

## The Characteristics of Japanese Fishing Associations

### The Sanriku Area Fishing Villages in the 1930s

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#### 1. The Fishing Cooperative Association System and its introduction into fishing villages

In the process of clarifying the nature of the village "Fishing Cooperative Association" and its organizational characteristics, it is necessary to discuss the types of parties that were members of these associations and the role these associations played in the life of the fishing villages where they existed. How did they function as organizations and what was the nature of their effect on society? These are the basic topics underlying their nature that must be considered.

However, these matters can be clarified by examining the organizational structure of these fishing associations, how this form of organization developed during the process of establishing such associations, and the system upon which they were based.

The first fishing associations were organized starting from 1901 (Meiji 34), the year that the Fishing Industry Law was promulgated. (In the years that followed this Law was modified). It is clear that the basic law and the modifications that followed had a clear and basic influence on the nature of the Japan's fishing associations and their characteristics as organizations.

The law and its subsequently modified version were the basic factors that determined the nature of fishing associations and, at the same time, are a key to understanding the structure of such associations. The changes in the Fishing Associations that were brought about by the modifications of the Fishing Industry Law will be examined below.

Based on the original Fishing Industry Law, local fishing associations were reorganized into "Fishing Cooperative Associations." During this reorganization process, the legal content of the law was partially modified three times. The first modification to the original law occurred in 1910 (Meiji 43). As will be discussed below, the aim of this first revision of the law was the merging of many of the small, local fishing associations into "Fishing Cooperative Associations," but as will be seen, this was only the beginning of the changes to the legal basis of these organizations.

The fishing associations of the past, in addition to holding and managing the fishing rights, were also given a form of property rights and, at the same time, the economic functions of a "cooperative" were

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added that enabled them to operate in the manner of businesses. These changes occurred during the period from the end of the Meiji Period to the middle of the ensuing Taisho Period which was also the period when fishing boats were coming to be equipped with engines and was the period when the "fishing associations" began to take on economic and business-like features. It was the turning point in the development of the Japanese fishing industry's production capacity.<sup>1)</sup>

As can be seen by the factors alluded to above, during the period extending from the end of the Meiji Period through the middle of the Taisho Period, the government's fishing industry policy during this stage of the development of deep sea fishing operations was aimed at building and maintaining both deep sea fishing and coastal fishing in parallel. However, the emphasis at this period was clearly focused on coastal fishing operations. Therefore, based on the first revision to the original law, the aim of the law was to encourage multiple local fishing associations to use the same fishing-related facilities together on a cooperative basis. Thus, the "fishing association" took a first step from being the keeper of fishing rights to becoming a business cooperative type of organization. However, the major problem of the basic weakness of the fishing associations as organizations remained. From the beginning, the original law did not prevent the local fishing associations from joining together and carrying out their activities as a form of local "cooperative." Likewise, it is clear that the major aim of the first revision to the original law was to provide a legal framework for such mutual cooperation and to encourage the establishment of such cooperation. However, the perception of fishing associations held by most of the government authorities in charge of the fishing industry policy during the period was colored by doubts concerning the abilities of fishing association to function as businesses. The cooperative facilities of the fishing associations consisted mainly of selling organizations and were very simple in nature. Thus, as one opinion put it, "the operation of business operations involving the use of credit, or operations involving procurement and sales of daily life necessities and the keeping of accurate accounting records were be very difficult for them." These words, expressing the perceptions of the authorities, clearly indicate the weaknesses of the fishing associations as organizations for handling credit and sales operations. Thus, it can be seen that the conversion of the local fishing associations into cooperatives as envisioned in the first revision of the Fishing Industry Law did not necessarily indicate a significant move forward.

