

“International Mountain Day”

Mitigating Disasters through
Preserving Mountains and their
Environment

Japanese Experiences

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Greetings from Japan & Celebrating International Mountain Day !

- My name is Hitoshi IGARASHI from Japan. I teach at the Faculty of Risk and Crisis Management, Chiba Institute of Science, Chiba Province, JAPAN.
- My apology to all the participants in the on live Webinar today.
- The COVID 19 has affected our lives in every aspect. I have an emergency counter measures meeting at my university and cannot broadcast my presentation live. I am sorry.
- My expertise is emergency management in fact but it is something to do with disaster risk reduction as well. :). Hopefully, my presentation would be useful to your future maneuvers.



My presentation will cover:

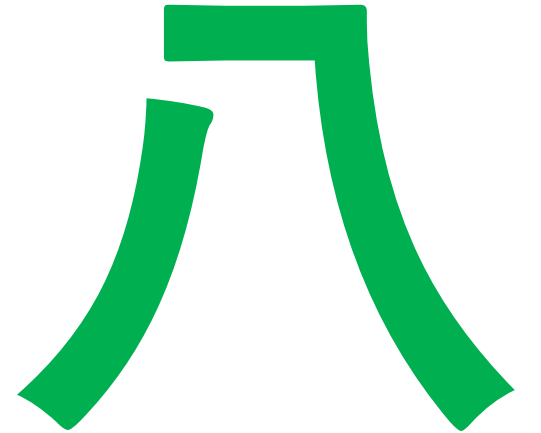
- 1) What we do on the Mountain Day in Japan,
- 2) Our lives with mountains in Japan,
- 3) Our respects to Gods in mountains,
- 4) Our disasters in mountainous regions,
- 5) Our way of preserving mountain environment – Japanese experiences, and
- 6) Where we all go in the future.



Mountain Day in Japan

- 2016, August, the day of 11th became our Mountain Day as one of our national holidays!
- Why August 11?

- In Japanese writing, August (number 8) is written as



Why - the 11th day?

11 looks like trees !



∧ + 1 1 = Mountain
Day

Very simple equation!



