Symposium

Deterioration of Fisheries in Ariake Sea Resulted from the Reclamation of Isahaya Bay

Date:
Thursday, 9 November 2017,
19:00 – 21:30

Venue:
AVANCE, 3rd Training Room, 4th Floor
Dondondonnomori Park, 3-2-11 Tenjin, Saga-shi
10 minutes from AWS Venue Hotel Grande Hagakure

Organisers:
Association of Researchers Calling for the Opening the Floodgates in Isahaya Bay
Ariake Sea Network of Fishermen and Citizens

Sponsor:
Ramsar Network Japan

Admission
Free of Charge! for Overseas AWS Participants and for those who bring a Magazine "Environment and Fisheries in the Ariake Sea"
Others: JPY 500 for the material

[Programme]

Isahaya Bay Reclamation Project
—the most devastating wetland destruction in Japan—
Takayuki JINNAI, Ariake Sea Network of Fishermen and Citizens

The important role of the soft mudflats supporting fishery
Masanori SATO, Professor, Research Field in Science, Science and Engineering Area, Kagoshima University

Ecosystem crisis of Ariake Bay caused by the construction of dikes in Isahaya Bay.
Hiroaki TSUTSUMI, Professor, Faculty of Environmental & Symbiotic Sciences, Prefectural University of Kumamoto

Talks and Photos
"Fishery in Ariake Sea, Yesterday and Today"
Nobukiyo HIRAKATA, Oura Branch, Ariake Fishery Cooperative in Saga
Hidenori MATSUNAGA, Konagai Fishery Cooperative in Nagasaki
Kango NAKAO, Photographer of Ariake Sea

Questions and Answers / Discussion

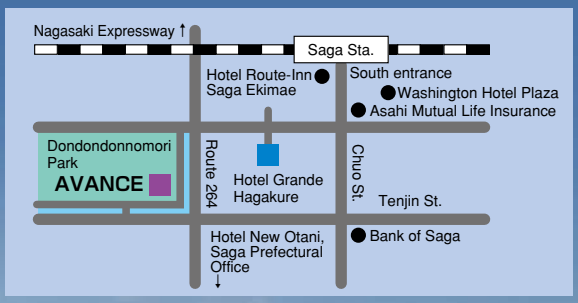
[Rationale]

Under the Isahaya Bay Reclamation Project, Isahaya Bay was closed off from the rest of the Ariake Sea by a dike in 1997, destroying the vast tidal flats in the bay and living organisms that inhabited there. This incident made the headlines both at home and abroad. Ever since, fisheries in the Ariake Sea has been on the decline. The third-party committee made a proposal to the government to open the floodgates of the dike and carry out medium- and long-term surveys. And the court ordered the government to open the floodgates and conduct the surveys, but the government refused to follow the orders and this spring (2017) Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery announced the government's policy not to open the floodgates.

Asian Wetland Symposium 2017 will be held this November in Saga City that faces the Ariake Sea. The symposium, which is related to the Ramsar Convention, will attract many individuals who are committed to wetland conservation from around Asia and other parts of the world and from Japan.

The organisers are holding an independent symposium on this occasion to provide a chance to hear reports of those scientists that have been studying the issues related to reclamation of Isahaya Bay, and the voice of fisher people in Ariake Sea directly. Development projects are causing troubles in many places in Asia such as weirs and estuary dams that halt the flow of water and degrade the environment of tidal flats or brackish water area. It would be a good chance to share opinions and considerations on the conservation and restoration of tidal flats.

Interpretation in English is provided and non-Japanese-speaking participants are most welcome.



[Demonstration on the sea appealing for opening the floodgates in 2017]

