

# **The Significance of Green Tourism in the City of Kamaishi**

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## **1. Purpose**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This paper will examine the significance of green tourism in the city of Kamaishi by looking at its current situation and various issues surrounding green tourism.

Kamaishi developed as a company town for the Nippon Steel Corporation. With the rationalization of the company, the city population sharply decreased. The population, which was once 92,123 in March of 1963, is now 43,279, as of March, 2006. The changes in the local community have been remarkable.

Various efforts have been made to revitalize Kamaishi, one of which has been green tourism. Full-scale green tourism in Kamaishi began in 1998 and has since continued to grow smoothly while becoming a focus of some expectation. In August 2004, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) selected Kamaishi for their Eco-Town Program.<sup>1</sup> In the Eco-Town plan developed by the city at the time, green tourism,

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<sup>1</sup> Eco-Town Programs are programs whose aims are the creation of environmental industry, reduction of local wastes, etc. When plans drawn up by local governments are approved by the METI and the MOE, subsidies are given to local governments (the subsidy system was abolished and ceased activities in fiscal 2005). The system began in fiscal 1997 and 26 local governments had been given approval by fiscal 2005. Kamaishi's plan was approved based on acceptance of the idea of creating an industry for the recycling of marine product processing waste. Generally, soft projects are also incorporated into the plans.

or eco-tourism,<sup>2</sup> was chosen as a part of 'soft' programs—programs other than facility building, etc.—to redevelop the city of Kamashi. (Kamaishi-shi, 2004: 16-17). In 2007, plans were made to build an auto-camp site at Nebama Beach, where green tourism is being conducted, at a cost of about 33 million yen (Iwate Nippo, June 15, 2007).

How will this kind of green tourism affect the city of Kamaishi? It is with this question in mind that the author has interviewed those involved in green tourism. In this paper the results of those interviews, as well as various other literature and statistical materials, are used to examine the issue.

## 1.2 Definition of Terms and Discussion about Preceding Literature

Let us briefly examine the term “green tourism” and previous studies. Green tourism is a form of tourism that emphasizes an exchange between the residents of a region and tourists regarding the life and culture of villages connected to agriculture, forestry, and fishery.<sup>3</sup> In Japan, the use of the term originates from the green tourism study group program by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry,

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<sup>2</sup> To be more precise, the expression “eco-tourism” is used in plans. However, Mr. ST, section chief, and Mr. SS, subsection chief to the responsible departments of the Industrial Policy Section of Kamaishi, say that they do not make a distinction between these two (Interview with Mr. ST, section chief on November 2, 2006 and with Mr. SS, subsection chief, on November 8, 2006). In the trial eco-tours that the city organized in 2004, those related to green tourism played an important role. In this paper, partly because the difference between eco-tourism and green tourism is not dealt with as an issue, the term “green tourism” is more often used. See also note 3.

<sup>3</sup> Fisheries-based tourism is sometimes referred to as “blue tourism.” On the other hand, eco-tourism is a form of tourism that attaches importance to the preservation/protection of natural and historical resources and utilizes them. This is one form of tourism over which the MOE has jurisdiction. One main factor that eco-tourism and green tourism have in common is that they are both forms of tourism that depend on the natural environment as a resource. Further, they are sometimes lumped together as “alternative tourism” or “sustainable tourism.” Thus, this paper does not deal with the differences between them. Aoki has taken up the issue of the differences between “*tsuurizumu*” (tourism) and “*kanko*” (sightseeing) (Aoki, 2004). It is an important point that, unfortunately, this paper is not

and Fisheries in 1992. The Ministry released a preliminary report from the study group in the same year and started a project called “a leisurely vacation in rural villages” the next year. In 1994, the law on the promotion of infrastructure building for leisure activities in rural villages was enacted. Furthermore, the promotion of green tourism was stipulated in the agriculture policy reform framework/agriculture policy reform program of 1998, leading to the general use of the term (Yamazaki, 2004).

In studies performed by the social sciences on tourism, a recurring theme has been the transformation of local communities and cultures as a result of tourism or sightseeing developments. MacCannel points out that tourists seek authentic culture and society and thus try to catch a backstage glimpse at the everyday lives of the local residents.<sup>4</sup> He describes how local residents build a multi-layered mechanism from a false backstage, which is put on display for tourists, to a real backstage (MacCannel, 1999: 91-107). MacCannel’s analysis presents this transformation as relatively unproblematic. However, in *Hosts and Guests*, by Smith (ed.), the asymmetry between the tourists and the local residents, or receiving community, and the transformation that accompanies it are clearly seen as a problem (Smith, 1989). In her book, for example, Greenwood reports on a festival called Alarde in the small town of Fuenterrabia in Spain (*ibid*: Ch.8). As this festival was gradually envisioned as a tourist attraction by the municipal government, the residents of Fuenterrabia came to see their festival not as a pleasure but as an obligation. As a result, the festival lost its vitality. Based on this case,

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ready to deal with.

<sup>4</sup> The issue of the “authenticity of tourism” was raised by Boorstin. He argues that pseudo-events distributed by the media through photographs and films have come to substitute the real life experiences of people. He said that tourism is a form of “pseudo-event” and that tourists do not truly seek the authentic culture of another place (foreign countries, for example) (Boorstin, 1962=1964), a point with which MacCannel took issue with Boorstin.

