

# Learning environments and tradition of mountain worship

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Yakushima Environmental culture Foundation

# About The Yakushima Environmental Culture Foundation

The foundation is the central organization devoted to the promotion of

**“Yakushima Environmental Culture Village”**

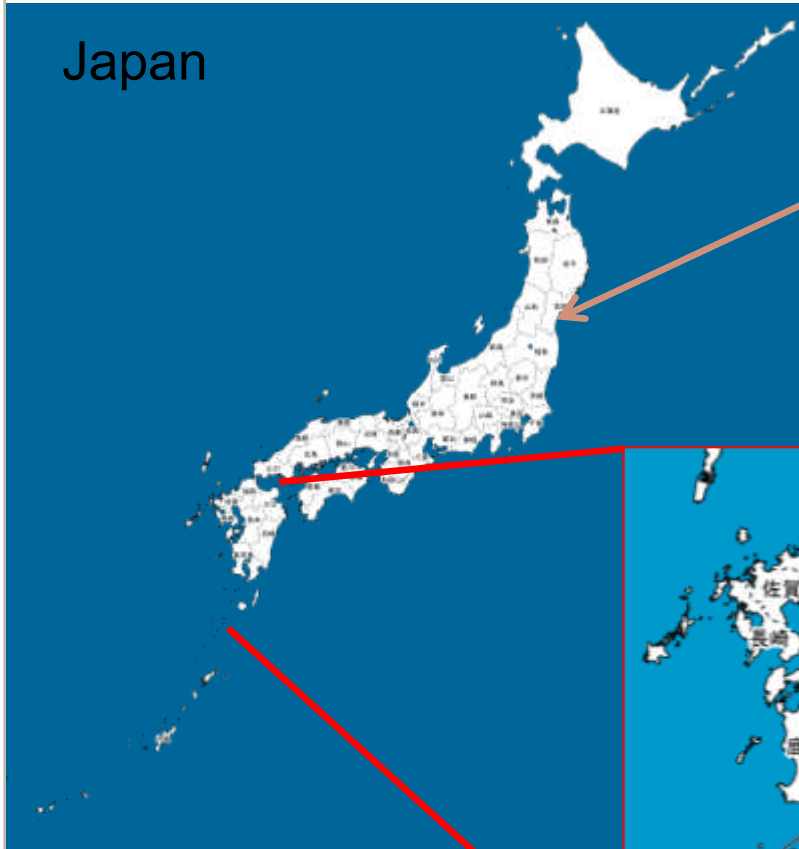
- Environmental Preservation Support Programs
- Nature Protection Activities
- Cultural Projects
- **Environmental Education Programs**

# About Yakushima



# Where is Yakushima ?

Japan

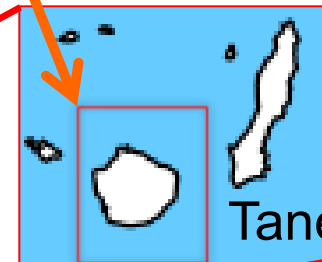


We are here. (Miyagi pref.)

Kyushu



**Yakushima**  
(Kagoshima pref.)



Tanegashima

# Size of Yakushima



Area: 504km<sup>2</sup>

Pop.: ca. 13,000

**Tokyo metropolitan area**

Area: 622km<sup>2</sup>

Pop.: ca. 9,060,000

**Tsunami on 11.III. 2011**

The tsunami inundated a total area of approximately **561**km<sup>2</sup>

# Why has Yakushima registered a World Heritage Site ?

- Contains unique, rare or superlative natural phenomena, formations or features of exceptional natural beauty.
- Outstanding examples representing significant ongoing geological processes, and biological evolution.



Yakushima Is. made from granite.