[For Information]
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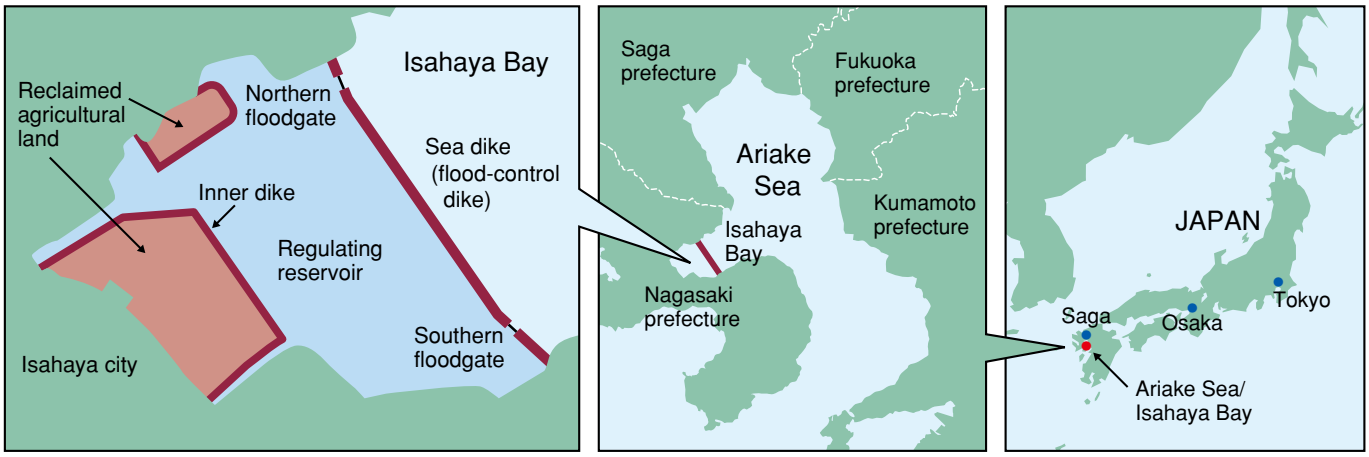
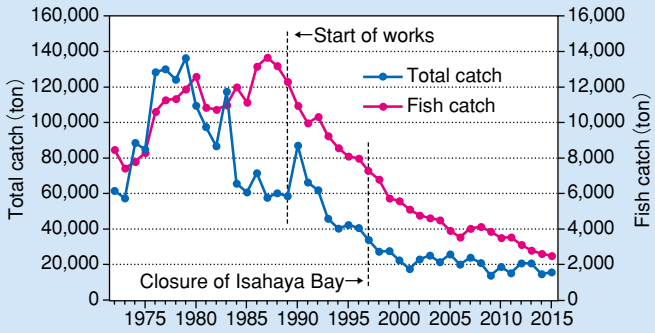
http://www.ariake-gyomin.net

Isahaya Bay Reclamation Project

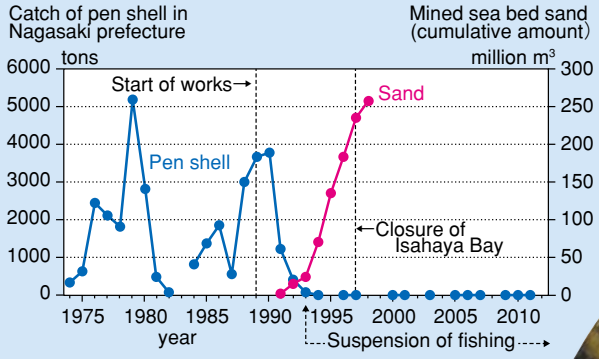


Isahaya Bay is situated on the mid-western part of the Ariake Sea. Inner part of the Bay (approx. 3,550 ha) was shut off from the rest of the Ariake Sea by a sea dike which stretches about 7 km across the bay. A double dike system of land reclamation where a regulating reservoir (2,600 ha) was constructed inside the sea dike.

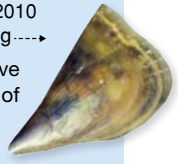
Farmland of 942 ha of was developed inside the inner dike. Total project cost is JPY 253.3 billion. (USD 2.2 billion.). The reclamation works commenced in 1989, the closure of project area from the rest of Ariake Sea in 1997, and the project completed in 2008.



Changes in the total catch and the fish catch in the Ariake Sea. The vertical dotted lines show 1989 when the reclamation works started and 1997 when the dike in the Isahaya Bay was closed.



Catch of pen shell in Nagasaki Prefecture and cumulative amounts of sea bed sand mined from the bay mouth of Isahaya by the reclamation work



Pen shell "Tairagi"

The vast lost tidal flat was one of the major breeding grounds for endemic species such as the Blue-spotted mudskipper and Fiddler crab. It was also a globally important stopover site for migratory waterbirds. The 2,900 ha of lost wetland represents the largest tidal flat destruction in Japan. The loss of vast tidal flat, which used to be a nursery ground for fish, having an excellent purification function, was to impact fisheries in the inner sea in the subsequent years.

Three years after the closure, in December 2000, a massive red tide involving *Rhizosolenia* occurred, and hit nori seaweed aquaculture severely in the entire Ariake Sea. The fishermen's opposition was intense, and it became a big social problem known as the "Ariake Environmental Tumult". For 17 years since then, the Ariake Sea has not been restored, and the damage to the local fishery has become serious year by year.

In order to achieve the social mission of revitalising the Ariake Sea, and to build a society where agriculture and fisheries are mutually prosperous, the open-gate investigation re-introducing salt water into the regulating reservoir, though only a first step, must be carried out. It is the step toward realising the sustainable society that the Ramsar Convention calls for. It is also a request from international community.

The sea dike across Isahaya Bay

▼Please read our journal.
"Environment and fisheries in the Ariake Sea"
http://www.ariake-gyomin.net/info/171107aef04.pdf