

Changing Consumer's Behavior in order to Protect the Food Culture of Eels

ウナギを食べるといふ食文化を守るために消費者の意識・行動を変える

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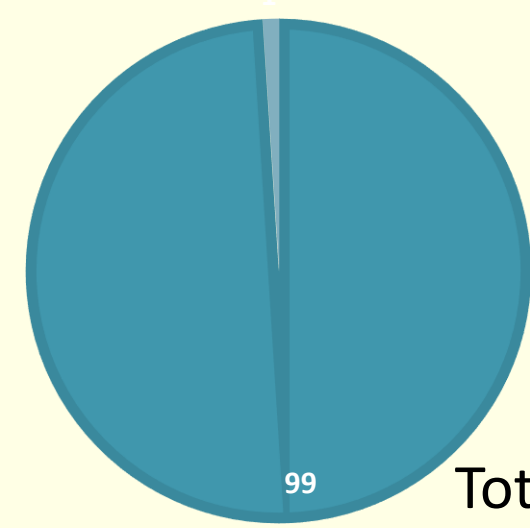
Eels are a special part of Japanese food culture and have been loved by people for many years. However, eels are in danger of extinction and they will become extinct if we keep eating at this pace. Recently, a lot of eels are sold, consumed, and wasted, so consumers have to change their awareness of eel consumption to keep eels as an important part of our culture. The purpose of this project is to find measures to improve consumer's awareness in various ways.

ウナギを食するのは日本特有の食文化の1つであり、長い間人々に愛されてきた。しかし現在ではウナギは絶滅危惧種であり、私たちが今までと同じように食べ続ければ絶滅してしまう恐れがある。近年では、たくさんのウナギ製品が販売・消費・廃棄されている。私たちの大切な食文化を守るために、消費者のウナギ消費への意識を変えなければならない。この研究において、様々な方法で消費者の意識を改善していく施策を行った。

