

Consumers' willingness to spend their taxes on supporting sustainable fisheries: An analysis using the contingent valuation method

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Summary

Seafood ecolabels have become increasingly popular as a consumer-driven method to support sustainable fisheries management. The Basic Plan for Fisheries, developed in 2022, now explicitly incorporates provisions for the utilization of seafood ecolabels. Nevertheless, only a limited number of fisheries in Japan have achieved ecolabel certifications through both domestic and international programs. Global initiatives, like Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), often involve substantial examination fees, necessitating adequate profitability for participation. This financial instability occasionally discourages fishermen from participating in the certification process. Japan provides subsidies related to ecolabels, including export promotion; however, it offers fewer assessments than other countries. This study employed a contingent valuation method by conducting a web survey to gauge Japanese seafood consumers' perceptions of the government's ability to offer subsidies for sustainable fisheries management initiatives. Findings revealed that the appropriate subsidy value for seafood ecolabels was approximately 1.8 million yen per fishery. Furthermore, the study identified distinct consumer segments, including the older population, altruists, frequent seafood consumers, and individuals with a preference for safe and secure seafood, who exhibited a greater inclination toward support subsidies. In contrast, consumers who were skeptical had a less favorable inclination toward subsidies.

Key words: seafood ecolabel, willingness to pay, subsidy