

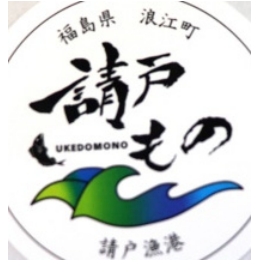
Musanko Ukedo

What is “Musanko”?

“Musanko” is a local dialect from the Ukedo area, meaning “relentlessly.” Through this interview, we wanted to support those relentless efforts of the people in the Ukedo district, which is why we chose the title “Musanko Ukedo.”

On Thursday, August 8th, we visited the Ukedo Fishing Port in Namie Town. We were assisted by Ms. Maki Tamano and Mr. Nobuyuki Amiya from the Soma-Futaba Fishing Cooperative.

Currently there are 101 cooperative members and 29 fishing boats. This is a significant decrease compared to the time before the disaster. We interviewed the people who are working hard to continue catching high-quality fish known as “Ukedo catch” in the future.



“Ukedo Catch” Confidence in Quality

Flounder, Olive Flounder, and Many Other Fish Varieties

“Delicious!” No Processing, Eat it Fresh!

“The Sea of Ukedo is Green.” The locals don’t refer to it as blue. It’s said that where the Pacific’s Oyashio and Kuroshio currents meet, the water appears green. This is because the area is rich in plankton which serves as food for the fish.

Mr. Tsunatani of the fishing cooperative was born and raised in Ukedo. He remembers when he was in elementary school, he painted the sea green in his art class.

The waters of Ukedo are home to many fish, including olive flounder, shirasu (whitebait), flounder, hairtail, and seabass.

The fish from Ukedo are mostly shipped to

the Toyosu Market without much processing. They are delicious even without being processed. The cooperative is confident in the freshness and taste of “Ukedo catch.”

When the women’s division of the fishing cooperative conducted a survey on “wanted fish dishes,” sashimi was the top choice. There were only two shirasu processing factories in the area.

► We were invited aboard a fishing boat before it set out to sea. The crew was preparing to head out for gillnet fishing.



Revitalization Through Strong Bonds

After the Great East Japan Earthquake, Namie Town experienced a restricted access period. Fishing at Ukedo Fishing Port was no longer possible. The people of Ukedo moved and scattered to various evacuation sites. There are no longer any houses left in Ukedo and even some fishermen commute from far-off relocation areas.

Historically, the people of Ukedo have had strong bonds, living together like a large family.

The Ukedo fishing port has a tradition of women actively participating in fishing, with people supporting each other in raising children.

Now the concern is the future of the fishing port. The number of co-operative members has decreased, and there are few successors.

Perhaps due to climate change, the types of fish caught each season are also changing. Based on their past connections, the people of Ukedo Fishing Port are working together to revive their community.



▲ Ice cutting experience at the fishing cooperative’s ice storage facility.

Rumors Won't Stop Us

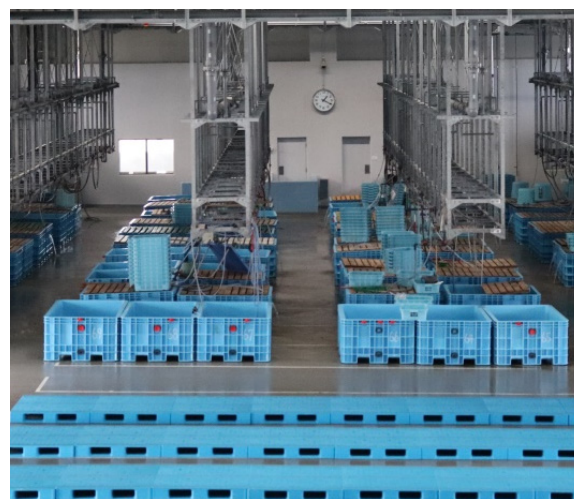
With the release of “ALPS treated water” into the ocean last August, rumors about the safety of the fish have persisted.

I asked a representative from the fishing cooperative, “What do you think about the rumors?”

They replied: “No matter how much we explain, some people may never un-

derstand.” “We simply continue to do what we’ve always done—head out to sea and catch as many fish as we can.” “We are not the perpetrators here.”

From every word they spoke, we could sense their scientific understanding and the deep pride they take in their work.



▲ The unloading area is strictly sanitized. The rear tanks are sorted by fish species, the front pallets are for fish placement.

Strict Hygiene Management

In the fishing cooperative, the most critical area is the facility where freshly landed fish are handled and sorted. At the Ukedo Fishing Port, fish are placed on pallets above the concrete floor to avoid direct contact with the ground. At the entrance to the sorting facility, equipment is installed to clean dirt from footwear, and nets are used to keep seabirds out. The new facility, built after the disaster, enforces “advanced hygiene management” with the utmost rigor.

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The Wind of Ukedo

For a long time, dialects have been cherished by local communities. These words carry the essence of the lives and histories of the people who speak them. In the coastal community of Ukedo in Namie Town, there is a unique dialect tied to the fishing industry, reflecting its maritime roots. ► For example, tasks related to handling and maintaining fishing nets are called “amitadokashi.” The word “suka” refers to the shore. Both are deeply rooted in the daily lives of those connected to the sea. ► After the disaster, local residents were forced to relocate, scattering far and wide. As they adjusted to life in new places, their dialect gradually began to fade. ► One person from the fishing cooperative shared, “Even conversations between my spouse and me are no longer understood by our children.” It is only natural that children adapt to the language of their new environment. ► Dialects are a valuable treasure that convey a region’s history and culture. What will become of the Futaba region’s dialects in the future? Even if these words are no longer spoken, the love the people of Ukedo have for the sea and their homeland must continue to be passed down through generations.