

## Problem of “Fishery coordination” adjustment of interests in fishing ground use

The Fisheries act was amended in December 2020. This amendment is to reconsider method of the resource management and using method the sea fishery area. Aim of this amendment was reforms to turn fishery into a growth sector, with in mind appropriate management of fishery resources. Combined with the production volume of Japan's fishery and aquaculture has decreased to one-third of its peak, there is a pressing need to construct of an active production system. Accordingly, growth of inshore fishery production is one of the important agenda to turn fishery and aquaculture into a growth sector. Although the Japanese government has instructed the necessity of making effective use of the fishery area in its "Guidelines on fishery area utilization systems, etc.," effective progress has not been made at production sites in each region.

In most of Japanese fishing grounds, the utilization rate of many fishing grounds has declined due to the aging of fishermen and the lack of successors. And vacant fishing grounds are left untouched in depopulated areas. In regions that are reluctant to promote the use of fishing grounds, the change of generation and the succession of fishing grounds are delayed, and promotion of new entrants and optimization of fishing ground utilization have not progressed. In addition, despite the urgent need for optimal use of fishing grounds, many companies interested in entering the fishing industry cannot obtain information on specific locations of underutilized or underutilized fishing grounds. The Fisheries Agency's website "Umishiru" does not cover the necessary information for prospective market participants and does not function as a contact point for providing information. Due to the above problems, fishing grounds are not being effectively utilized, and fishery production has not been improved.

In the use of fishing grounds after the acquisition of fishing rights, Despite the enforcement of the Fisheries Law for Proper Distribution of Marine Products, which stipulates the obligation to report catches and the management of quantities of fish caught, and the stricter penal provisions, reporting on the production of farmed fish and the distribution of catches is not entirely reliable. Due to the above problems, Accuracy of catches, etc. is not guaranteed, and appropriate resource management is difficult.

“Fishery coordination” is the task of coordinating the interests of fishermen in order to maintain fisheries order and ensure smooth operations, and is the role of prefectures. In many cases, JF members, fishermen, and companies argue about securing fishing order and operation within the same region, which hinders human relations within the region and makes smooth "fishery coordination" difficult. Many prefectures rely on the JF to fulfill that public role. Since the situation in the coordination process is also indirectly monitored through the JF. So it is not government-led “fisheries coordination”, but rather “internal coordination within the JF members”.

Since JF General Assembly and Board of Directors often place importance on human relations within the region and avoid personal conflicts, avoiding decisions by majority vote and making decisions based on unanimous decisions. that is one of the factors that make "internal coordination within the JF members". In addition, the objections of local fishermen who are reluctant to have their fishing grounds used in the past by others and JF members who think that they are owners of fishing grounds may strongly influence "fisheries coordination". It is difficult for existing JF, which consist of fishermen in a limited legion, to achieve national guidelines and "fisheries coordination" of prefectures.

In order to further develop the fishery and make usual fishery into sustainable fisheries, it is important to implement government-led "fisheries coordination". It is also necessary to transition from coastal fishing under fishing rights to coastal fishing managed by national fishing licenses and IQ. It is also important to specifically determine the need for developing the role of municipalities in "fisheries coordination" and the need for wide-area mergers of JF. Fishermen's awareness of fishery resources should be improved, and the principle that "marine resources are the common property of the people" should be aimed at optimal use of the oceans by the entire nation.