The government, in order to promote the reorganization of local fishing associations into cooperatives, in 1933 (Showa 8), carried out an additional partial revision of the Fishing Industry Law. This revision (Law # 33) came to be known as the "second revision." The main points of this second revision followed the main intent of the first revision, but should be viewed against the background of the efforts going on in the fishing villages related to the overall establishment of "industry associations." However, first of all, the main revisions, as they affected the fishing associations, are as follow :

- ① This second revision contained a definition of the aims of establishing the fishing cooperative. The cooperative was positioned as follows: "The establishment of facilities to be used on a cooperative basis by the fishing association members of the cooperative for their economic

development" and the content of the revision dealt directly with the nature of the operations of these cooperatives in detail. The content included guidelines concerning the following already existing fishing association activities : sales, purchases, lending, cooperative use of facilities and protection of fish farming and mutual assistance in times of maritime accidents and dangerous conditions. In addition, other contents were also added that included the establishment of mooring facilities, facilities to bring boats onto land and underwater structures to attract fish, facilities for processing fish, storing fish and transporting marine products. Concerning these items, there were guidelines for increasing such facilities and concerning expanding cooperative operations and thus the path was opened for making fishing cooperatives into self-governing entities.

- ② In order to convert the existing fishing associations into a form of organization closer in nature to a business, the following practices were adopted : co-guaranties and collective responsibility between associations and association members (Bonded liability, non-limited liability and limited liability). By introducing these forms of investment, the aim was to make the fishing association closer in nature to a cooperative.
- ③ The revision also made it possible for persons not engaged directly in fishing to become members of fishing associations.

Based on the second revision as described above, from 1934 (Showa 9) onward, the fishing associations that had been organized under the terms of the original law began to convert themselves into fishing cooperatives. However, as will be described in detail later in this paper, the fishing associations did not become credit-extending organizations in the real sense until the third revision of the Fishing Industry Law. In any event, the characteristics of the fishing association, as a fishing cooperative, were strengthened and the associations reached the stage where they became fully able to handle such functions as selling, purchasing, and other business-related functions. In actual fact, the fishing cooperatives gained the ability to compete more effectively against local mercantile capital and against the fishing industry associations and achieved the status of commercial entities in their own right.

The third revision of the Fishing Industry Law was carried out in 1938 (Showa 13). The significance of this revision was that it dealt with the important matter of fishing association finance of fishing operations and established the guidelines for such finance. It also was aimed at converting more fishing associations into the form of fishing cooperatives and helped to strengthen such organizations. The main features of the third revision were as follow :<sup>2)</sup>

- ① The revision made it possible for both the Federation of Fishing Associations and fishing cooperatives themselves to establish facilities for handling member savings.
- ② The revision also made it possible for the Federation of Fishing Associations to guarantee loans made by the Nihon Kangyo Bank, the Nihon Industrial Bank, the Hokkaido Development Bank, the Noko Bank and the Industrial Association Central Fund to the fishing associations.
- ③ The revision also made it possible for the regional offices of the Federation of Fishing

Associations to discount promissory notes submitted by the local member fishing associations.

- ④ By the terms of the third revision, regulations were established so that the local fishing associations could also accept saving deposits from non-member parties.

How was the content of the revision as described above actually reflected in the organizational form of the fishing cooperative associations? First of all, as an example, one route of finance that came to be used by the Federation of Fishing Associations and the fishing cooperative associations as well was the Industrial Association Fund. By joining the Industrial Association Fund, the fishing cooperative associations could obtain finance. When this became possible, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry used an existing policy to block the establishment of a specialized investment institution such as a Fishing Association Central Fund, even though such a form of finance was promoted as desired by such fishing industry organizations as the Imperial Marine Products Industry Association and the Dai-Nihon Marine Products Industry Association. Concerning this point, by joining the Fishing Association Central Fund, the relationships between the fishing cooperative associations and the industrial associations that could not be completely separated at the fishing village level could be maintained and at the same time, competition between them would continue and a collective order would result. Secondly, because of the undersize scale of the fishing cooperative associations and the scale of their business operations as related to the use of credit, the establishment of local federations of fishing cooperatives was stimulated. For example, in the case of savings operations, and in the case of entry into the Industrial Association Central Fund, entry was limited to prefectural level federations. The government used strong persuasion methods to get the fishing cooperative associations to organize such federations in their local prefectures in order to organize the routes by which finance would flow to the cooperatives.

