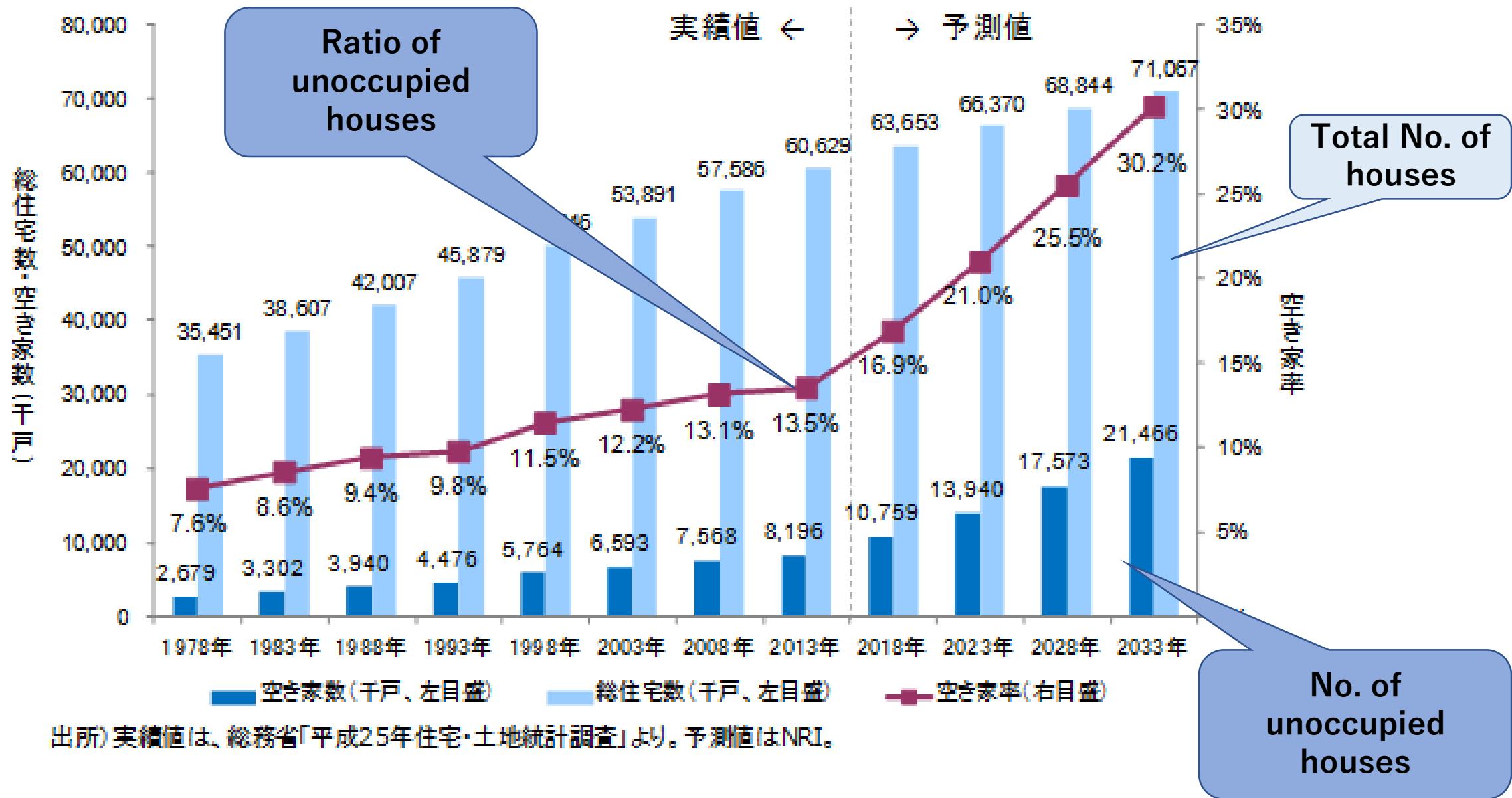
Unoccupied/vacant houses



- Number (Ratio) of unoccupied houses:
 - 8,200,000 in 2013
 - → 14,000,000 (21.0%) in 2023
 - → 21,500,000 (30.2%) in 2033
- ← 1/3 will be unoccupied houses

- Possession of houses:
 - assets to liabilities/debts for heir/heirless
- Increasing people who do not register their inheritance:
 - to avoid inheritance tax, property tax, maintenance cost
 - ← critical issue

*Source: Nozawa (2016)



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2015),
Nomura Research Institute (2015)

Types of unoccupied houses

- (1) Vacant houses for lease
- (2) Vacant houses for sale
- (3) Vacant houses for second use:
 - villa, etc.
- (4) Other vacant houses:
 - expected to destroy, etc.