Greenwood has the following to say: “By making it part of the tourism package, it is turned into an explicit and paid performance and no longer can be believed in the way it was before” (*ibid.*:179).

The same issue is raised to eco/green tourism, the ideal of which is to minimize any effect on culture and nature. Looking at the Lake District in England, which has changed from what was once an “unhospitable terror” to an object of tourism, Urry observes a social change (antipathy toward industrialization, improvement of traffic conditions, etc.) that turns nature and rural areas into objects of “tourist gaze” (Urry 1995: Ch.13). Further, he explains the transformation and destruction of nature by the increase in tourist traffic (*ibid.*: Ch.12). Hashimoto Kazuya points out that in developing countries, such as Fiji, local people have adopted eco-tourism simply as a means of making profit without understanding the significance of nature conservation. According to him, eco-tourism is just another form of development which is led, sometimes forcibly, by more advanced countries (Hashimoto, 2003). Nakamura Atsushi, from the perspective of a criticism of nationalism, criticizes tourism resource development in Japan, which tends to focus on traditional culture in response to the requests of the central government. He also raises the issue of the “selling-off in pieces” of local culture, which is essentially unique to each area (Nakamura 2007: 18), being carried out under a national appraisal in the form of so-called “100 best spots,” etc. (*ibid.*: 18-21). Green tourism, which “sells off” nature and culture, fits this criticism.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, there exists a discourse that views the eco/green tourism industry with a critical eye. On the other hand, it remains true that rural villages are impoverished. Therefore, agronomist researchers have been involved in practice-oriented studies that aim to develop and improve eco-tourism (Yamazaki, Koyama,

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<sup>5</sup> However, Nakamura states that green tourism is one “option” for “selling off” culture (Nakamura 2007: 18).

and Oshima 1993). Aoki Shinji, a sociologist, advocates the need for a “practice-oriented policy science” concerning green tourism from the viewpoint of the regeneration of agriculture villages (Aoki, Koyama, Lane 2006: 5). It is not that these studies fail to acknowledge that green tourism transforms nature and culture. Rather, theirs is a discourse which points out the validity of eco-tourism based on the reality of the rural villages and seeks a concrete method for receiving communities to maintain autonomy without being controlled by tourism.

Thus, the effort is advanced in the research. In reality, however, many local areas are suffering from either excessive tourist traffic (and the transformation caused by it) or a lack of tourists. It can be assumed that there are few cases where well-balanced green tourism is achieved. Rather than present a comprehensive answer concerning all of these issues, this paper will focus mainly on the search for the significance of green tourism in Kamaishi and try to approach these issues as well. After first looking at the actual situation of green tourism in Kamaishi in section 2, Kamaishi’s history as an “industrial town,” which could negatively affect tourism/green tourism, will be explored. However, section 4 will confirm that even though this disadvantage exists, green tourism in Kamaishi is meaningful in the sense that it could nurture “citizens that support the community”. The possibility that this could lead to a solution for Kamaishi on the issue of “selling off” nature and culture will also be discussed.

## **2. Overview of Green Tourism in Kamaishi**

### **2.1 History of Activities in Kamaishi**

Green tourism began running at full scale in 1998. Leading up to this, in 1997, the Horaikan Inn was registered as a Minshuku (an inn) Providing First-hand Experiences in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery at the Association of First-hand

Experiences in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery<sup>6</sup> for the first time in Kamaishi. This inn is located on Nebama Beach, one of tourist spots in the Unosumai district (Figure 1) in the north-eastern part of the city. In July of 1998 a committee was formed by the officials of the Kamaishi Regional Development Office (an institutional branch of the Iwate Prefectural Office, which has jurisdiction over Kamaishi and the neighboring town of Otsuchi, to be referred to hereinafter as the **Figures1. Districts in Kamaishi**



development office), the officials of the Kamaishi government office, and the officials of the Otsuchi government office, as well as people from the Horaikan Inn, other Minshuku, and those involved in activities of first-hand experience in agriculture and fishery: Kamaishi-Otsuchi A&F Green Tourism Planning

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<sup>6</sup> Presently, the Organization for Urban-Rural Interchange Revitalization.

Committee (to be referred to hereinafter as the steering committee). In the beginning, the Kamaishi Agricultural Development Center in the development office functioned as the secretariat (Iwate Tokai Shimbun, September 3, 1998). Later, the office for city tourism became the secretariat and managed inbound participants of the tourism program.

As for the “A & F” in the steering committee’s name, A stands for agriculture and F for fishery, signifying a cooperation between farmers and fishermen. This is one of the unique features of green tourism in Kamaishi. The participatory programs available to tourists includes events related to fisheries near the sea, such as peeling scallops, oysters, and ascidians and raising a fixed net, and those related to agriculture and forestry in the mountains, such as making buckwheat noodles, harvesting radishes, and making charcoal. Sea activities are mainly carried out in the Unosumai district, where Nebama Beach is located, and the mountain activities in the Kurihashi district of the north-western part of the city.