Existing under the umbrella of the industrial association system, the problems concerning the establishment of financing for the fishing industry was solved, if not perfectly. As part of this solution, the organization of fishing cooperative associations headed toward completion.

## 2. The special characteristics of fishing cooperative associations

As can be seen from the above, up to this point, to bring the fishing associations into association for cooperation the principle of the cooperative as an organizing method was introduced. In addition, in order to establish a route for obtaining credit, a system of collective responsibility was also established and these factors caused an epochal change in the way in which fishing associations operated.

In 1933 (Showa 8), the year of the second revision of the Fishing Industry Law, the revision contained many elements that promoted the collectivizing of the small fishing associations into fishing cooperative associations. However, it can be seen that these measures did not achieve complete articulation throughout the industry. This can be seen by comparing the figures for establishment of fishing cooperative associations under the terms of the law. For the entire country, the number of fishing cooperative associations that were established during the first full year (1935) for which

statistics are available after the new revision went into effect (all types, including bonded liability, non-limited liability and limited liability) was only 414, including associations for which no investment of capital was made. Thus the ratio compared to the number of total fishing associations was about 10% of 4,000. In other words, the system based on collective liability did not instantly become a reality. Thus, the core of the industry was still based on "association without collective liability." Reforming the system implicit in fishing associations was a reform that was carried out as above using various methods of indirect coercion based on the Fishing Industry Law. When this reality is considered, it becomes clear why the rate of conversion was low. It is clear that the cause behind this slow rate of conversion is the inherent weaknesses of the traditional, existing fishing associations. In June 1936 (Showa 11), the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, in order to promote the collectivization process, held a meeting of the officials who had the duty of promoting the switchover in their respective prefectures. At this meeting, it was stated that there were many factors that were standing in the way of the conversion to cooperatives in the case of the project in the Sanriku area (northeastern Japan). These included "the poverty level of the fishermen making it impossible for them to invest; the small scale of the local associations and lack of specialists to help promote the conversion. The lack of ability of the local government officials to help convince the local fishermen and the competition between the industrial cooperatives and the local fishing associations" were also mentioned. Over 40 prefectures made reports at the meeting.<sup>3)</sup>

Concerning the structural weaknesses of the fishing associations, basically this can be seen as being caused by the very small scale of the associations and economic causes. However, it is important to note that lack of qualified personnel is also cited as a basic problem. One of the reasons for the low speed of conversion to cooperatives is related to the association officers. The matter of the quality of the leadership of association officials and their actual professional abilities were problems that were also discussed. Regarding these points, the type of abilities that were seen as being required in a leader included such suggested items as experience outside the fishing village and experience working at the local village government offices. The guidelines that were set down by the government included such requirements as that the leaders be persons with "superior administrative abilities" and "trustworthy persons."

Going back in time, from 1935 (Showa 10) onward, let's examine the trends in the number of fishing associations and the number of members of these associations. Briefly summarizing the situation, the two most factors to note were that the conversion to cooperatives proceeded slowly, but the scale of the fishing association size expanded. The number of fishing associations remained around 4,000 and no reduction in number can be seen. However, the number of fishing association members slowly increased. In addition, the adoption of liability systems followed the same slow upward trend. The traditional "association without monetary liability" form of operation was surpassed in number in 1938 (Showa 13). Therefore, the embodiment of the liability-based system was put into place in the eight years following the second revision of the Fishing Industry Law in 1941 (Showa 16).<sup>4)</sup>

Meanwhile, concerning the fishing association scale of organization and its economic base, it can probably be said that there was continuous development. Looking at the number of fishing

associations and the number of members, from 1935 (Showa 10) through 1941 (Showa 16), a period of six years, the number of members increased to 110,000 persons (an increase of 19%) and the average size of an association rose to 181.5 members through recruiting efforts. However, as has been stated above, it must be remembered that in the background there is the factor of permitting non-fishing personnel to become members of fishing associations so part of these results came from that factor and the increase in the number of members did not translate directly into the strengthening the fishing associations. Persons who were living in fishing villages were able to join a fishing association as non-fishing members. Merchants were also permitted to become members. The policy of permitting non-fishing members was probably aimed at allowing non-fishing residents of the fishing villages to participate in selling and credit features of the associations. This meant that the fishing association became a source of help in times when the economy turned down.

