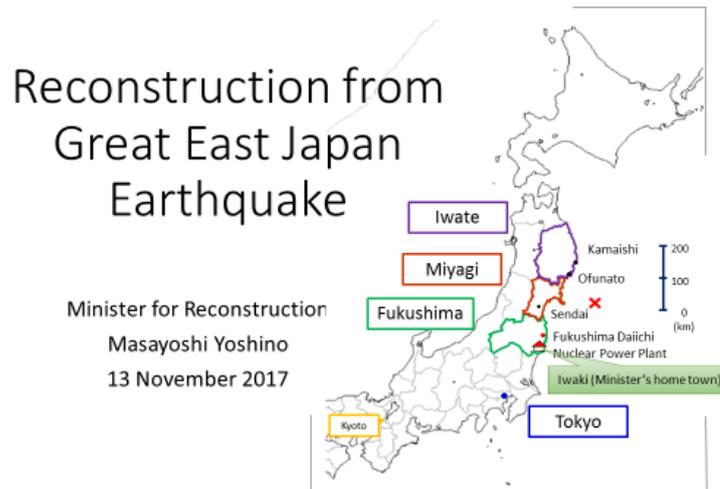


Minister Yoshino's Keynote Speech at the Luncheon Plenary of the
U.S.-Japan Council Annual Conference
"Reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake"
(November 13, 2017, Washington DC)

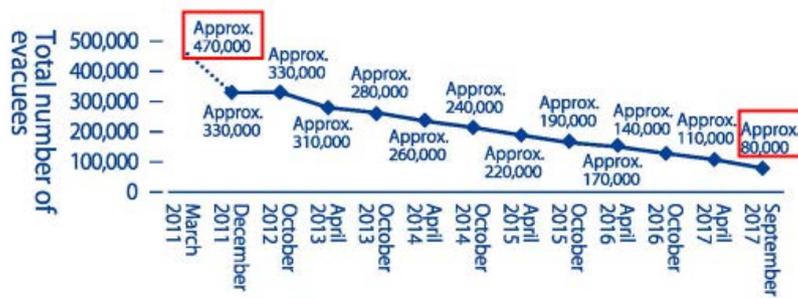


Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. I am Masayoshi Yoshino, Minister for Reconstruction. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to deliver the keynote speech at this important meeting. Today, I would like to talk to you about the state of reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake, and offer a message to everyone in the United States.

On March 11, 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake, an unprecedented disaster, occurred in Japan. The coastal areas of the Tohoku region, including Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima, suffered extensive damage from the tsunami. Simultaneously, the nuclear power station accident happened. My home in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture was also damaged by the tsunami. Immediately after the disaster, U.S. forces in Japan carried out large-scale support activities named "Operation Tomodachi." From the United States, we received tremendous support in many other ways as well. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to the people of the United States and to Ambassador John V. Roos, who was devoted to supporting us as Ambassador to Japan at that time.

Ambassador Roos was also a proponent of the "Tomodachi Initiative," a public-private partnership for reconstruction. Under the "Tomodachi Initiative," meaningful programs, including exchanges between young people in the disaster-affected areas and the United States, as well as visits by U.S. companies to these areas, have been organized. The Reconstruction Agency is also involved to the best of our ability.

Total number of evacuees

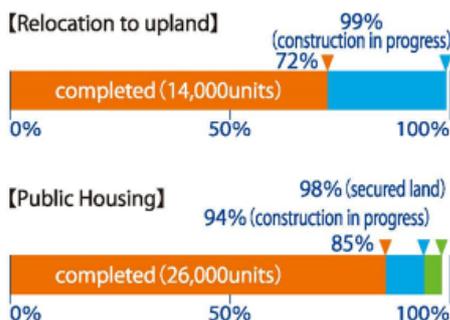


*As of September 30, 2017

Thanks to the efforts of so many people and their support including that of international society, reconstruction is moving steadily ahead.

