

Statement

January 21st, 2020

Honourable Judge, Civil Division 2, Tokyo District Court

Plaintiff: Sadayuki Kajigaya

1. I have been engaged in the family fishing business for 56 years now since 1964, in an area called Akiya in Yokosuka City facing the west coast of the Miura Peninsula in Kanagawa Prefecture. My two sons also became fishers.

Since long ago, the fishers of Akiya have been harvesting throughout the year shellfish like tokobushi, abalone and sazae (sea snail), as well as shrimp, octopus and seaweed, all which inhabit seabeds at a depth of 1 to 15 meters close to the shore. Aboard a small boat of about 0.3 tons, they use so-called "box glasses" — a wooden cylindrical box with an attached a piece of glass of about 30 centimeters in diameter — to examine the bottom of the sea. While looking at the seabed from the boat, they catch shellfish that live in beds of seaweed like hijiki, kajime and arame using an iron lance or hook attached to a bamboo stick of roughly 3 to 15 meters length (adjusted to the depth of the water). This is the method of fishing that the fishers of Akiya mainly use.

2. However, starting from about 10 years ago, the amount of seaweed growing in rocky places at the bottom of the sea (such as arame, kajime, habanori and hijiki) has been steadily decreasing year by year. This phenomenon has become especially serious over the last 5 years. Even when using the box glasses, from last year it has been impossible to spot even a trace of arame, kajime, or hijiki, all of which before had covered the seabed as densely as a forest. As a result, catches have decreased sharply, and recently fishers have only been able to find a single abalone per day, compared to 5 to 6 kilograms (about 30 abalone) per day before. Sazae, too, are hardly able to be collected — and those that are found are small and thin. Seaweed harvests have also declined. For this reason, there has recently been a shift to hunting for fish, but the catches of thread-sale filefish, Japanese red seaperch, gnomefish, etc. and others have also decreased. We are worried that if this situation does not improve, we will have to give up catching fish and shellfish, leaving us to rely on operating fishing boats for customers as our only business.

3. One possible cause of this "rocky-shore denudation" might be that the temperature of the sea water has become unsuitable for the propagation of seaweed. Seaweed species like arame, kajime, habanori, and hijiki, just like terrestrial plants, adhere to seasonal cycles, sprouting in early spring and then growing bigger over the span of several years. For seaweed species like arame and kajime, the water needs to be of a certain temperature suitable for their growth cycles, but water temperatures have stopped falling, especially in early spring. Every morning before going to fish, we check the outside temperature and water temperature using the thermometer on the boat and decide what kind of fishing to engage in on that particular day. This is why we have accurately measured the outside and water temperatures throughout one year and have always monitored the relationship

between those temperatures and seaweed breeding cycles. Especially around January, the water temperature at which seaweed starts to sprout is usually around 10 to 11 °C , but recently the temperature does not fall below 13 - 14 °C even around this time.

Also, from about 10 years ago, the weather out at sea has also changed. In the past, during the winter from around December to February, a cold west wind would continuously blow strongly, cleaning rocky areas in shallow seas from dead leaves and the like. Water temperatures would drop, and new sprouts would be ready to emerge from their roots. Then in spring, forests of seaweed would sprout and grow into from rocks at the bottom of the sea, concealing the surfaces of the rocks completely. This acted as food and breeding grounds for fish and shellfish.

However, in recent years, there has hardly been any west wind, and the winters no longer feel cold. When in January the temperature would usually drop, now it stays almost the same as in December. I think that these changes in climate and the changes in sea temperature are related. Us fishers have worked closely with the weather since long ago, but we did not understand much about the causes of such changes in climate.

But if these conditions regarding the climate and sea temperature persist, unfortunately it is certain that we will not be able to continue our fishing business treasured and passed down by our ancestors. Because of this, I've been thinking every day about how we can return the sea back to its original state.

4. In this way, I came to know about the problems of coal-fired power plants and CO₂, and about the people in Yokosuka mobilizing and acting to stop these problems. By listening to them and by doing my own research, I learned about the issue of global warming from CO₂, which began well over 10 years ago and is backed by science; about how this became a political issue worldwide through things such as the Paris Agreement; and about how the causes of changes in climate and seawater temperatures that actually heavily impact us fishers lie in the high CO₂ emissions from the use of coal and other fuels for over all around the world for over a century.

Around October of last year, I also heard about the lawsuit submitted pertaining to the planned construction of the Yokosuka coal-fired power plant in Kurihama from one of the plaintiffs, Mr. Rikuro Suzuki.

I think that we must prevent the situation from getting even worse as soon as possible, and put in our best efforts to return things to the way they were. This is why I made the decision to join the plaintiffs in this trial, thinking that maybe there is something that I can do.

From this point forward, I hope to make my fellow fishers and citizens in general more aware of these issues.