In addition, the fishing associations that adopted a system of investment in the association as of 1935 (Showa 10), were only 9 % percent of total fishing associations, only 365 associations. The total investment was 331,988 yen, but in 1941 (Showa 16), the number of fishing cooperative associations had risen eight-fold to 2,946 associations. The total investment in associations had expanded by 32 times to 10,639,195 yen.

As can be seen from the above, these figures represent the trends for the entire country. In comparison to these trends, what was the situation for the fishing villages of the Sanriku area?

First, let's look at the numbers of fishing associations in Iwate Prefecture that had converted to fishing cooperative associations. Special features of the conversion process in Iwate Prefecture were that the rate of conversion to fishing cooperative associations differed slightly from the national trends and that the conversion process proceeded smoothly. By the time of the second revision in 1933 (Showa 8), the number of fishing cooperative associations had reached 63. This number includes many of the previously existing traditional fishing cooperatives that formed cooperatives. In addition, there was some movement in the numbers later, but as of 1939 (Showa 14), the number was 64, indicating that there had not been much change. However, during the early period, the growth rate of the conversion to cooperative has been relatively rapid in the Sanriku fishing villages. By around 1937 (Showa 12), the growth of new cooperatives was said to be over. With regard to the number of members as well, there were small changes and by 1933 (Showa 8), the number was 12,618 members (average per cooperative: 200 member). By 1939 (Showa 14), this number had risen by 2,173 to 14,791 members (average: 230 members). When these numbers are examined overall, it is possible see the rate of speed with which the number of cooperative collectivization process progressed in the Sanriku fishing villages.

The rate of speed with which this process took place in the Sanriku area that was pointed out as a special feature of the Sanriku area can probably be explained as being partly the effect of the unprecedented damage the area incurred from what became known as the Sanriku Tsunami (Tidal Wave). In the period that followed, the efforts of all the fishing associations along the entire coast were directed to recovering from this massive natural disaster, and the disaster provided to be an opportunity to the associations for reorganization amidst an atmosphere in the fishing villages that worked to make such change acceptable. The organizational form based on investment spread and of

the 59 cooperatives existing at this time, 78% (46 associations) had already by 1937 (Showa 12) begun operation as cooperatives based on investment from members. The investment in these 46 cooperatives climbed to a total of 75,000 yen with average investment coming to 6,430 yen. (In the following year, the total investment grew to 143,000 yen). When the figures for the accumulated reserves of these cooperatives are examined, in 1933 (Showa 8), the reserves of the existing 57 cooperatives of 66,000 yen were shown in their financial reports. However, in 1939 (Showa 14), the same 57 cooperatives showed a total of 205,200 yen (an average of 36,000 yen per cooperative) and a growth of 3.1 times. In addition, using their loans as a barometer of their financial condition, the records show that their loans had grown to very large sums and from 1933 (Showa 8) onward, the amount was above 2,500,000 yen. Most these loans were related to projects related to efforts to recover from the effects of the disaster being carried out by the various cooperatives.

The development of the Sanriku area of these fishing cooperative associations can be seen from examples of the individual associations compared to the cooperative organizations. Let's examine the case of the Nodaura fishing cooperative association in the Kunohe-gun village of Tamura located to the north of the Sanriku Coast. This fishing cooperative had 309 members in 1935 (Showa 10) and was an association that was re-established on the principle of financial liability guarantees for all members. The aim here is to examine the various problems that arose during the period from when this fishing cooperative association was established in 1936 (Showa 11) through until its reorganization into a Fishing Industry Association in 1943 (Showa 18), and the fluctuations in its membership.<sup>5)</sup>