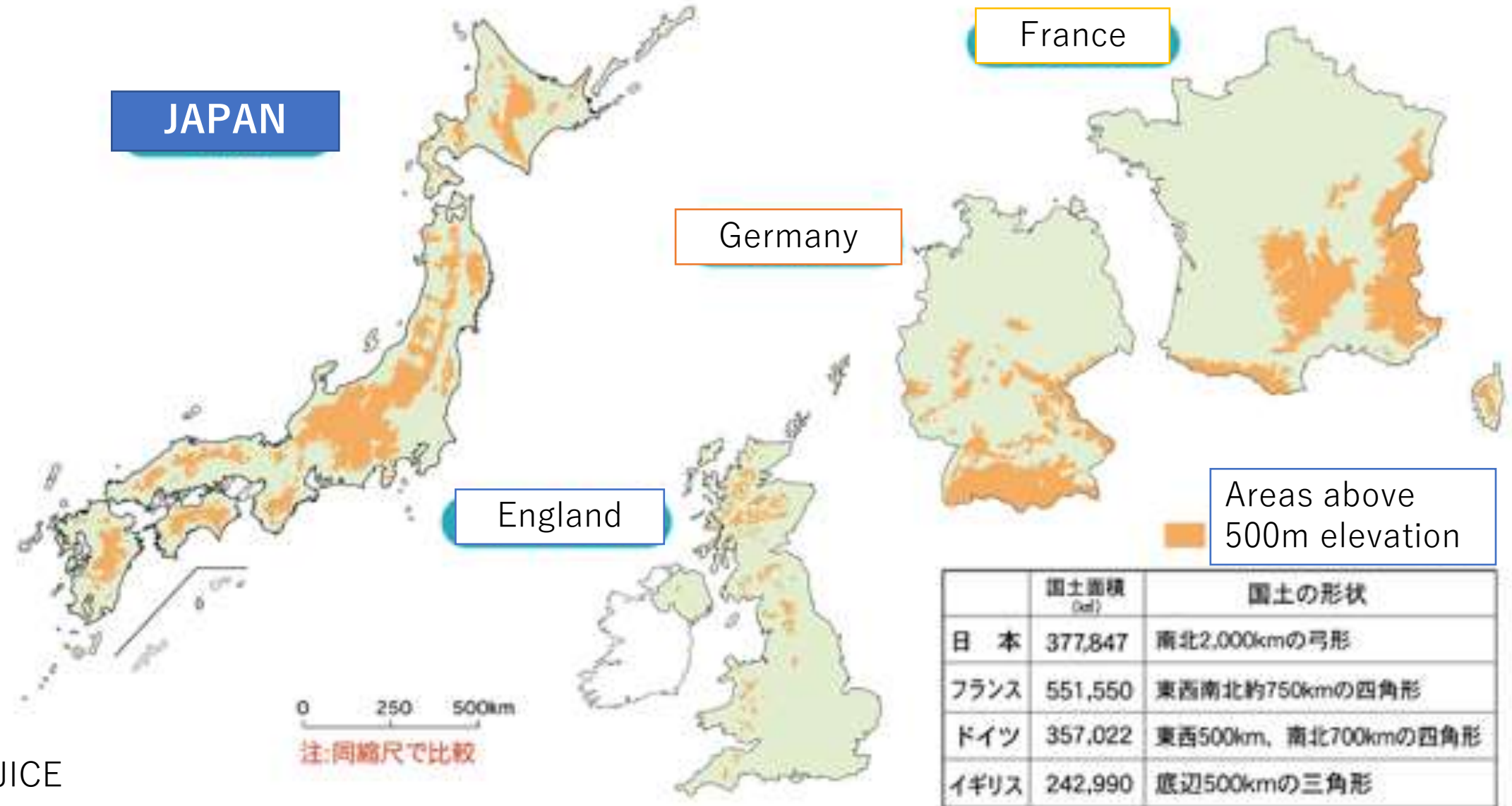
13 provinces out of 47 in Japan had a mountain day already set before the national government did.



Very clear indication of our
RESPECT
to mountains and their environment



Japan's Land



Source: JICE



Japan

2/3 of Japan's land \Rightarrow forests.



Protect

Mountains and Forests
= Protecting our Nation



What we do on the Mountain Day?

**According to the law,
it is a day to take the opportunity to get to
know the mountains and appreciate the
benefits of the mountains (including their
environment).**



Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery



Awareness





Fund Raising Events



Clean up







Fire Preventive Measure
(Controlled burning)



Gods in Mountains

- Traditionally, mountains in Japan are considered to be holy places where many Gods reside.
- Mountains provide water down to the plains where rice is grown.
- Some Y shaped trees in the forests are residence of the Gods that we should not cut down.



People's Lives in Mountains



Mountains as
our life
sustenance

Mountain as our
water provider





Source: Chichibujohosaito





Appropriate forest
thinning practice





Mini Monorail for residents
in mountain regions



However, not all human activities are environmentally friendly in Japan







Unreasonable tree cuttings



Source: Fujisan.or



Unlawful garbage dumping





Source: Fujisan Club

写真提供: 富士山クラブ





Source: Fujisan.clean.com



Angry Mountains





Source: rief-jp.org





Source: Ito-tadashige.net





Source: Nikkei.com





Source: JP Defense Forces



Hard-shell emergency shelters were placed



Source: CTV.co.jp



Traffic Jams, climbing the Mt. Fuji



Source: Rakuten Blog





Source: Hiroshima City

Science can solve all our environmental issues?



Source: United Nations



How do we co-exist with disaster risks?

- Best way to reduce risks is to live outside the disaster prone areas, but,
- can we simply afford to move to the sound areas where cost of living is usually much higher?
- can we simply afford to live outside the culturally inappropriate areas when the mountain regions provide more spiritually correct environment for certain people?