So far, the number of the participants has been increasing. The number of the participants that the steering committee received was only 9 in fiscal 1998, when it started. Later, in fiscal 2002, it received a high school field trip from the city of Sendai, and it started to accept junior high school field trips from Osaka in fiscal 2004. As a result of these efforts, the number of the participants that the steering committee received in fiscal 2006 reached 1,408 (Figure 2).

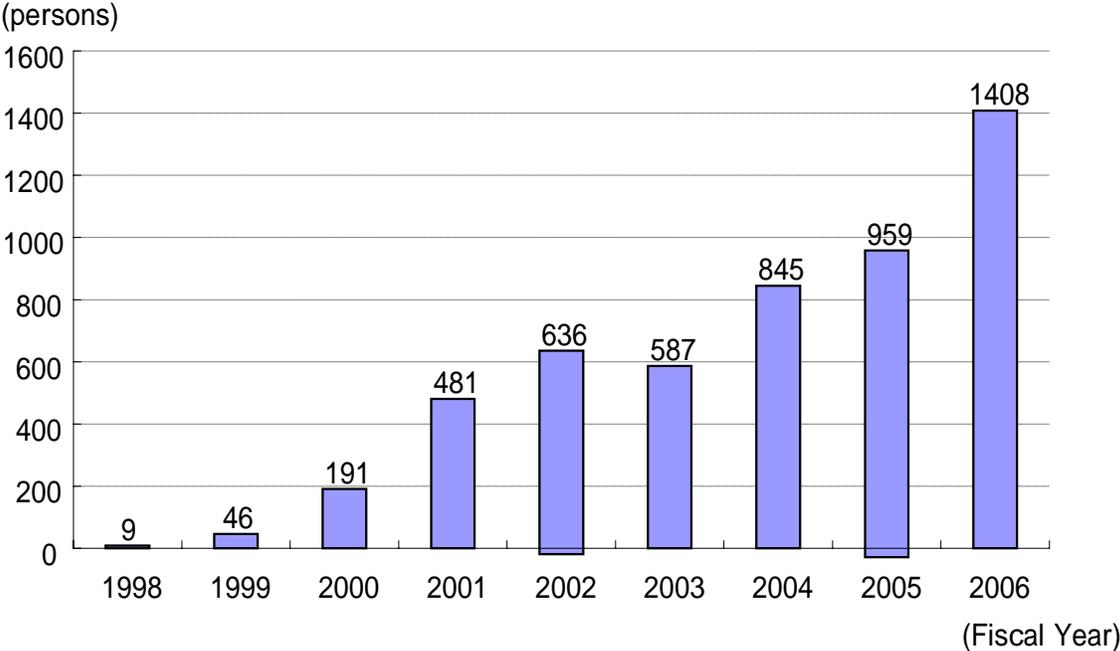
## **2.2 An Involvement of Diverse Parties**

The parties involved with green tourism are also diverse. For example, groups involved in “Farm-fresh” Produce Cooperative and farmer-run restaurants are main players in green tourism, not just in Kamaishi, but also in other regions.

The Kamaishi/Otsuchi Local Dish Study Group (hereinafter referred to as the local dish study group) established in 2004 is a group that holds Meeting to Enjoy

Local Dishes once a month in the Horaikan Inn. This group consists of four organizations, such as the Aonoki Housewife Association, which operates a shop selling local products and a restaurant in Aonoki (in the western part of the Kurihashi district), and the women’s department of the Kamaishi East Fisheries Cooperative Association (a fisheries cooperative association in the Unosumai district). The Aonoki Housewife Association was established in 1984. They grow a vegetable called *Chorogi* (*Stachys sieboldii*), which is used in *Osechi Ryori* (Japanese New Year’s food), and they have developed and marketed *Sennin*

**Figures2.** Trend in the number of participants in green tourism in Kamaishi



Source: “History of A & F Green Tourism” (material given at the time of the interview with Mr. W, Chief of the Commerce and Tourism Section of Kamaishi, July 19, 2006) and materials from the 2007 general meeting of the A & F Green Tourism planning Committee.

*Chorogi* (Hermit Longevity Joy). Through the interest and popularity gained through this activity, in 1995 the group was awarded the National Land Agency Director General Award, the highest prize in the Food Amenity Activity Contest

sponsored by the then National Land Agency and the Rural Development Planning Commission. The group also received *Ikiiki Chusankan Sho* (Lively Non-Flatland Area Prize) of Iwate prefecture in the same year (Iwate Tokai Shimbun, November 27, 1995). The local dish study group itself also received the *Iwate Omoshiro Chisan Chisho Taisho* (Iwate Interesting Local Production Local Consumption Grand Prize) in fiscal 2005 (Iwate Tokai Shimbun, March 23, 2006).