First, let's look at the special characteristics of its membership. First of all, at the time when this association was first established, about 40% of its total membership consisted of non-fishing members. This association was organized using the method of inviting all residents of the village to join the association. The previously existing association based on possession of fishing rights faded into the background and the new association took on the characteristics of a village enterprise. However, as it developed in later years, it gradually became an association built around fishing operations. This is indicated by the composition of its membership. The number of fishing members increased by 18. In contrast, the non-fishing members declined by 19. The "other" members also declined by 8. These figures show clearly the change in this organization to a new orientation for the organization. This change in the characteristics of this fishing cooperative association began to appear around 1940 (Showa 15) as a turning point. In this year, there was one fishing member dropout, and 5 persons who were farmers by occupation also left. When the other departing persons are added, the total comes to 9 persons that left the organization. A probable reason for this was the increase in the required investment for membership. The required investment for membership, which until 1939 (Showa 14), was 30 yen per member. However in this year, this sum was raised to 50 yen per member. In addition to raising the required basic investment unit from amount from 30 to 50 yen, it was further required that each member hold 2 units or more. The membership had been centered mainly on fishing members and although their numbers varied upward and downward slightly each year, it continued to be around the 190-member level. The Noda-ura Fishing Cooperative Association had begun with a membership of 309 members and it had succeeded in recruiting into membership

the entire adult population, including non-fishing residents, into the original association. However, it is possible to conjecture that the damage caused by the tsunami had been too big so that the composition of the membership began to change. In 1933 (Showa 8), 96 members had previously been persons involved in collecting edible seaweed, and in 1933 the total membership expanded to 293 members.

### 3. Cooperative business ventures carried by Fishing Cooperative Associations

As of December 1934 (Showa 9), the association regulations were revised and because of this revision, from the following year onward, the policy of converting the fishing associations into industrial associations was launched. This was the start of government efforts to bring about significant changes in the organizational structure of the fishing associations. At the early stages of this policy, what did this mean for fishing cooperative associations in terms of change? Before examining the nature of the reorganization itself, let's examine first in outline the business operations of the fishing cooperative associations.

The total number of joint-use facilities based on cooperative projects carried out by all of the business associations of all types in Japan as of 1934 (Showa 9) was 4,241 projects carried out by 2,091 associations. Categorizing the projects by type, in order of the number of projects, the highest ratio was accounted for by fishing associations, about 50% of the total. This was followed by projects carried out by fish and other marine product breeding organizations (861 associations) that account for 41.2% percent of the total. Of the total organizations, 35.8% (749) were carrying on business activities related to loaning out money.

In other words, at the point time just before the advent of the major change in the organization structure of the fishing cooperative associations described above, most of these associations were involved in one or more of the three major categories of projects: cooperative selling operations, breeding projects and lending operations as their main forms of business activity. The question is what happened in the period that followed concerning changes that occurred related to these operations of the fishing cooperative associations? Let's compare the characteristics of the situation for both the entire country and the prefecture level.

The business operations of the fishing cooperative associations can be roughly divided into two areas. One of these categories is operations where the basis of the activity has a significant element of cooperative characteristics. These are the type of cooperative operations that are defined in the Fishing Law, Clause 43. The facilities that are used cooperatively consist of three categories: cooperative sales, purchasing and fund lending operations. Concerning the categories indicated here, comparing the situation as of 1935 (Showa 10), and as of 1939 (Showa 14), let's examine the changes that occurred. First, let's look at the changes on the national level. As of 1935 (Showa 10), the category of cooperative operation projects was the highest and accounted for 27.6%, followed by cooperative funds lending operations that accounted for 23.8%. In comparison to this, the cooperative procurement-related and cooperative facility use projects accounted for 8.1% and 7.0%, respectively, a very low level. Rephrasing this, based on the cooperative conversion process, the main association

operations had become limited to cooperative sales operations and fund lending operations, and the number of operations projects had declined. If this situation is looked at in terms of business operations projects only, it is probably fair to say that the process of conversion, by the measure of the success of this process as actual cooperative projects, had not penetrated very far and cannot be evaluated very highly. However, in 1939 (Showa 14), the results for the categories of cooperative projects expanded the numbers of procurement, and joint use projects carried out that had been very low suddenly increased 45.8% and 16.3% respectively. In addition, projects in the joint selling and fund lending categories increased 38.1% and 32.8%, respectively, and the imbalance between the categories tended to disappear. Needless to say, it is not very difficult to trace the cause for this expansion in the number of projects overall to the third revision of the Fishing Industry Law. This can be seen clearly from the increase in loaning of funds of over ten million yen and the increase in savings operations, etc. in the credit category.

