

Ama Town's Concept of Sufficiency and Message to the World

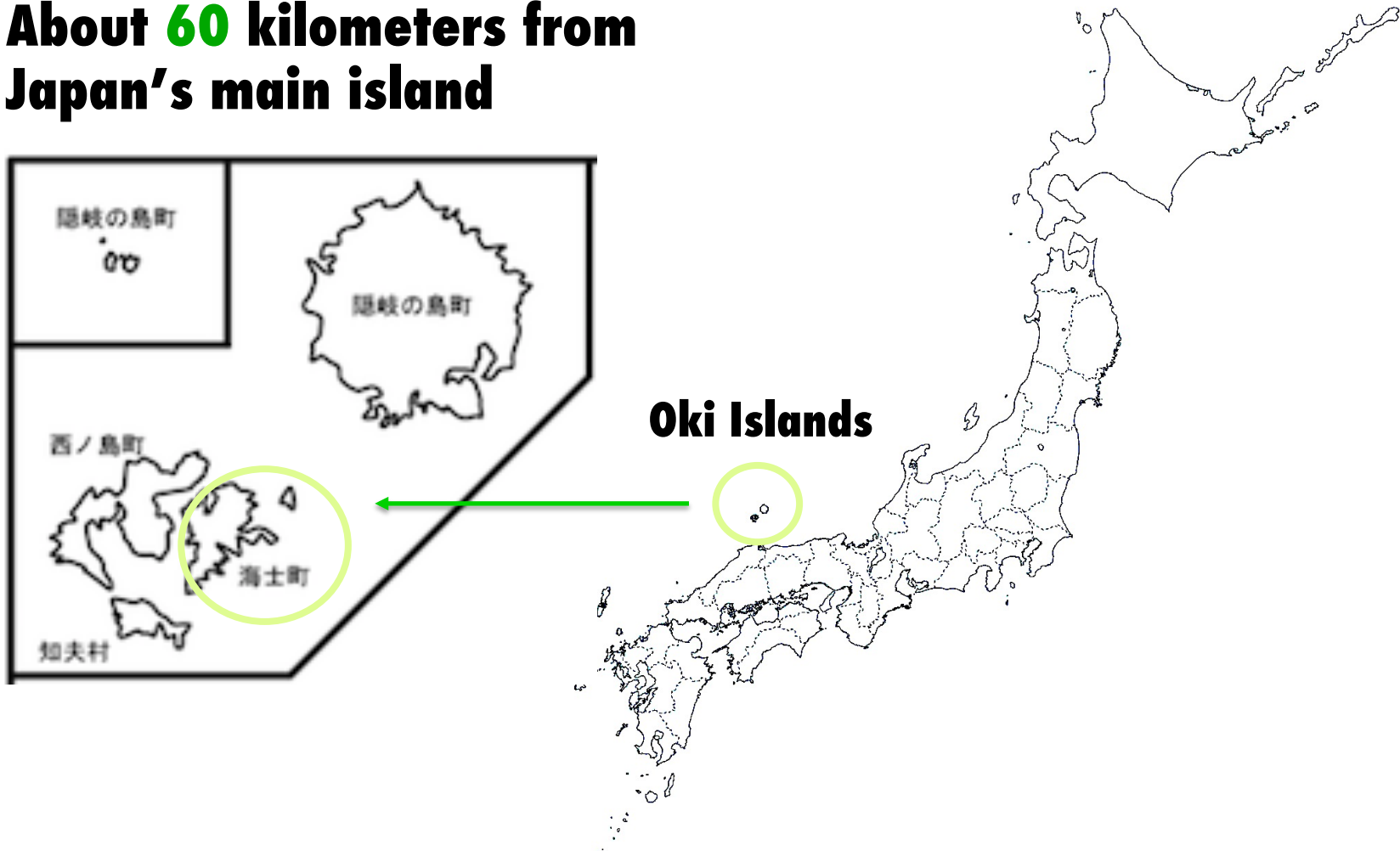
Nai-mono-wa-nai

Junko Edahiro

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About Ama Town

About **60** kilometers from
Japan's main island



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WHAT IS THIS
CONCEPT OF
NAI-MONO-WA-NAI?