The Hashino District “Farm-fresh” Produce Cooperative, also known as “*Donguri Kumiai* (Acorn Cooperative)”, established by the farmers, etc. of the Kurihashi district is a central party in the support of green tourism. The *Donguri Kumiai* was established in May of 1996 and started selling agricultural products on Saturdays and Sundays. It expanded its business to weekday-operation “at the strong request of its customers” from May 1998 (Iwate Tokai Shimbun, May 2, 1998). It also received the *Ikiiki Chusankan Sho* (Lively Non-Flatland Area Prize) of Iwate prefecture in 1999. The Hashino Promotion Society (an umbrella organization of neighborhood associations in the Hashino-cho district) received financial assistance from the development office in 2005 and built a water mill at the shop selling local products (*Donguri Hiroba* (Acorn Field)) based on a “ground-work” method, where residents provide the labor (Figure 3). This facility too is being used for green tourism activities such as buckwheat noodle-making activities.

Also of note in the activities menu is a visit to a sake brewery of the *Hamachidori* Corporation, a *sake* brewing company in Kamaishi. An employee of *Hamachidori* joined the steering committee in March of 2007. Since 1998 the company has also been holding, on its own, “brewing participatory events” for the

**Figure 3** Watermill at the *Donguri Hiroba* (Acorn Field)



Note: Photographed by the author on September 25, 2006.

general public covering everything from planting rice to preparing ingredients for sake. In the beginning, the rice activity, a participatory event, was held in the town of Ishidoriya (now known as Hanamaki-shi) in Iwate prefecture, where the chief brewer of the company was raised. Since 2003, it has been held in the Kamiyo district in the town of Otsuchi. Thus, the Hamachidori Corporation has long been engaged in green-tourism type activities as one way to have visitors participatory activities on local farmers' land, and in 2004 it received the *Chisan Chisho Taisho* (Local Production Local Consumption Grand Prize) of Iwate prefecture. The reputation and quality of the company's sake are also high, and they received the Gold Prize of the National New Sake Exhibition for the 2005 and 2006 brewing years.

There are also more recent parties who have become involved in green tourism. The *Mini Sanchoku "Kosmos"* (mini farm-fresh" produce cooperative "Cosmos") located in the Kasshi district in the western part of the city opened a farmer's restaurant in January of 2007. Ms. FS turned her fallow rice field into a cosmos growing field in 2000 with the assistance of the city, which led to a direct-marketing project the following year (Iwate Tokai Shimbun, January 26, 2007). The *Mini Sanchoku "Kosmos"* received a prize at the Iwate Prefectural Local Food

Contest in 2006 for its chocolate-based sweets using Kasshi persimmon, which is a specialty of the Kasshi district. Ms. FS says that she is considering opening her farm for family lodging in the future (interview, November 4, 2006).

### **2.3 Connection to Nature Conservation Activities**

In Kamaishi and Otsuchi, nature conservation activities also have been conducted, including in areas where green tourism activities are being promoted. After aquaculture facilities in the sea were damaged by flooded rivers caused by Typhoon No. 6 in July of 2002, activities for the integral preservation of mountains, rivers, and the sea became serious. In March of 2003, the Council for Promoting Mountains, Rivers, and Sea Environment Preservation was established. The purpose of this organization is to promote the preservation of forested mountains and an improvement in the quality of river water in order to prevent the deterioration of the quality of water at the beach. This council was established at the call of the development office, and it came into being with 32 participant organizations, including environmental organizations, fisheries cooperative associations, agricultural cooperative associations, etc. in Kamaishi and Otsuchi. The development office acts as the secretariat of the council. The council is engaged in operations such as the Environment Forest Creation Project (afforestation) and Environment School (with lectures by researchers and fishery and agricultural activities).

As an activity of the council, an Environment Preservation Society was established in each district of Kamaishi and Otsuchi. First, in October of 2005, the Toni District Environment Preservation Society was organized in the Toni district in the southern part of Kamaishi. In March 2006, the Otsuchi-Kozuchi District Environment Preservation Society was organized, and in November the same year, the Uno-Kuri Area Environment Preservation Society in the Unosumai and Kurihashi districts, the center of green tourism, was established. There is a

possibility that environmental preservation activities can be actively promoted in a way that is linked to the development of green tourism.

#### **2.4 Expected Challenges**

So far, the number of participants in green tourism participatory programs has continued to increase, as has the diversity in participating parties and the number collaborative activities with environment preservation operations. As we saw in Section 1, an auto-camp is to be developed anew. Green tourism activities are generally a growing trend. It does not mean, however, that there are no challenges in developing more activities.

One significant challenge is in the age of the main actors. Through interviews the author conducted, there was a view expressed about the need for a generation shift (interview with Mr. SN on September 25, 2006). Sociologist Yoshino Hideki cites “securing main actors” as one of the themes of his future study on green tourism in Kamaishi. Specifically, he says, “in addition to the members that have been centrally involved in the operation, the challenge from now on is how much the younger people and women will be able to play their vital role” (Yoshino 2007: 23). It can be said that this is a challenge related to the issue of aging among the main actors. However, Mr. SK, chair of the planning committee, once pointed out that as young people face child rearing and other important, time-consuming activities, it would be meaningful for older people to try to take on new challenges by getting involved in green tourism (interview, September 29, 2006).