*Source: Nozawa (2016)



Increasing number of unknown owner of the vacant houses and lands (1)

- Questionnaire survey in 2014:
 - 134 local governments (85%) out of 157 face the difficulty to identify the owners of unoccupied houses and land.



*Source: Yoshihara (2017)

Increasing number of unknown owner of the vacant houses and lands (2)

- Many people do not register their inheritance:
 - an example of the land (**only 192 m²**) on which inheritance registration had not been done for three generations
- about **150 people** who have inheritance right were identified after wasting tremendous time and efforts by the local government to have a plan to construct a new road.
- Problem:
 - difficulties to collect property tax
(=accounts for 40% of the tax revenue of the local governments)



abandoned farmlands

*Source: Yoshihara (2017)

Why? (1)

- There is no punishment for not registering inheritance.
 - Many people want to avoid complicated processes.
 - Ex) Unregistered inherited farmland:
 - 930,000 hectare, or 20% of the farmland in Japan
(Data: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2016)
- Decreasing value of the land in terms of consciousness of the people.
 - The land become negative assets (liabilities)

Are the land more profitable assets than stocks and deposit/savings?

	1983	2015
Yes, I think so.	61.8 %	30.1 %
No, I don't think so.	21.3 %	41.3 %

*Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (2015)

Why? (2)

- Increasing number of the absentee landowner
- ex) Land area of **private forest** (occupies 40% of the national land area):
 - 24% the private forest lands: owned by the absentee landowners.
 - About 40% of them: owned by the absentee landlords who live outside the prefecture.

*Source: World Agriculture
Forestry Census (2005)



Incomplete land register investigation

- Purposes:
 - to identify land owner, the lot number, land-use category, area,
 - to fix the boundary,
 - and to make the map.
- Japan:
 - The investigation was finished only **52%** of the lands, because of lack of the staff and complicated system
 - ← There are about 300 laws related to the land.
- France, Germany, Korea, Taiwan:
 - finished

*Source: Yoshihara (2017)



New forest management system (1)

- **‘Forest Management Act’** : approved in 25 May 2018
- Management Rights:
 - Transfer of the management rights of unmanaged forests from private forest land owner to the local government (max. 50 years)
- Management Implementation Rights:
 - The local governments entrust harvesting of timber to logging companies (min.15 years)

New forest management system (2)

- Criticism:
 - (1) Essence =supply of raw materials to big timber company and biomass power station,
 - (2) Judgement of 'unmanaged' is not so easy. Small scale forest lands, with more than 50 years-rotational management plan, are likely regarded as unmanaged.
 - (3) Violation of property rights, even violation of constitution: disadvantage of small scale forestland owners

Trials against depopulation and aging

- Only certain parts of the vacant house are rented (not whole):
 - ex. Except for the Buddhist family altar room
- Two-based residential style:
 - live in the rural community as well as the city
- The local communities and NPO are involved into the process of purchasing the vacant house by the outsiders:
 - To check whether the outsiders will be adaptable to the community



*Source: Yamazaki and Sakuma (2017)

Trials to maintain community function

- The local residents, their children and relatives are, of course, the main actors.
- Out-migrants return to the village for attending Bon festival in summer, a new year ceremony in winter, village shrines' festival in autumn, new year ceremony, the equinoctial week, and to visit family graves, etc.
- Question:
 - Are there any possibilities to keep the village in which many stakeholders communicate and take action each other, even after most of the residents migrated from the village?

*Source: Yamazaki and Sakuma (2017)

Theoretical implication (1): *Soyu-ownership*

	Union	Right of management and disposal	Usufructs	Individual holdings
Joint-ownership	Not form organization	belong to the individuals	belong to the individuals	Individual has right of disposal.
Traditional <i>Soyu-ownership</i>	Form organization, but individuals also have independence.	belong to the organization	belong to the individuals	Individual members don't have their own holdings.