☆Current situation

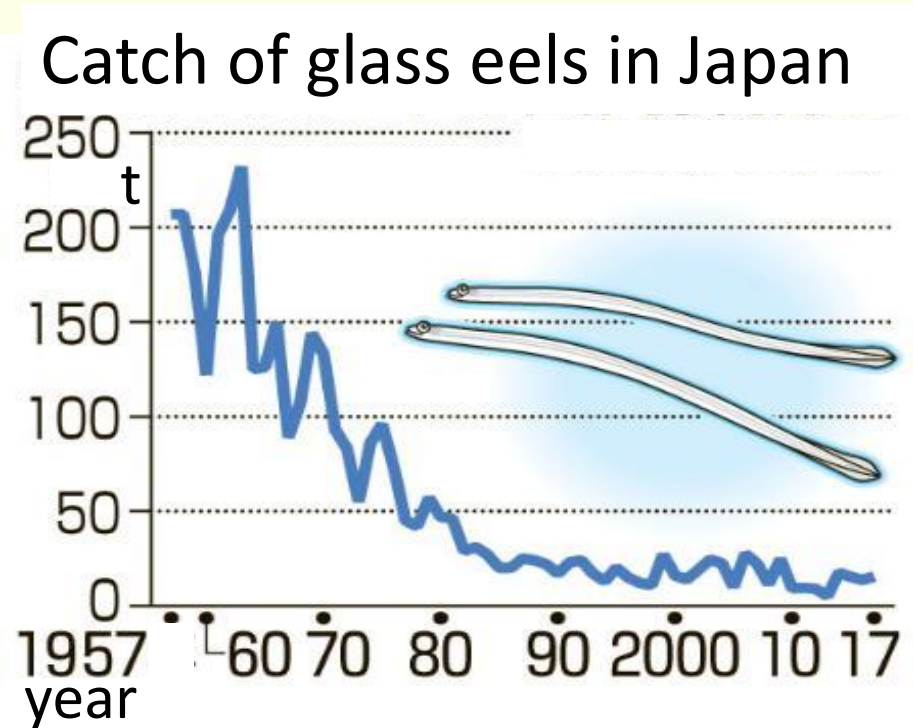
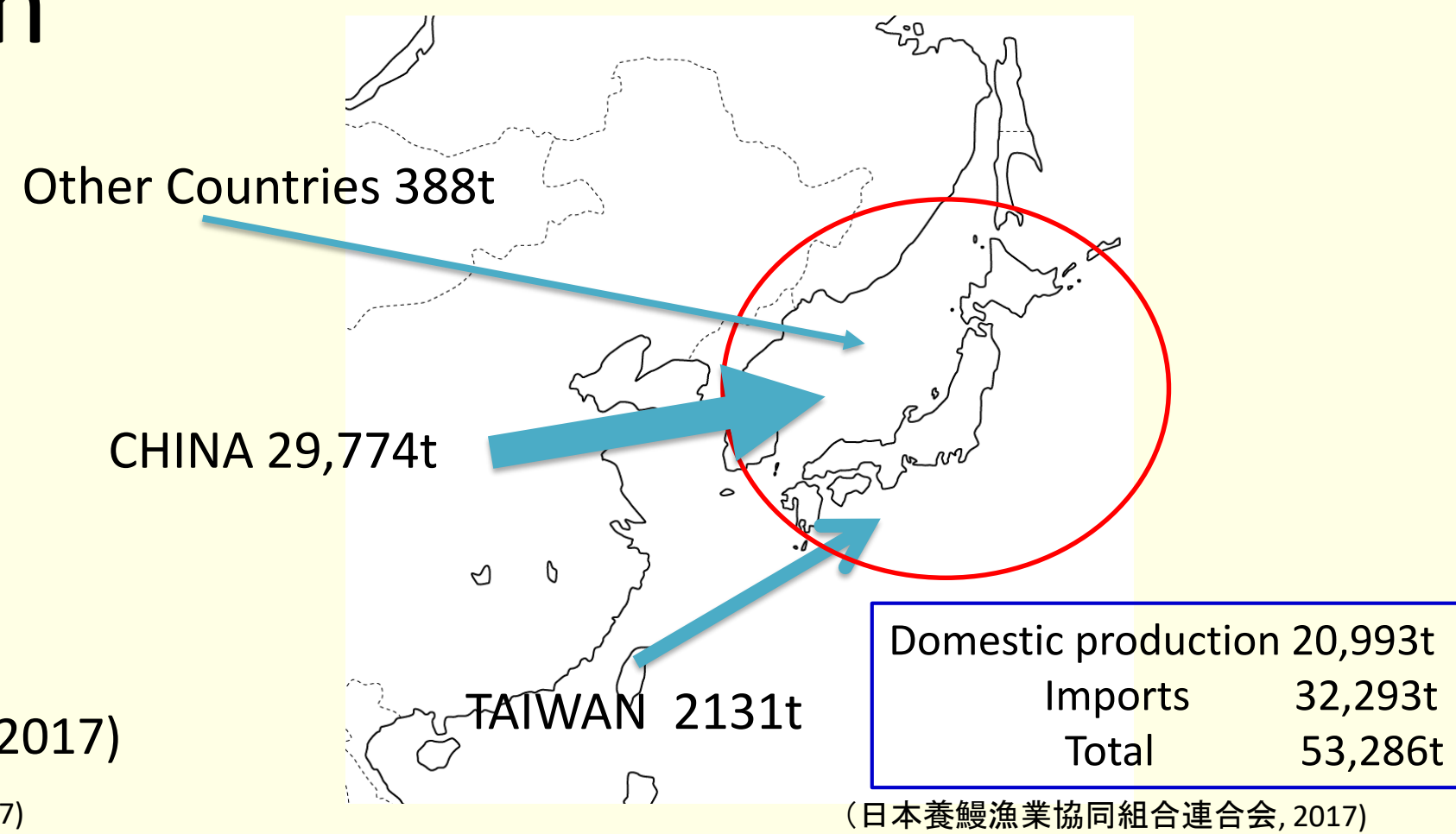
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT OF EELS

■ Farmed ■ Natural



Total 20,993t (2017)

(日本養鰻漁業協同組合連合会, 2017)



- marine environment
- deterioration of habitat
- indiscriminate hunting

Glass eel catch is decreasing!