Yoshino also cites the “establishment of operations independent of governmental administration” and the “strengthening of collaboration among actors through cooperation between various industries” as challenges. The latter points out that it is necessary to expand the activities menu through collaboration with the tourism association, the chamber of commerce, etc. This is a valid

proposal. As for the former, however, people on the planning committee consider collaboration with governmental administration and other governing bodies as one of the features of the organization. The following statement by a member of the planning committee, emphasizes this: “(the fact that the planning committee consists of diverse parties such as the municipal government, the development office, fisheries cooperative associations, etc. could mean that) the organization itself might become a model” (Sugawara 2003: 94). In view of this, would it not be necessary to further consider relationships with governing bodies, including the meaning of the term “independence?”

### **3. Current Situation of the City of Kamaishi concerning Tourism**

#### **3.1 Image of Kamaishi**

As we have seen in the previous section, green tourism is growing in Kamaishi. Although there are problems such as the aging of the main actors, the situation does not warrant pessimism at present. If Kamaishi intends to further develop green tourism and tourism in general, however, another issue looms: the image held of Kamaishi by outside actors such as ordinary citizens and the tourist industry.

Outside actors must have long viewed Kamaishi as a “steel town” or “industrial town.” As such, it does not have a strong image as a tourist area. This should be seen as disadvantageous for tourism in Kamaishi. Endo Hideki, for example, says, “for a phenomenon of tourism to exist...the destination should be given significance as a tourist area and its image as a tourist area must be formed systematically” (Endo 2005: 94-95).<sup>7</sup> To be recognized as an “industrial town” is

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<sup>7</sup> However, Endo’s argument is not something that simply affirms the logic of tourism, such as to say it would be good if the area was recognized as a tourist area by the outside world and thus leading to an increase of tourists. In fact, in the above-mentioned paper, it is

not advantageous to spread an image of green tourism, either. For, generally speaking, there would be few people who want to experience agriculture and fishery in an “industrial town.” For example, a participant of the green tourism monitor tour organized by the city in 2000 says, “for us outsiders, steel is associated with terms such as ‘cold,’ ‘hard,’ ‘industry,’ etc., and it feels rather far from green tourism” (Kamaishi-shi 2000: 45).<sup>8</sup>

So, let us examine whether or not Kamaishi is viewed as a tourist area. Endo, quoted above, carried out an analysis of Nara. Specifically, Endo collected representation of Nara in tourist guidebooks and pamphlets and extracted an image of tourism (Endo 2005). We will evaluate Kamaishi based on the same method, although in a rather simplified form.

JR East staged a North Tohoku District Destination Campaign from July to September of 2007. On its webpage,<sup>9</sup> Iwate prefecture is divided into five areas and Kamaishi was put into the Hanamaki-Tono-Kamaishi area. Nine tourist spots in Hanamaki and six tourist spots in Tono were introduced. As for Kamaishi, there was information only on a festival called *Kamaishi Yoisa* (as of July 31, 2007).

JR East also publishes a monthly magazine called *Train Vert* and distributes copies for free on the *Tohoku Shinkansen* (Bullet Train). The May, 2007 issue featured a 23-page “trip to experience the life of Iwate.” There were no tourist spots in Kamaishi included in this special feature.

The image of Kamaishi as a tourist area is weak. As a testament to this, the number of visitors to Kamaishi for tourism/recreation purposes has been

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pointed out that tourists reshuffle the details of the images distributed by the media, through such publications as tourism information magazines and pamphlets, and transform the logic of tourism.

<sup>8</sup> This participant goes on to propose that “steel be made softer” to be added to the activities menu. In that sense, the participant is not denying “steel” in its totality.

<sup>9</sup> Morioka branch of JR East. <http://www.jr-morioka.com/kitatouhoku/> (accessed July

decreasing. It was hovering around 1.2 million to 1.3 million in the 1990s (it reached 2.32 million in 1992 because of the Sanriku Sea Exhibition) but started to decrease in the 2000s and fell to about 0.81 million in 2005.

The weakness of its image as a tourist area is fully recognized in Kamaishi too. For example, in the Kamaishi Tourism Promotion Vision (draft) developed in 2006 by the city, there are passages such as “together with the mixed image of Kamaishi as a city of steel and fish, tourism too is stagnating because the city cannot be differentiated from its neighboring cities” and “due to its strong image as an industrial city, Kamaishi lacks the image of a tourist area” (Kamaishi-shi 2006c: 27).

### **3.2 The Direction of City Policies Concerning Tourism**

As mentioned above, the image of Kamaishi as a tourist area is weak. Unless outside actors already hold an image of the city as a tourist spot, it will be difficult to increase the number of tourists. How should the city government go about this situation? Let us examine the direction of city policies concerning tourism.

The city of Kamaishi drew up its fifth general plan in 2001. One of the three “basic goals for community building” is creating a “community with bustling and vigorous industries.” To this end, a policy for “building a bustling community” is cited. Specifically, this is to “promote tourism utilizing the characteristics of the area, while promoting peculiar events and various exchanges between regions in order to increase the tourists” (Kamaishi-shi 2001: 17). The plan also established the goal of increasing the number of the tourists from 1.09 million in fiscal 1998 to 1.29 million in fiscal 2010 (*ibid.*: 50). Later, because the number of the tourists dwindled, the basic plan for the second half of the fifth general plan drawn up in 2006 revised the goal for fiscal 2010 to one million (Kamaishi-shi 2006a: 35).