Keeping the above national level changes in mind, let's compare this to the local Iwate Prefecture level and in the Sanriku fishing village fishing cooperative associations. In 1935 (Showa 10), let's look at the numbers of fishing cooperative projects carried out. For the cooperative selling projects, 91.5% of the cooperative were carrying out such projects. For funds lending projects, the level was 86.4% of cooperatives. For cooperative sales projects, the level was 42.3%. These ratios, when compared to the national averages for the prefectures were well above the national levels for the three main categories of operations projects. The tendency toward high levels was especially prominent in the case of selling projects and correlates with high levels of catches for that year in that area. In other words, in 1934 (Showa 9), the cooperative selling projects carried out by the coastal fishing organizations in Iwate Prefecture involved 74.6% of the 59 associations, or 44 associations in number. The total value of these sales rose to 2,651,340 yen. When this figure is compared to the figure for 1928 (Showa 3) that involved 19 associations and amounted to 524,884 yen, the number of associations was 3.3 times larger and the sales value was 4.72 times as large in 1934. However, these increases correlated very closely to the size of the catches. In the case of the Sanriku fishing villages that had a record of high production strength, it is possible to see a close correlation between the sales operations and the size of the catches.

The ratios of participation in cooperative projects in 1939 (Showa 14) were as follows. For cooperative sales operation, the participation ratio was 94.9% and for funds lending was 76.2%. As for the procurement category, the level was 66.1%. These levels were also above the national averages as was the case for 1935 (Showa 10). However, one special factor that should be noted was that the rate of increase in the procurement category was relatively low and that there was a decline in the number of projects in the funds-lending category. In the case of the Sanriku fishing village fishing cooperative associations, virtually all sales projects were handled by the associations. The reason for this is that, unlike fund lending and other business-related categories, sales is still heavily influenced by the traditional concept of fishing rights and perhaps this indicated that this manner of thinking had changed very little among the various fishing associations in this area. The declining trend in the participation ratio for fund lending may be conjectured to be an indication that the requirements stipulated in the third revision of the Fishing Law had not been met. In any event, it is

probably easy to detect signs of the spread of a more highly controlled type of organization than the organization that characterized the rapid and deep penetration of the cooperative concept in the early period.

The procurement operations carried by the fishing cooperative associations, compared to the sales operations, were very small in volume and were not regarded as very important. However, when one considers that it was a wartime period during which there were heavy economic restrictions, it is possible to say that in fact the procurement operations carried by the fishing cooperative associations were, given the situation, very large. That is to say, the procurement operations did not only include items necessary for fishing operations, but included many of the necessities of daily life, and the fishing folk of the area played an important role in the supply and distribution areas. Concerning this period, what special feature did the procurement activities of the fishing cooperative associations exhibit? Let's look at the situation in the case of the Nodaura Fishing Cooperative Association.

The type of products that were handled in the case of these procurement activities can roughly be divided into two categories, consisting of items needed for fishing operations and daily life necessities (items in the general economy). Let's have a look at the first category. These fishing-use items were power-related petroleum products such as kerosene, cotton cord, hemp rope, cotton netting such as fishing nets, wire rope, carbide, fishing gut, fishing equipment, straw matting, empty cans, rubber products and boxes made of wood for transporting fish. The list includes more than ten different categories of manufactured products. (Of all these items, the one for which demand was highest in the case of the records for Showa 14 was fishing netting.)