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The Two Meanings of Nai-mono-wa-nai

- **In 2011 Ama town adopted the slogan of Nai-mono-wa-nai (ないものはない).**
- **“Nai” means “nothing” or “not” and “mono” is “thing.”**
- **The first meaning is a simple statement: “What is not here ... is not here”**
 - **“We don’t have it here, so just accept the situation.”**
- **A second meaning is “There is nothing that is not here.”**
 - **“Everything ... is ... here.”**



The basic conditions are very different from urban area of Japan



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NAI-MONO-WA-NAI AND AMA TOWN

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Youth group activities



"If there is nothing fun to do here, let's create it."

Vending machines in Tokyo



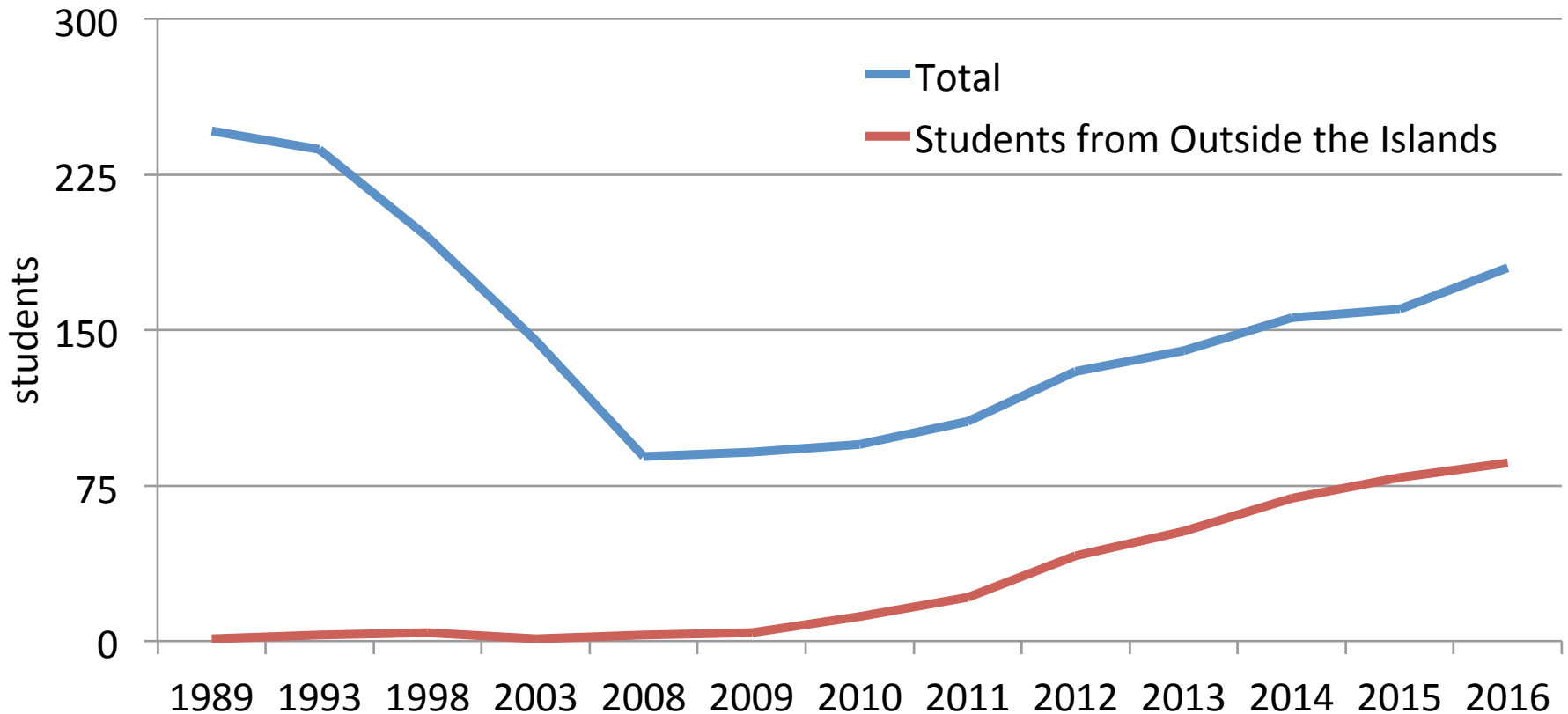
No vending machines at the ferry terminal