As we saw in section 3.1 above, the city of Kamaishi drew up a *Kamaishi Tourism Promotion Vision (draft)*. Within it, the vision suggests the possibility of

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2007).

an increase in tourism as a result of the following two points: (1) An increase in the demand for tourism is expected due to the aging of the population and massive retirement in the baby-boom generation; (2) A new expressway and port facilities will be completed in fiscal 2006. It also cites four “viewpoints to push tourism-related policies.” One is to “establish tourism as an industry.” It concretely states that “in spreading various positive effects on the local economy by promoting tourism, the position of tourism as an industry will be ensured through further the development of tourism whose aim has changed from exchange to settlement (Kamaishi-shi 2006c: 35). The target number of tourists is 1.2 million (*ibid.*: 53).

Therefore, the Kamaishi city government is leaning towards tourism as a major industry. The next question is whether an effective project can really be conducted.

First, the above-mentioned “new expressway,” a project not of the city but of the central government, holds the possibility of promoting tourism in Kamaishi. The Sennin Toge Expressway connecting the cities of Tono and Kamaishi opened in March 2007 and, because of this, the number of tourists that visited Kamaishi during the “golden week” vacation period in May increased. The total number of tourists that visited Kamaishi from May 3<sup>rd</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup> is reported to have increased by about 38,200 from the previous year to about 87,600 (Yomiuri Shimbun, May 11, 2007). The construction of the Sanriku Expressway, which connects Sendai, Miyagi prefecture and Miyako, Iwate prefecture, going through Kamaishi in between, is as of now still under construction. It is possible that these projects may positively affect tourism in Kamaishi even more.

However, it is possible that the city may be unable to carry out effective projects due to financial and other constraints. There are things that were considered to be tourism resources but could not be preserved. There are also

tourism resources that are not fully utilized now.<sup>10</sup>

One example of this is the *Kyojo Ichiba* (on-the-bridge market). This market used to be on the Oowatari Bridge spanning the Kasshi River that flows through the central part of the city. Everything from marine products to daily necessities was sold there. With the occupancy of a part of the river allowed exceptionally by Iwate prefecture, the market was established in 1958. Due to the market's peculiar feature of being on a bridge, the market gained popularity as a tourist spot in Kamaishi. As the Oowatari Bridge became too old, however, the prefectural government called for the relocation of the market. Although an association of shops first expressed opposition, it agreed to transfer in 1995 and later closed in January of 2003 (Niibari, 2004).

Another example of underutilized tourist resources would be *Koyo no Taki* (waterfall of autumn leaves). This waterfall is along a tributary of the Katagishi River that flows into Toni Bay in the southern part of the city. It was featured as a tourist spot in a pamphlet published by the city that the author obtained in 2006.<sup>11</sup> Local residents also cite this waterfall as a local resource (for example, refer to [Kamaishi-shi 2003: 41]). However, when the author tried to visit the waterfall in November of 2006 the once paved access road had become overrun with bushes. The bridge up the stream from the waterfall is also in disrepair (Figure 4). It would be quite difficult for tourists to enjoy the waterfall.

From these examples, it can be seen that there are some aspects where tourism resources have not been fully utilized. As is the case with the *Kyojo Ichiba*

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<sup>10</sup> Things that were not preserved include the furnaces at the Kamaishi Steel Works and the ore dressing area in the Kamaishi mine. Both of them were inside the premises of a private company and it was difficult for the city to preserve them. An example of something that is not fully utilized now is the windmills of the Kamaishi Wide Area Wind Farm. These windmills began operating in 2004, but no usable roads have been made to allow large buses access to the site. In addition, there are no public facilities such as lavatories near the windmills.

<sup>11</sup> The new pamphlet published in 2007 has a photograph but no explanation.

market, the intention of the prefecture can sometimes be a contributing factor, in addition to financial constraints. For example, according to a medium term financial forecast of the city of Kamaishi, expenses are expected to surpass income from fiscal 2006 through fiscal 2010. The ratio of the balance was 90.9% in fiscal 2006. Financial flexibility is lost with a ratio of over 80%, and consequently the level of financial freedom in Kamaishi lowers (Kamaishi-shi 2006b).

Thus, tourism-related projects become harder for the city to carry out. In this case, building an image of Kamaishi as a tourist area is difficult. Even with the contribution of the new expressway, if the tourism resources were not fully utilized, there would be a possibility that outside actors would still fail to recognize Kamaishi as a tourist area.

**Figure 4** Remains of the bridge over the river upstream from the waterfall of autumn leaves



Note: Photographed by the author on November 5, 2006.

### **3.3 Views of Kamaishi Citizens on Tourism**

In addition to the intentions of the city government, let us now look at the views of Kamaishi citizens on tourism. In opinion polls conducted in 1999 and 2004 by the city, citizens were asked the following question: "In what kind of business area should priority be given?" In the answers to this question in 1999, the first was marine products at 21.7%, the second, tourism at 17.6%, and the third, industry at 16.6%. The answers were similar in 2004, with the first being marine products industry at 20.0%, the second, tourism at 18.6%, and the third, industry at 17.7%

Although expectations for tourism are high, expectations for industry are also high. Thus, it would be an overstatement to insist that citizens of Kamaishi fully desire a transformation from "industrial town" to "tourist town." One reason for this could be the sense of history and pride citizens of Kamaishi have about their once "industrial town." Another reason could be that the ratio of the employees of the secondary industry has not changed much after the rationalization of the steel factory.<sup>12</sup> The slogan, "town of steel and fish," which remains of the city to this day, shows one part of this.