In the case of the procurement operations, there were several features of relevance. The first example concerns the size of the actual catches that are prevailing at any given time versus the supply of fishing-related items available. There is, of course, a close correlation between catch size and demand for such items. It is clear that the more fish that are caught, the greater amounts of these products that will be needed. In 1936 (Showa 11), the demand amounted to more than 12,718 yen. "Last year, in addition to the fact that the catches were relatively large, the prices were good and the members were able to enjoy good economic conditions and this was a very happy thing." This line is a good indication of the direct connection between the size of catches and the increase in demand. In addition, in 1937 (Showa 12), the demand for fishing-related items dropped by 50%, but from the following year through 1940 (Showa 15), with the upturn in the size of catches, the demand for fishing-related items expanded explosively. Then, from 1941 (Showa 16) onward, demand went into a declining trend and with the outbreak of the War in The Pacific, this trend become even more pronounced. Virtually every type of item was in short supply and, in addition, the fishing environment worsened and the procurement abilities of the cooperative declined rapidly. The second example involves the supply route for fishing-related items. The sole route was designated to be through the cooperatives and this brought about closer relationships between the cooperative and the members in the area of fishing items. Based on the purchase-on-credit system with the rule that the account must be paid up within the given year, the supply operations related to fishing items led to the accumulation of debt, and with the prolongation of payment terms, this was solved temporarily. When the amount of unpaid debts related to the purchase of fishing items purchased-on-credit is

investigated for the period leading up to 1940 (Showa 15), it is clear that the total rose in two-year cycles. For example, in 1937 (Showa 12), the total demand for fishing related items amounted to 6,678.79 yen. However, the amount of money collected by the cooperative was a mere 57.25 yen. This was a collection of 0.85%. For the following year, the demand increased to 23,663 yen and with this, the amount of the related uncollected debt rapidly shot up to 5,562.77 yen (collection ratio: 23.5%). In 1939 (Showa 14) and 1940 (Showa 15), the same type of phenomena could be observed.

Next, let's look at the situation concerning the supply of daily life necessities. The items in this category that were supplied by the cooperatives in 1939 (Showa 14) were limited to mainly rice, charcoal, straight-grained hinoki wood and some others. In 1938 (Showa 13), the value of the rice supplied by the cooperative was 3,583 yen and this accounted for 99.9% of the value of the daily necessity items that were supplied. The procurement operations which were centered on rice from 1940 (Showa 15) onward were subjected to rationing restrictions a overall shortage appeared and continued without abating. During this period of shrinking supplies, the number of types of items supplied increased. For example, the items handled grew to include such items as work gloves, knit sweaters, working clothes, aizome wear, regular gloves, socks and other items of clothing. Other items that were available included sweet potatoes, wheat flour, salt, acetic acid, and other food products. When these items were added together, the number of products being supplied increased by more than ten types of products. As can be seen from the foregoing, the weight shifted from the supply of rice to the supply of daily life necessities. This shift persisted while the wartime rationing system was functioning. It can be seen from these examples that the role of the cooperative penetrated deeply into the everyday life of the fishing population.

Lastly, I would like to briefly discuss the relationship between the coastal fishing grounds and the fishing cooperative associations.

There is one more area of activity that involves cooperative operation and concerning the local fishing cooperatives significantly involved. This includes such items as protection and breeding of natural marine products through the construction of underwater structures designed to attract fish. There are also projects to develop moorings and storage places for fishing boats that must be built and maintained. In addition, there is the important function of handling accidents and other life-threatening incidents at sea, and other activities that are related to the production of marine products and related activities. The content of these different areas of activities can thus be examined, in comparison to the areas of cooperative activity defined in Clause 43 of the Fishing Industry Law such as sales, procurement, lending of funds and the joint use of facilities, plus items related to distribution, finance, and credit-related cooperative activities. The activities that are being referred to here were, in the past, the central tasks of the traditional fishing associations. These tasks included the protection and breeding of marine product resources, the construction of moorings and storage places for fishing boats and the life-saving functions connected with marine disasters, all of which have a close relationship to fishing grounds and marine product production. Likewise, the accomplishment of these tasks involved the special skills that the cooperative and its members have, and are related to the fishing rights that permitted the associations to carry out these functions.<sup>6)</sup>