Infrastructure in the disaster-affected areas, such as schools, hospitals, and roads, has mostly been restored and the number of evacuees, which was 470,000 at its peak, has now decreased to about 80,000.

Reconstruction of towns and housings



*As of June 30, 2017

The rebuilding of housing is also moving ahead step-by-step. The rebuilding of housing and towns will be 90% complete by next spring. Our aim is to complete the reconstruction of the tsunami-affected areas of Miyagi and Iwate in 10 years after the earthquake, that is, by March 2021.

Kamaishi-city
(Just after the earthquake)



This is the state of a residential area in Kamaishi City in Iwate Prefecture, one of the towns where U.S. rescue teams were active during the disaster. As you can see, many of the homes had been washed away and destroyed by the tsunami.

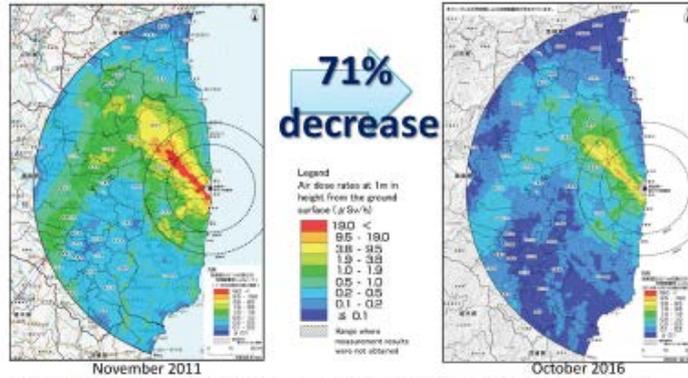
Today, land in this residential area has been elevated and the transfer of land for housing is being carried out (*show photos of replotted land). Kamaishi City has been selected as the host city for the 2019 Rugby World Cup.

Kamaishi-City (October 2017)



Changes in Air Dose Rate

• The average air dose rate at 1m in height from the ground surface at a distance within 80km from Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station decreased by about 71%* compared to levels in November 2011.



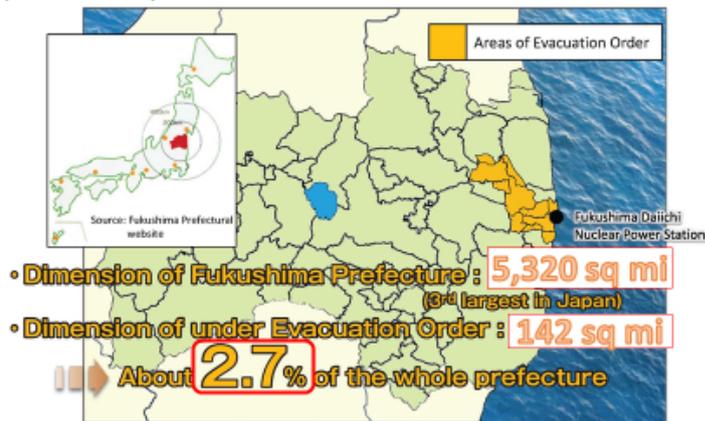
*The target area is divided into 250 m grid meshes and the value is calculated from the ratio of the measurement results in the central point of each grid mesh. The rate of reduction may differ when other comparative methods are used.
 Source: Nuclear Regulation Authority, "Measurement Results of Monitoring by Aircraft in Fukushima Prefecture and Neighboring Prefectures"
 Most recent data: <https://radioactivity.nra.go.jp/en/>

Next, I would like to talk about the state of reconstruction from the nuclear accident.

The air dose rate within 49-mile radius from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant has decreased by about 71% compared to eight months after the accident.