High School *Miryokuka* Project

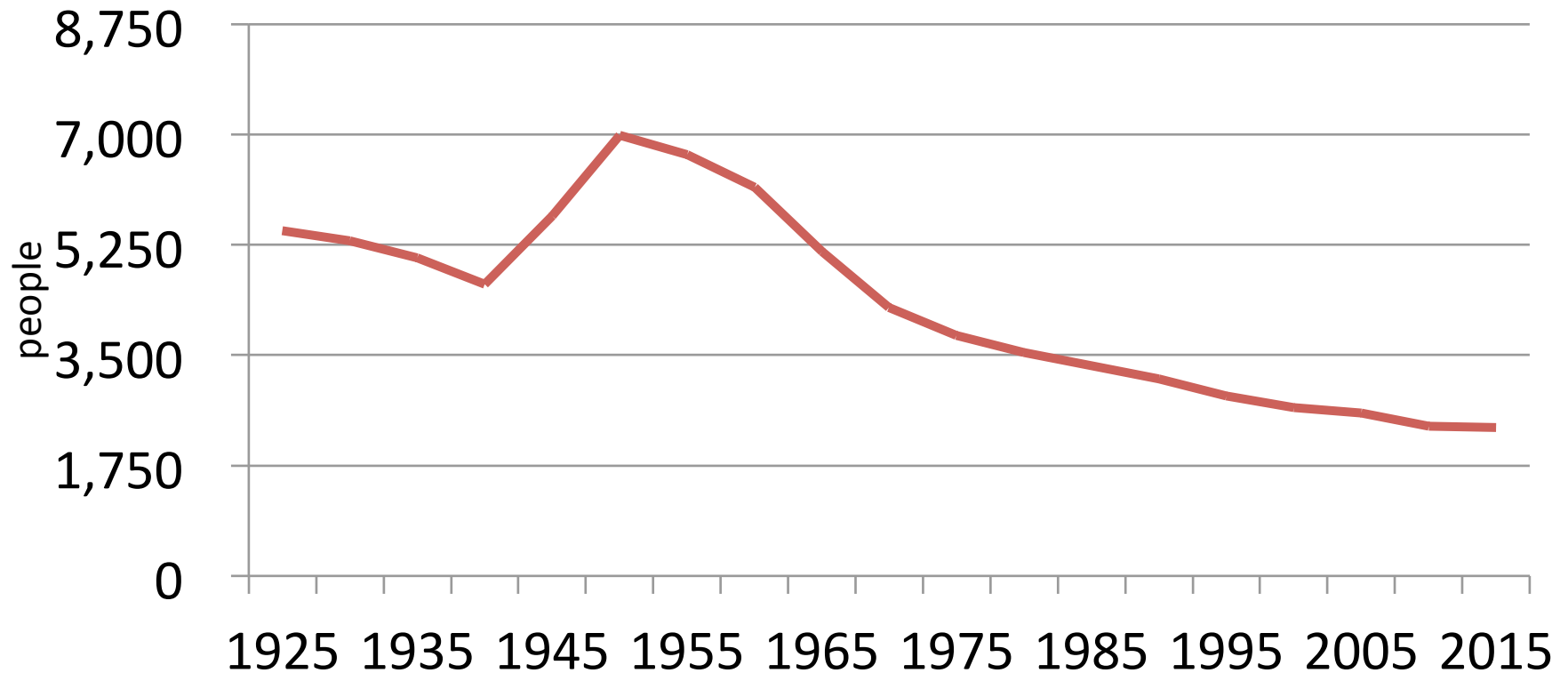
- **the Dōzen High School is trying to make a greater use of the local challenges**
 - **population decline; a dramatically declining birth rate and aging population; financial pressures**
- **The negative dimensions of local challenges could be seen as resources.**
- **These challenges could help to develop the human resources that can pioneer a new future for Japan.**