**We still need to tackle with
very hard questions**



Disaster Smart Living (Sustainable Resiliency)

- We sometimes need to accept natural **disasters to happen as our reality** that we actually do not know the exact mechanism of how, where and when they happen.
- Yes, we can preserve environment with more efforts hoping that disasters would not happen, but they usually happen anyhow.
- Looking at our lives, there is **no ZERO risk** at wherever we are, whatever we do on the planet of the Earth. Somehow, we need to accept this specific fact.
- But, we **can still reduce risk using** our **wisdoms** gained through our human history.



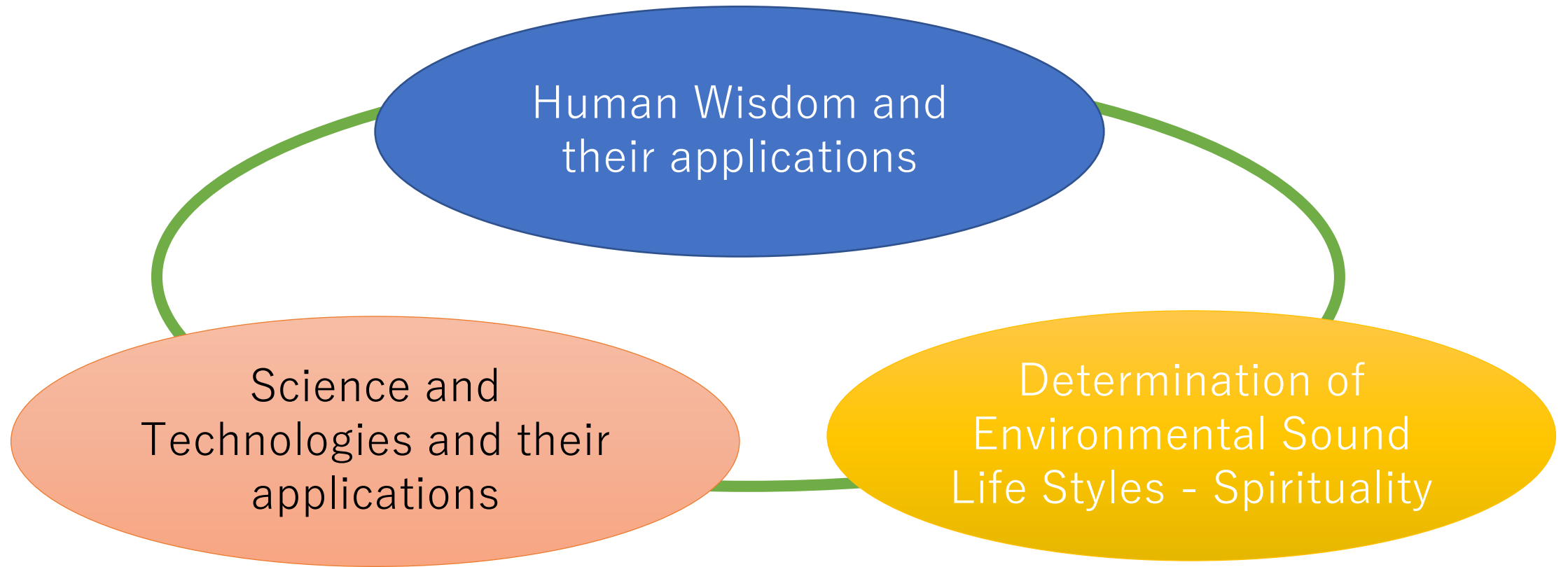
Science, Wisdoms and Spirituality

Balance among Science, Wisdoms and Spirituality is necessary.

- **Scientific advancement and technologies** may help us mitigate impacts generated by disasters, either they are natural or man-made.
- **Human wisdoms** gained from bitter lessons learned at every hardship would certainly guide us to the right directions.
- **Spirituality** - what we know about us – human as absolute and unchangeable fact is that we all die one day. This is the only fact, which is irreversible in our lives. Others are not really proven at absolute level (100% correct does not exist). It guides us how we live under a high level of uncertainty. We need to determine to act ...preserving environment.



Disaster Smart Living (New Normal & Sustainable Resilience)



Thank you very much.

Should you have any questions and comments, please contact me at higarashi@cis.ac.jp

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