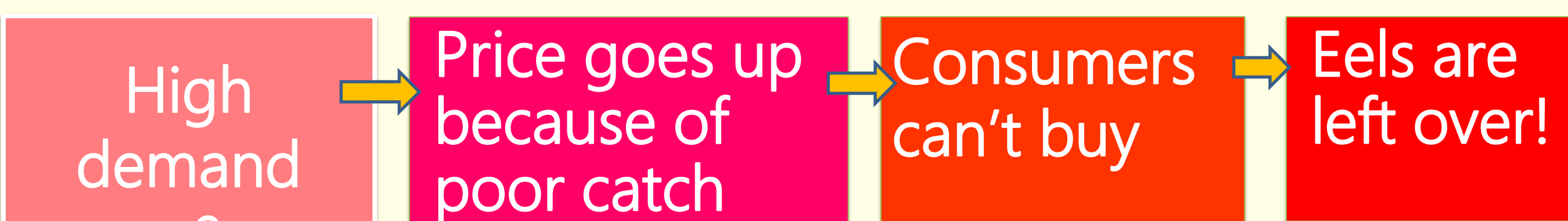
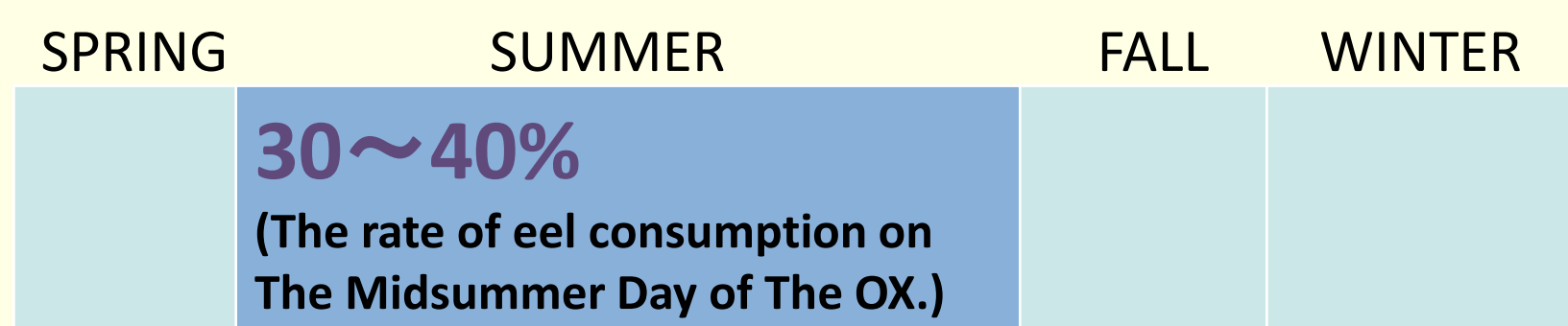
Listed on the red list of endangered species (2014)

However...

We continue mass consumption & distribution

“The Midsummer Day of The OX” (土用の丑の日)

The ratio of eel consumption by season



2.7t

→ Food waste

(supermarket 5/16 companies in 2017)

Why?

- Passing the best before date.
- Broken package.

- Researchers say ... Possible
- Newspapers and TV ... Limited information
- → Consumers keep eating without considering this problem.

☆Importance

- We continue to eat eels which are an endangered species.
- Although the catch of glass eels is decreasing, we throw away a lot of eels.
- If we keep eating at this pace, we cannot keep the food culture of eels.

☆Research Question

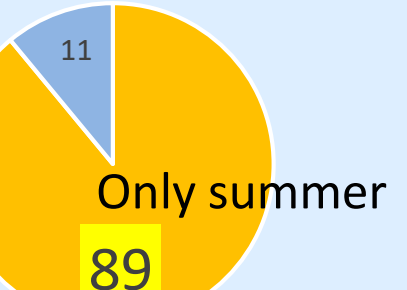
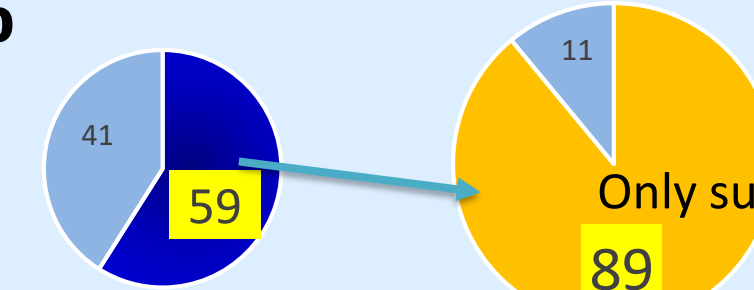
What is an effective way to protect the food culture of eels in Japan?

Survey 1 SENDING OUT QUESTIONNAIRES

Purpose: To know consumer's awareness about consumption of eels. (Period: One week, Respondents: 609)

Result & consideration

- Over 90% like eels!
- Eating eels in summer → 59%
- Over 75% know about the poor catch of glass eels & eels are an endangered species.



- Eels are loved by many people and are an important part of food culture.
- Consumption of eels are concentrated in summer. There is a high demand because of campaign effects.
- Though many people know this, they continue mass consumption.

☆Suggestion

□ Consumers have to change their awareness to protect food culture of eels.

- Savor the taste of eels and eat all
- Eels should be eaten throughout the year to scatter the demand and make efforts to reduce the number of eels eaten.

Based on these considerations, three measures were conducted.

☆Measures

Policy 1 • Submitted an article about the situation of eels to “The Asahi Shimbun,” which was published on December 8th.
Circulation: 600,000
• Sent the information of eels to many people by SNS.

Policy 2 Released the results and analysis of questionnaires & proposal. 329 access.(12/12)

Policy 3 Distributed the teaching aid and gave lessons to children.

Q1.Were you interested in eels before?

- YES 5th grade: 94% 6th grade: 98%

Q2.Do you understand the relationship between eels and people?

- YES 5th grade: 85% 6th grade: 88%



☆Next action Marketing & Education

- Explore how to spread information to more people.
- Ask distribution companies about their efforts of selling eels and suggest the effort of scattering the demands.
- Bring the teaching aid to the textbook company.

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