- A kind of joint-ownership, but there are fundamental differences.
- Typical example in Japan: *Iriai rights*
- Contemporary Soyu-ownership: Framework for land management under declining population

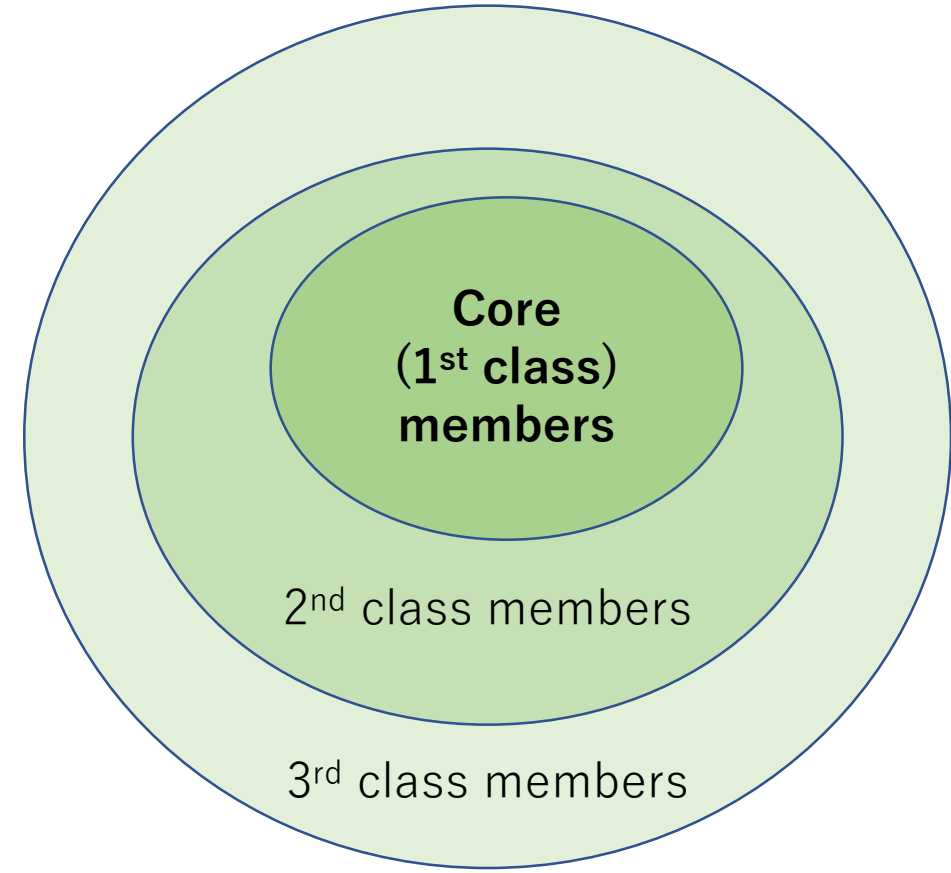
*Source: Igarashi (2016)

Expected attributes of main actors under the framework of *Soyu-ownership* (1)

- (1) Joint undertaking can be set as a purpose of the organization.
- (2) The organization is independent even from donors.
- (3) Management and labor are not separated.
 - ← Principle of International Co-operative Alliance
- (4) Admission to and withdrawal from the organization are limited.
 - → “**Graduated membership**” (Inoue, 2009) might be one of the ways.

“Graduated membership”

- ‘Open-minded localism’ is required, in which local people consent to open their resources and environment to outsiders.
- This principle fits the principle of subsidiarity, whereby the larger-scale political and administrative unit only supplements the smaller-scale unit or basic autonomous unit.
- Then some of the local people act as **core members** (first-class members), who have the strongest authority and co-operate with other **graduated members** (second- and third-class members), who have relatively weaker authority.



Expected attributes of main actors under the framework of *Soyu-ownership* (2)

- (5) Decision making should be done democratically, usually one vote per member.
- → “**Commitment principle**” (Inoue, 2009) might also be applied. Once we adopt it, the decision-making process will no longer be based on the notion of equality (one vote per member) but that in itself will not be problematic as long as members view the decision-making process as fair.

*Source: Inoue (2009)

“**Commitment principle**” for decision-making

- ‘Commitment principle’: a principle for decision-making in which the authority of stakeholders is recognised to an extent that corresponds to their degree of commitment to relevant activities.
- Under this principle,
 - **local people** who often enter and care for the forest
 - expected to have greater/ greatest power over the decision-making process;
 - **irresponsible outsiders** who say a lot without doing much
 - provided less power;
 - **conscientious outsiders** who devote their time or money to local forest management
 - given more power

Expected attributes of main actors under the framework of *Soyu-ownership* (3)

- (6) Outflow of the benefit from the organization should be minimized, while enhancement of the *soyu*-property must be a major concern.
- (7) The undertaking and participants are integrated into the local communities.
- (8) The products of the joint undertaking should meet the social needs. Entrepreneurship is required to be sensible to the needs, make a feasible plan, and balance income and expenditure.
- (9) Relation to the public sector, including subsidy, should be carefully considered.

*Source: Mogi (2016)

Literature (written in Japanese)

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Thank you for attention!

- Hope my presentation will inspire your idea related to “diversity” and “dynamics” of Natural Resource Management in Asia



My hobby: Karate-do