The number of the Dōzen High School students : V-shaped recovery



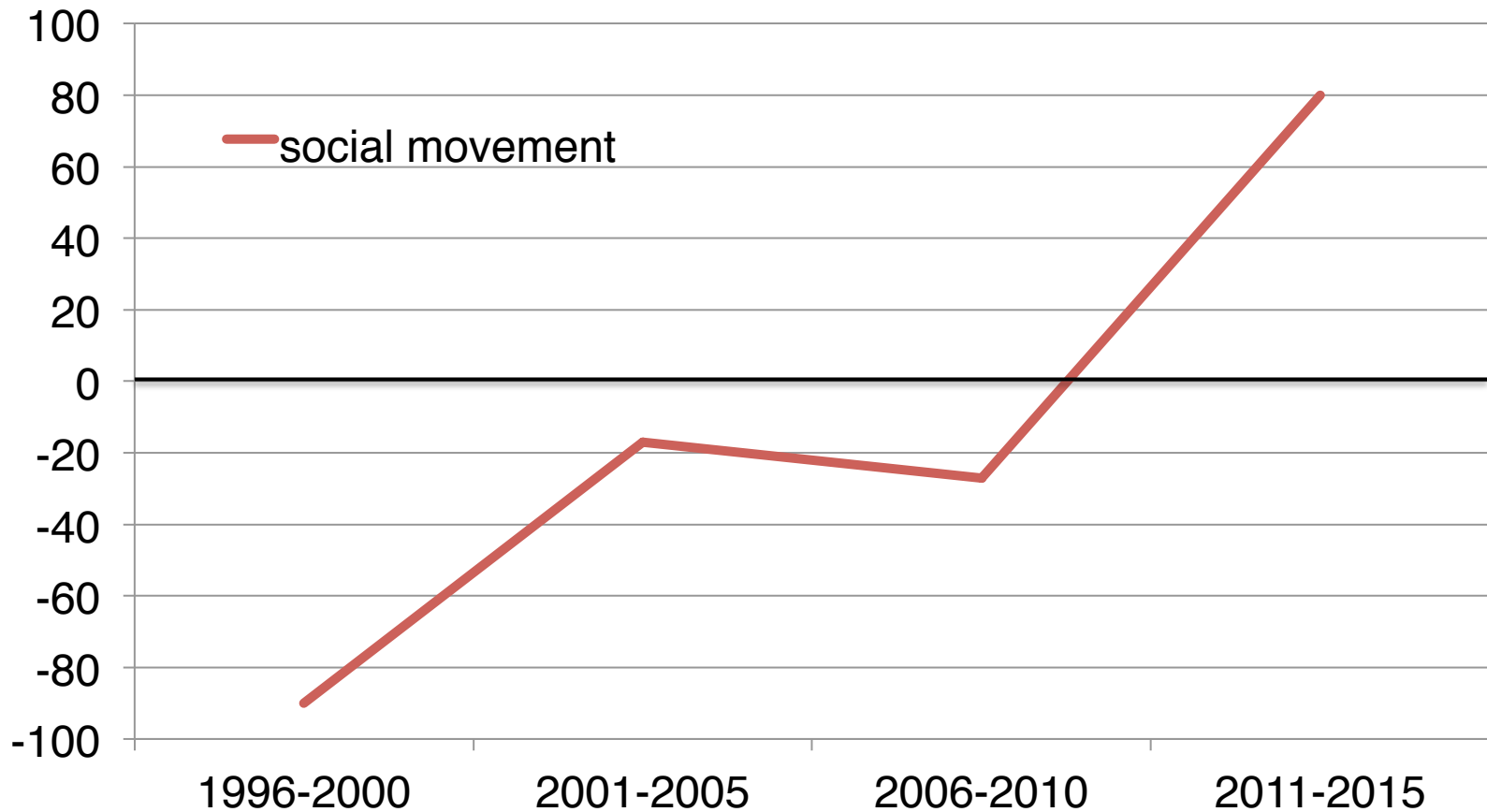
Source: The Handbook of 2017 Census in Ama Town

Population Decline After Postwar Period



Source: THE 2015 POPULATION CENSUS

The Number of People Moving to Ama Town is on the Rise



The secret attraction
for these people is the spirit of
Nai-mono-wa-nai.