Reconstruction and Recovery of Fukushima: Status of the Areas under Evacuation Orders ①

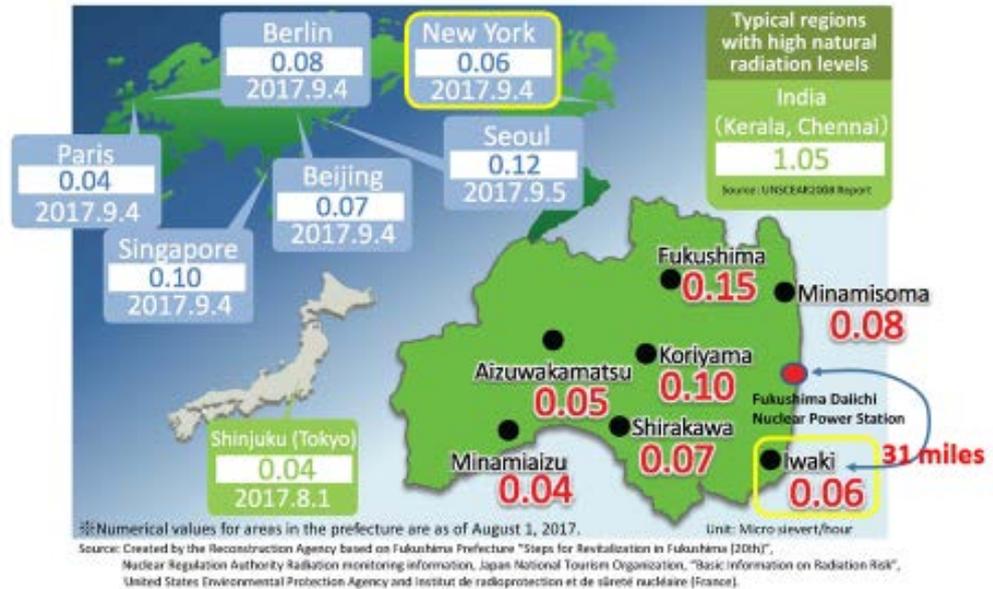
Dimension of areas under evacuation order is about 2.7 % of the whole prefecture.
 People in 97.3% of the prefecture can live a normal life.



The area of Fukushima Prefecture is roughly about the same size as the State of Connecticut. Of this, only 2.7% is still under evacuation orders from the nuclear accident. This corresponds to an area of about the size of six Manhattan islands.

Current State of Air Dose Rates within Fukushima: Comparisons with Other Parts of the World

• The air dose rate in Fukushima Prefecture is about the same level as other major cities overseas.



When we compare the air dose rate in various places around Fukushima Prefecture with other cities throughout the world, we can see that the rates in major cities in Fukushima Prefecture do not differ significantly from many cities around the world. The rate of Iwaki City, my home town, which is 31 miles from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, is almost the same as the rate in New York.

Adoption of the World's Strictest Level of Standard Limits as Set in Scientific Basis

(Unit : Bq/kg)

Japan		EU	USA	CODEX			
General Foods	100	Food except Minor Food	1250	Food	1,200	Foods other than Infant Foods	1,000
Infant Foods	50	Infant Food	400			Infant Foods	1,000

In relation to the nuclear accident, I would like to talk about Japan's approach to food safety.

As a result of measures to reduce radioactive substances in foods, the safety of foods distributed on both domestic and international markets has been secured. We are also conducting tests on radioactive substances using the world's strictest level of standard limits that have been set based on scientific evidence to ensure that only those foods that meet standards are distributed on the market.

The standard limit in Japan is that general foods that exceed the limit of 100 Becquerels per kilogram are not released on the market. In comparison, the upper limit set in the United States is 1,200 Becquerels per kilogram.

Initiatives for the Safety and Security of Food in Fukushima Prefecture

State of monitoring of agricultural, forestry and fishery products produced in Fukushima Prefecture (April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017)
※ Monitoring for brown rice only was conducted from August 24, 2016 to March 1, 2017.