At present, efforts concerning the "town of industry" have achieved a certain level of success. In October of 2006, Dowa Forging Company and Japan SMC decided to build new factories in Kamaishi. Thus, citizens of Kamaishi will be able to maintain their "town of industry" if they so desire.

Let us be clear, however, that to maintain "a town of industry" runs counter to building a town of tourism. In recent years "industry tourism" has emerged, but a coexistence of the two would be difficult to maintain.

#### **4. Significance of Green Tourism in Kamaishi**

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<sup>12</sup> The ratio of the employees in the secondary industry was 34.5% (10,132 people) in 1980 and 33.8% (7,236 people) in 2000.

#### 4.1 To Nurture Citizens that Support the Community

In the city of Kamaishi, there exist factors that are disadvantageous to tourism, including green tourism. Although green tourism is increasing, as we have seen in section 2, the possibility of a brake being put on this increasing trend cannot be denied. If that happens, will the green tourism efforts going on now in Kamaishi turn out to be meaningless? To examine this, let us look at the following statements by those familiar with green tourism.

For example, Ms. OS, then president of the Aonoki Housewife Association as cited in section 2.2 above, said the following when the group was awarded the National Land Agency Director General Award for growing the *Chorogi* plant in 1995: “in the past, I would only be bitter about the Aonoki hamlet in the mountains but I now have heartfelt confidence and pride and have gained the composure to enjoy life in the mountains” (Iwate Tokai Shimbun, November 27, 1995). President NS of the *Hamachidori* Corporation, also mentioned in 2.2, said the following: “we consider our company not a Japanese sake brewer but a ‘local sake’ brewer. The *raison d’etre* of the company can only be found when we are deep-rooted in the area. We will become a part of the local culture. Unless we have that much determination, ‘local *sake*’ brewers cannot survive” (Iwate Tokai Shimbun, January 1, 2006).

In these statements we are able to find significance in green tourism in Kamaishi that goes beyond changes in the number of tourists. The trait of green tourism is that it allows people to utilize local nature and culture and find joy from it. In addition to Ms. OS and Mr. NS, all of those involved in green tourism must have a deeper understanding of nature and their local culture and society if they are to develop green tourism activities although the activities of Ms. OS and Mr. NS in agriculture and sake brewery already incorporate these aspects to a certain extent. Through learning about these areas we learn to appreciate and form a deep connection with our environment. This process is expressed in Ms.

OS's statement. Further, people involved in green tourism in Kamaishi are also involved in peripheral activities in various ways. For example, the Kamaishi *Hamayuri* (lily) International Triathlon, an international triathlon race, has been held in Kamaishi since 1990. Those involved in green tourism also support this race by providing food on the eve of the event or on the date of the race. In this light, green tourism in Kamaishi goes beyond its initial purpose, nurturing "citizens that support their community"<sup>13</sup> and creating a network among them.

If this examination is valid, even if there is a decrease in participants in the future, the importance of green tourism in Kamaishi will not be diminished.<sup>14</sup> This is related to the following situations in Kamaishi.

In the case of the *Kyojyo Ichiba* market we looked at in section 3.1, it has been reported that about 42,000 signatures against the proposed abolition of the market were collected (Iwate Tokai Shimbun, November 27, 1995). Even though all of the signers were not necessarily Kamaishi citizens, it represented the signatures of quite a number of people, considering that the population was only 50,338 as of March of 1995. Despite this, there have been no signs showing any movement calling for a reversal of the decision to abolish the market after the

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<sup>13</sup> The work of Shibukawa Tomoaki, *Fukushi NPO: Chiiki wo sasaeru shimin kigyo* (Welfare NPO: Citizen entrepreneurship that supports local regions) (Shibukawa 2001) prompted the author to come up with the expression, "citizens that support the community."

<sup>14</sup> Green tourism is understood to have its significance in being "small tourism," which is different from traditional mass tourism whose purpose is to bring in a large number of tourists (Yamazaki, Koyama, and Oshima 1993). Green tourism puts an emphasis on the experience of the tourist in the areas of agriculture, forestry, and fishery. Therefore, ordinary agriculture, forestry, and fishery must exist before tourism can develop, and the need to limit the number of tourists as to prevent the hampering of ordinary agriculture, forestry, and fishery arises. For example, Tono City, which is located next to Kamaishi and is a well-known pioneer in the field of green tourism, turned down some possible plans for educational field trips in fiscal 2006 (interview, January 22, 2007). Mr. SS, secretary general of Toni District Sports and the Culture Community of the Toni district in the southern part of Kamaishi, said that the Toni district did not have green tourism because of a concern that fisheries would be hampered (interview, December 25, 2006).

decision was made in November 1995. The signatures of as many as 42,000 people have been left up in the air.