There are also many examples of **nai-mono-wa-nai** in day-to-day life

- There are no babysitting services, but neighbors will take care of local kids any time.
- There are no “disco” clubs, but all of the townspeople can dance the traditional dance along with the “Kinyamonya” local folk songs.
- There are no security companies, but people do look after each other, so no one worries about that.
- There are no flower shops, but lovely flowers are growing outside many homes.
- There are no movie theaters, but there are many local video nights.

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THREE MESSAGES OR BENEFITS OF NAI-MONO-WA-NAI

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Three messages or benefits of **nai-mono-wa-nai**

- 1. Positive acceptance**
- 2. We have everything that is important: Know sufficiency (values + self-reliance + social capital)**
- 3. Enjoy the "process" of creating things together (willingness to take on a challenge + special skills + social capital)**

A society of
mass consumption is a society
that has forgotten
**the joy of creating something
deliberately together.**

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HAPPINESS AND NAI-MONO-WA-NAI IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

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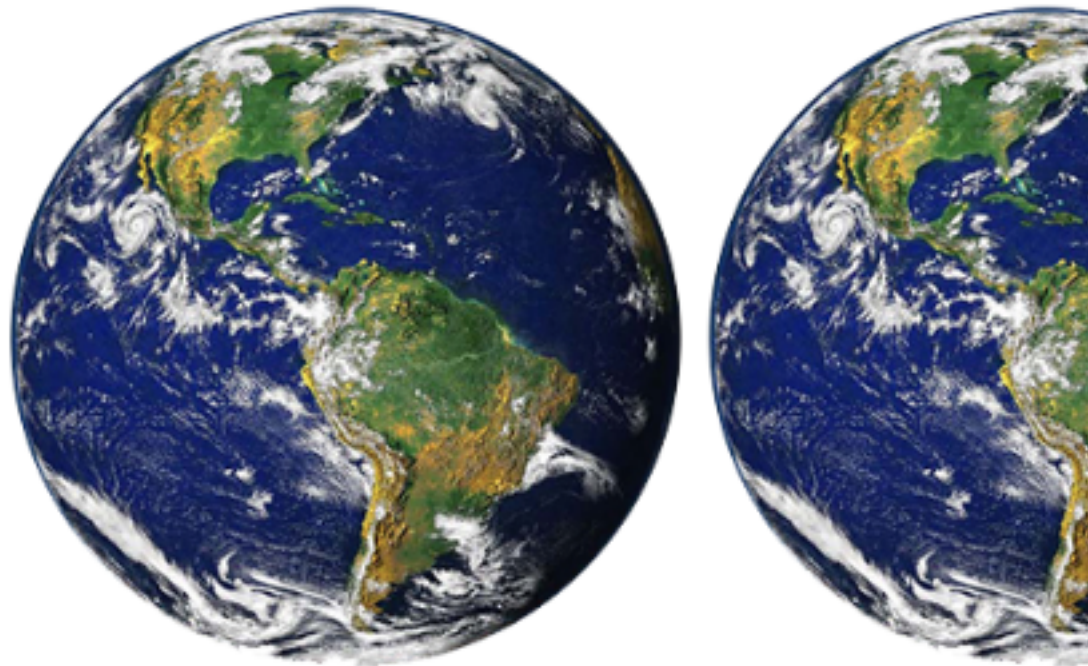
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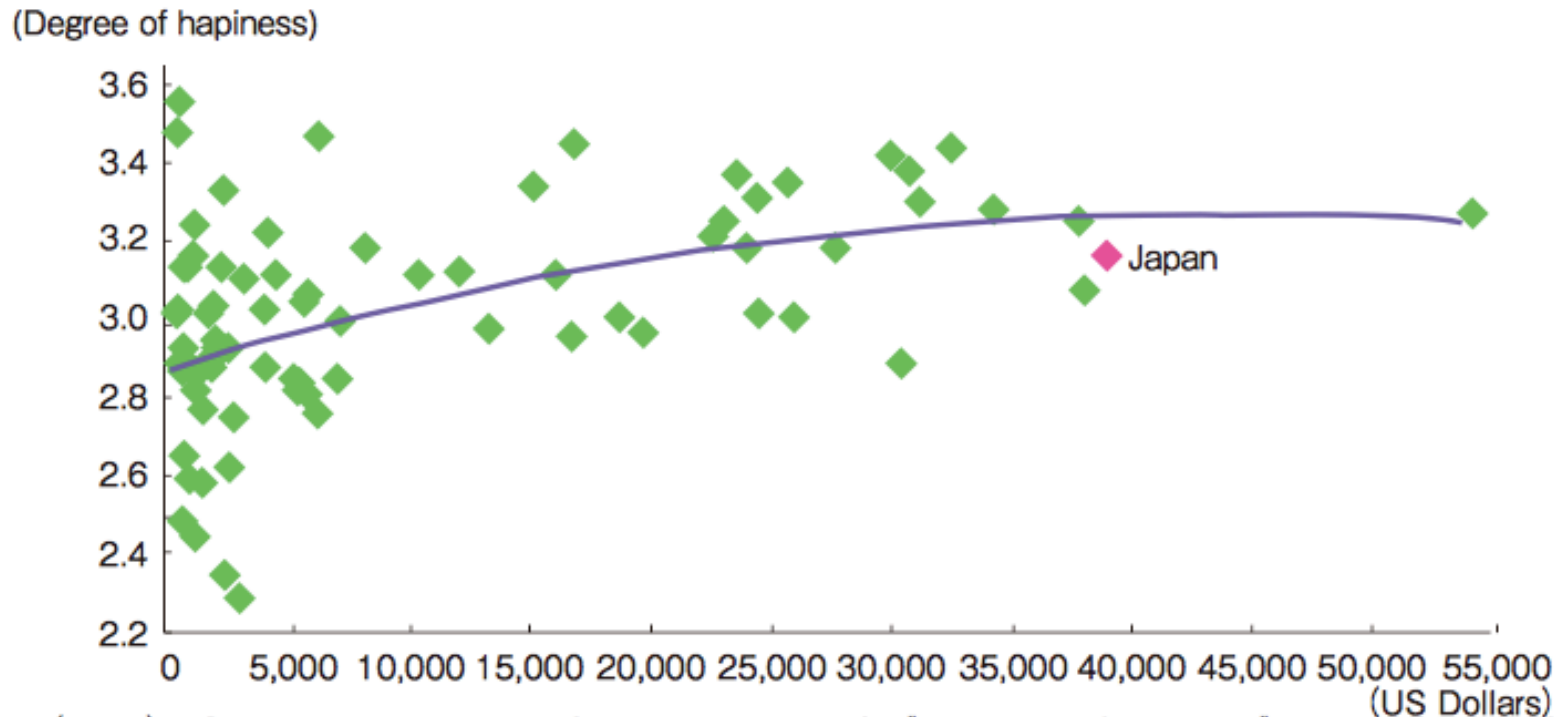
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The ecological footprint

The ecological footprint of humanity today is the equivalent of **1.7 planet Earths. .**