During the Showa Period, the Sanriku fishing villages met with an unprecedented era of economic downturn, and this was followed by an additional blow resulting from the tsunami that struck their area. This disaster strongly affected every inhabitant in this area without exception. The government, as a method of rehabilitating the economies of these fishing villages, in 1933 (Showa 8), revised the existing Fishing Industry Law and established a policy of promoting and strengthening the functions of the fishing associations. However, these policies of strengthening of the functions of the fishing associations and the increasing of their role were aimed at a more advanced development of the fishing associations than that implied by the wording describing the traditional perceptions of their role. This was expressed in the phrase, "The associations have the fishing rights or the rights to purchase fish caught and also extends the use of these rights to association members and promotes the joint use of fishing facilities." The aim was to make these organizations stronger business entities than the traditional associations that were based on control of rights. The realities related to the fishing grounds were overlooked. In addition, these cooperative joint activities were part of the overall plan aimed at promoting the economic recovery of these areas. Government funds were supplied for new projects such as additional construction of joint-use handling facilities, workshops, new installations of machinery and the construction of new fishing port moorings and storage, and these promotional activities became one of the key forces behind the modernization of fishing in Japan.

The input into Iwate Prefecture of government funds related to the marine products industry in 1932 (Showa 7) in the form of grants for the purpose of building and repairing fishing port facilities was 18,750 yen. The grants for additional mooring and storage facilities for fishing boats and facilities to launch and remove fishing boats to and from the ocean amounted to 90,999 yen. The total amount was 109,749 yen received as grants. In addition, in 1933 (Showa 8), the additional grants for repair and construction of fishing port facilities was 93,750 yen and for the other facilities was increased to 231,999 yen. Thus, in the second, this represented a 3-fold increase. This signified the use of grants as part of basic fishing industry policy. The concept "community" was gradually transformed into the concept of "cooperation." This came to mean ① cooperative sales operations for the sale of catches, and ② the standardization of fishing equipment, and the control of fishing methods such as systems of fishing season rules, and other practices as sweeps of the shallows and the throwing of large stones into the ocean to drive fish in the desired direction. These new control policies helped to protect the fishing grounds. The use of grants also brought about a change away from the emphasis on breeding to an increased emphasis on fishing operations. In addition, amidst the growing efforts to rehabilitate the economy, competition began to develop among the Fishing Industry Associations.

In the case of the village that failed to take advantages of the programs to modernize the fishing industry, after the changes in the cooperatives, the continued to carry out "joint" activities based on the theme of "cooperation." It can be seen here that the liability-based fishing cooperatives functioned "not to promote the development of the economic environment of the fishing folk, but rather to stabilize this environment, and did not promote the division of the fishermen into different classes, but rather worked to prevent this."

#### 4. In closing

The process of converting fishing associations into fishing cooperative associations in the period before World War II took place in a period during which a World Depression took place and during which there was a war going on. In other words, Japanese capitalism moved from a turbulent first phase into a second phase of economic confusion that turned into a situation of wartime controls on the economy. However, in the fishing villages in the Sanriku area, this historical period of economic downturn and government control of the economy was, at the same time, also the period when this area was struck by an immense tsunami in 1933 (Showa 8). In this paper, we have examined the establishment of fishing cooperative associations and their structure as organizations. From 1935 onward, there was strong competition from the fishing village industrial associations and in fighting that has been discussed. Below, there are two important points concerning these relationships with the fishing village industrial associations that summarize this matter :

- (1) Up to the present point, the process of converting fishing associations to fishing cooperatives and their activities and the activities of the fishing villages' industrial associations have not been given much weight in the discussion. However, the process of the development of both the fishing village industrial associations and the fishing cooperative associations are intricately inter-related. The meaning here is that in order to understand the fishing cooperative associations, for the purpose of analyzing the fishing village industrial associations, there is a need to consider new topics and points of view.
- (2) Among the fishing villages, the fishing village industrial associations have a close affinity to the other organizations and the fishing village industrial associations established a position for themselves in the villages where they operated. In the background, they were performing many of the same functions as the fishing cooperative associations and the basic environ determined arbitrarily where they were established. After the end of the war, the Marine Products Industry Cooperative Associations Law included the industrial cooperatives that had been established in regional areas, and it was intended to be a solution to "association problems," a subject that should also be carefully studied.

#### References

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- 6) Information can be obtained from the Fishing Cooperative Association Operations Reports.