Classification	Total No. samples	No. of samples exceeding standard limits	Proportion of samples exceeding standard limits
 Brown rice (produced 2016)	Approx. 10.24 million	0	0.00%
 Vegetables & Fruits	3,793	0	0.00%
 Livestock products	4,384	0	0.00%
 Cultivated edible Mushrooms	1,049	0	0.00%
 Marine Fishery products	8,766	0	0.00%
 Inner water-cultivated fish	118	0	0.00%
 Wild edible plants & Mushrooms	783	2	0.26%
 Inland water Fishery products	621	4	0.64%

No products were over standard limits
 ▶ Safe shipment
 ▶ Continued inspections towards the lifting of restrictions

Restrictions of distributions are instructed on each production area for items that are in excess of standard limits

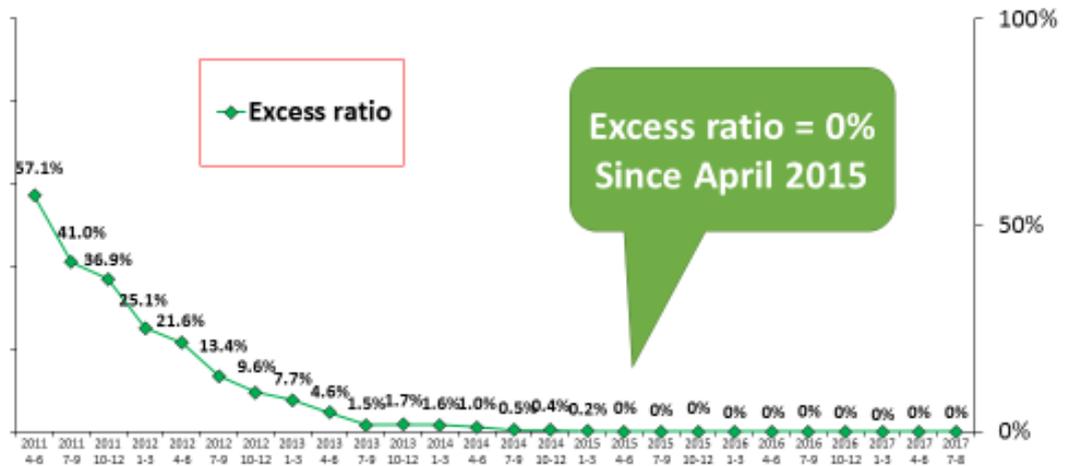
Speaking of radioactive substances contained in Japanese food, the figures for vegetables, tea, and livestock products have not exceeded standards for the past five years.

Initiatives for Inspections of All Bags of Rice in Fukushima Prefecture



No bags of rice produced since 2015 have exceeded standards. This is how we inspect bags of rice one-by-one.

Results of Surveys of Marine Fishery Products in Fukushima Prefecture

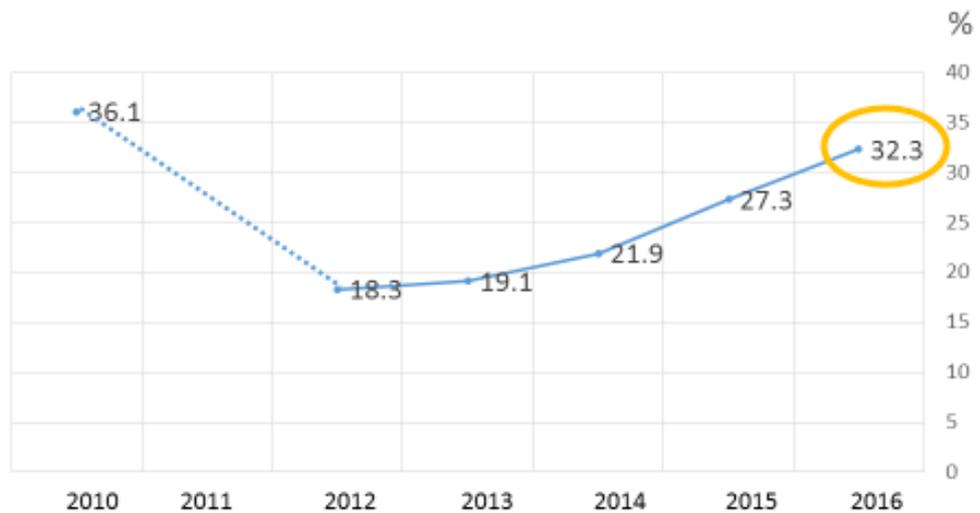


The proportion of marine products produced in Fukushima Prefecture that exceed standards has been zero % since April 2015.