GDP per capita does not correlate explicitly with the degree of satisfaction



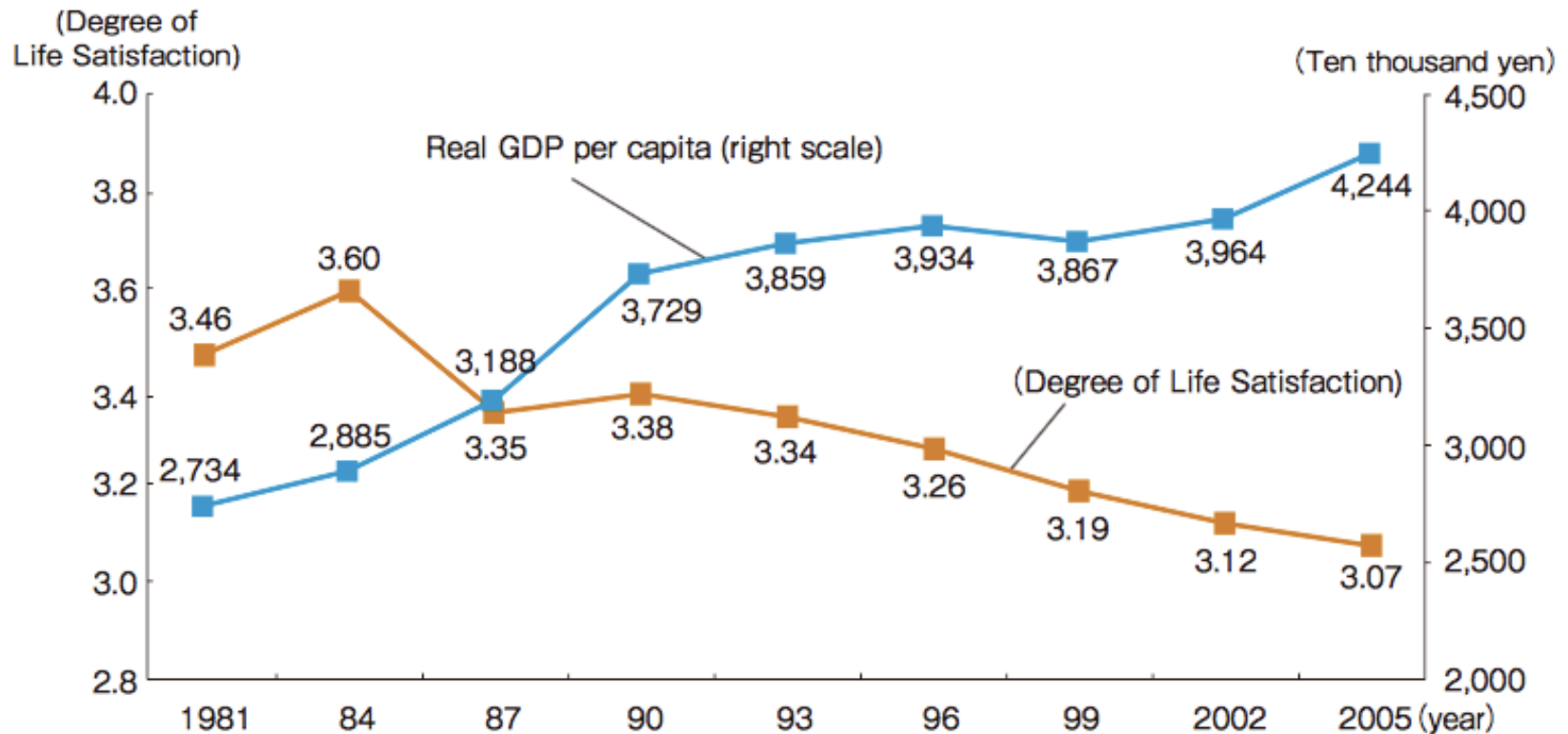
(Notes) 1. GDP per capita compiled from WDI, and data for "the degree of happiness" is drawn from the following site; Veenhoven, R., World Database of Happiness, Distributional Findings in Nations, Erasmus University Rotterdam. Available at: <http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl> (November 18,2008)

2. Analysis is conducted as follows;

$$\begin{aligned}
 (\text{Degree of Happiness}) = & 2.9031 + (1.79\text{E-}05) \times (\text{GDP per capita}) + (-2.13\text{E-}10) \\
 & (71.809) \quad (2.836) \quad (-1.324) \\
 & \times (\text{GDP per head})^2
 \end{aligned}$$