A similar situation can be observed with regard to the rugby issue in Kamaishi. As is well known in Japan, the rugby team made up of employees from the Nippon Steel Corporation in Kamaishi was the national champion and ruled for seven consecutive years (from 1979 to 1985). As Nippon Steel experienced rationalization, the rugby team was changed from a company team to a local club team in 2001, and its name was changed to the Kamaishi Sea Waves. When the team was made into a club team, participation in the Japan company-team championship, in which it had been participating, became an issue. At the time, approximately 14,800 signatures were collected in and out of Kamaishi calling for permission to participate in the company-team championship (Iwate Nippo, December 9, 2000). However, the Kamaishi Sea Waves have not been actively supported by Kamaishi citizens since the controversy, and in recent years Sea Waves supporters among Kamaishi citizens have decreased.

Although judgment should not be made based solely on two cases, it seems that in Kamaishi there is a tendency for citizens to meander on a number of issues. Therefore, it is important to note that green tourism holds a particular significance in nurturing “citizens that support the community.” The following statement of Mr. ST, chief of the Industrial Policy Section that drew up the Eco-Town Plan, symbolically express the significance of green tourism in Kamaishi: “since regional regeneration or regional vitalization can be achieved only when the power of each local resident is gathered together, we hope to see positive outcomes from active involvement in ‘eco-tourism’<sup>15</sup>” (Okamoto 2005: 232).

#### **4.2 Presentation of “Local Culture”**

If the significance of green tourism is in nurturing citizens that support the

community, there is the possibility of a reevaluation of the industry, which is not advantageous to tourism or green tourism. Although there have been various problems associated with industry such as pollution (see [Ohori 2007] for details), the steel industry is an important component of Kamaishi both in terms of economy and culture. If the city stresses their connection to nature while hiding the industrial aspect of the city for the sake of tourism, it would be interpreted as an excessive internalization of the “tourist gaze” and ultimately “sell off” the nature and culture of Kamaishi.

At present, the pamphlet on green tourism published by the city of Kamaishi has metal foundry activities and a tour of the Kamaishi Steel Works listed in its “activities menu.” In 2007, there were many programs related to steel, in part because it was the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of modern steel manufacturing in Kamaishi. A tour of the Kamaishi Steel Works began in fiscal 2007 and five tours were held by the following October. The relationship between local industry and tourism deserves our attention.<sup>16</sup>

However, just having those activities on the green tourism participatory programs together does not mean industry and green tourism are completely compatible. It will be necessary to construct and present a convincing argument as to what relation these two have in Kamaishi.

Even if industry and green tourism are considered compatible, there is no guarantee that both trades would not become “sold off.” However, from the viewpoint of the local community, the reality is that there is a limit to economical

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<sup>15</sup> See note 2.

<sup>16</sup> There is a possibility that Nippon Steel has different intentions as well. The NHK Special program, “Prevent hostile takeover: Decisions by the Nippon Steel administration,” broadcast at 22:00-23:00 on May 7, 2007 reported that Nippon Steel started to invite individual share holders to its factories and hold briefing sessions from around 2007 in order to prevent a takeover. Whatever their intentions were, however, it is more important to consider whether it is beneficial for the local community. Such a project would be beneficial to Kamaishi in the sense that it attracts tourists.

measures, even if “selling off” is criticized. Greenwood and Nakamura Atsushi, two researchers that criticize tourism and green tourism as mentioned in 1.2, admit that culture transforms (Smith 1989: 182) (Nakamura 2007: 3-5). Although there is a limit, a certain degree of “selling off in pieces” phenomena could not be avoided. Rather, precisely because presenting tourism as being compatible with industry is a difficult task, being able to present it in this way will allow the area to differentiate itself from other places carrying out tourism in a “selling off” way, even if it does not attract a large number of tourists into participatory programs.

Thus, actively presenting the local culture of Kamaishi could also become a significant part of green tourism in Kamaishi.

## **5. In Conclusion: Future Tasks**

In this paper, through the present situation of green tourism, we examined the situation of the city of Kamaishi and the significance of green tourism. In section 4.1 we discussed “citizens that support the community” in Kamaishi. This term is still instinctive and lacks full content. The author would like to seek future development on this study. In relation to this point, the author stated that “in Kamaishi there is a tendency for citizens to meander on a number of issues” based on the cases of the *Kyojo Ichiba* market and the rugby team. The validity of this statement has not been verified at this stage either. It will be necessary to verify it through an examination of more cases and other methods. In doing so, we should be careful not to talk about the level of the citizens’ resolve; “It is nothing other than arrogance in many cases for a third party to try to change the consciousness and desire of others” (Genda 2006: 254). The author considers it more necessary to address aspects of social structure.

However, “citizens that support the community” are naturally observed in scenes other than green tourism in Kamaishi. For example, the *Kamaishi Yoisa* festival started in 1987 and the Kamaishi *Hamayuri* International Triathlon

mentioned in section 4.1 were started and are maintained by actor citizens in the region (Kamechi 1999). Another future task lies in grasping the situation in Kamaishi with a multi-perspective approach with all of the parties involved in these projects in mind.

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