Our actions on the safety management and monitoring systems for food in Japan have been evaluated by international organizations, such as IAEA and FAO, as appropriate.

At the U.S.-Japan economic dialogue, discussions were held on U.S. regulations that originated with the nuclear accident and a gradual elimination and relaxation of such regulations has been carried out.

Utilization of local food for school lunches in Fukushima Prefecture (%)



Though the demand of the products from Fukushima fell immediately after the earthquake, the demand is recovering among Japanese consumers. The use of local products in school meals in Fukushima Prefecture also fell immediately after the earthquake, but it has currently recovered to nearly the same level as before the earthquake.

Ryusendo



Lastly, I would like to talk about the appeal of the Tohoku region. This is a limestone cave in Iwate Prefecture called Ryusendo (*Show photos of Ryusendo.) The spring water of Ryusendo has an old legend that it is able to “lengthen people’s lives by three years with just one sip.” It has been carefully protected by the local people, together with the surrounding environment. Today, we have placed coffee made with this water in the conference bags of everyone here today. You cannot drink the coffee at this conference, but please try it at home.

There are many scenic spots in the Tohoku region, offering beautiful views throughout the year where you can enjoy leisure activities in attractive natural settings. There are also a number of heritage sites. Please take a look at the tourism promotion streaming produced by Japan National Tourism Organization.

(Streaming : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aNqJA517Oc>

UNEXPECTED JAPAN –THE TREASURELAND, TOHOKU (JNTO))



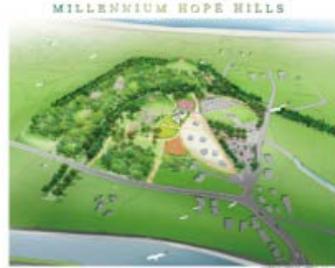
Copy Right: Yahoo! JAPAN, Tohoku Yell Market



Copy Right: Yahoo! JAPAN, Tohoku Yell Market



If you have an opportunity to visit the Tohoku region, please enjoy the fresh seafood. Peaches from Fukushima Prefecture are luxury goods that are also popular in overseas markets, with many peaches exported mainly to markets in Southeast Asia. The Tohoku region is also famous for Japanese sake. Fukushima Prefecture took first place and Miyagi Prefecture ranked second in gold medal awards for new sake at this year's exhibitions. Fukushima Prefecture has also held on to the top position for five consecutive years at this competition.



Source: Fukushima Offshore Wind Consortium
Floating Offshore Wind Farm Demonstration Project (Offshore of Fukushima)
(Sequential start of wind turbine operations from fiscal 2013)



With a magnitude of 9.0, the Great East Japan Earthquake was the fourth largest earthquake in the world since 1900. A total of 19,575 lives were lost and 2,577 people are still missing. The number of buildings that were completely destroyed has reached about 120 thousand. Even after experiencing such a catastrophe, the people in the affected areas not only moved forward with reconstruction, they also systematized the lessons learned from the earthquake to pass on to future generations and developed industries in new ways. There is so much knowledge in these areas that we would like to share with the people of the United States. In that sense as well, I believe that the visiting program to these areas being carried out by the “Tomodachi Initiative” is very significant.

The “Tomodachi Initiative” has made it possible for Americans and Japanese, many in the disaster-affected areas, to face difficulties, share knowledge, and shape the future together. I would like to conclude my remarks by once again expressing my gratitude and respect to the United States government and the U.S.-Japan Council, who are taking the lead in this grand initiative.