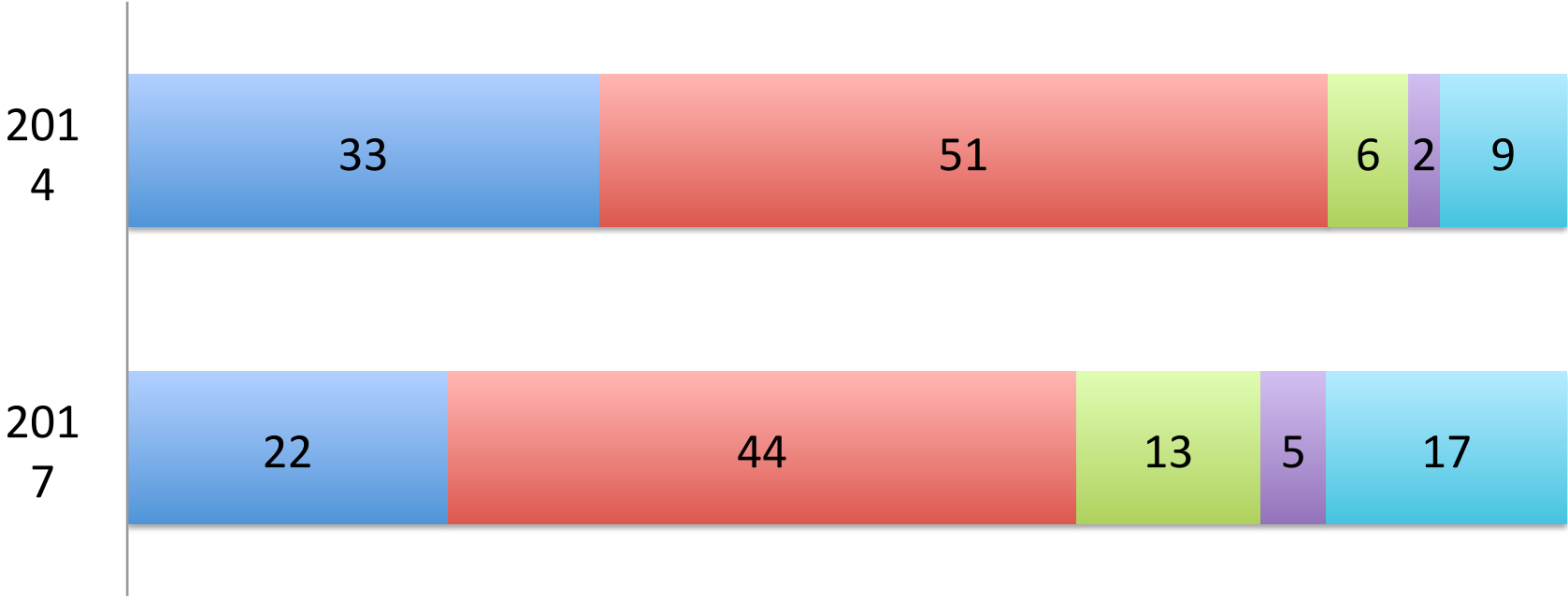
R2=0.2400, ※ () indicates t-value

The degree of life satisfaction does not increase



- (Notes) 1. Compiled from the Cabinet Office "National Survey on Lifestyle Preferences", "Annual Report on National Accounts" (Data before 1993 is compiled from 2002 report and data after 1996 is compiled from 2006 report), and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication "Population Statistics"
2. "Degree of Satisfaction" is calculated as follows: The question, "Are you satisfied with life or not?" was answered in five scales from "Satisfied" to "Unsatisfied". The weighted average of each answer was indexed into "Degree of Satisfaction".
3. The respondents represent both sexes from the age of 15 to 75. (Excludes "do not know" and "no answer")

Do you think continued GDP growth is necessary for Japanese Society?



- necessary
- somewhat unnecessary
- DK
- somewhat necessary
- unnecessary

Source: Institute for Studies in Happiness, Economy and Society

Developed countries need to free themselves from the models of mass production, mass consumption, and **forever chasing** after economic growth.

The **nai-mono-wa-nai** concept of Ama Town is a **new model** that can help us accomplish that.

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SUMMARY

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Rather than having us seek endless growth,

nai-mono-wa-nai

proposes for the world the possibility of

creating happiness for everyone

but still keeping within the finite boundaries of
our planet Earth.

Thank you very much for your attention.

THE END

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