“Tofu” rock  
Mt. Koban-dake

















***Macaca fuscata yakui***



*Euphyllobiomorphus kurosawai*



Endemic genus of Yakushima

Monospecific genus



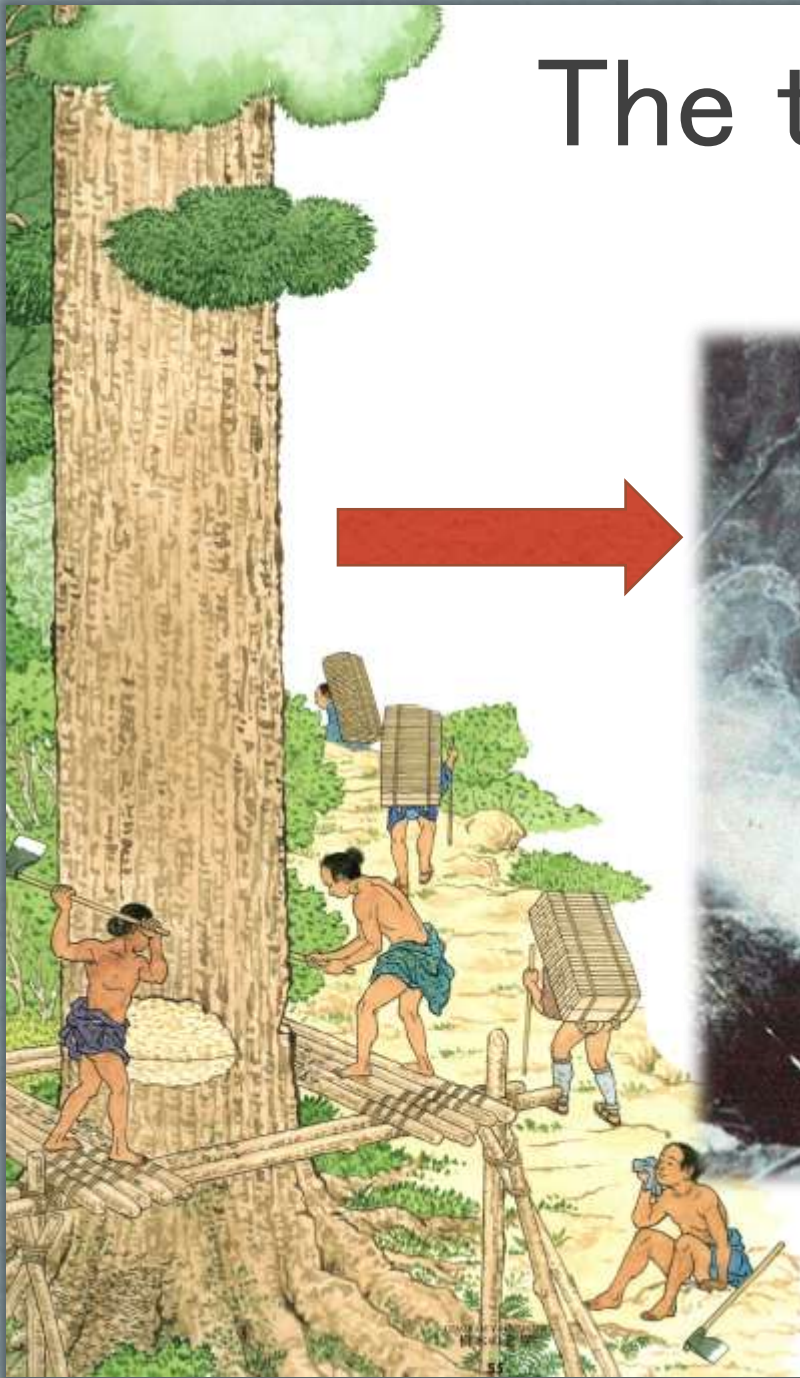
Founding director of the prestigious Unesco World Heritage Center  
(1992-1999)

## Dr. B. von Droste

“The value of Yakushima as a natural heritage, is that the excellent nature has left while many people lived”



# The times passed





Why nature has remained ?



# Nature is god

八百万の神 (Yaoyorozu-no-kami )

= Multitudinous gods (8million gods)

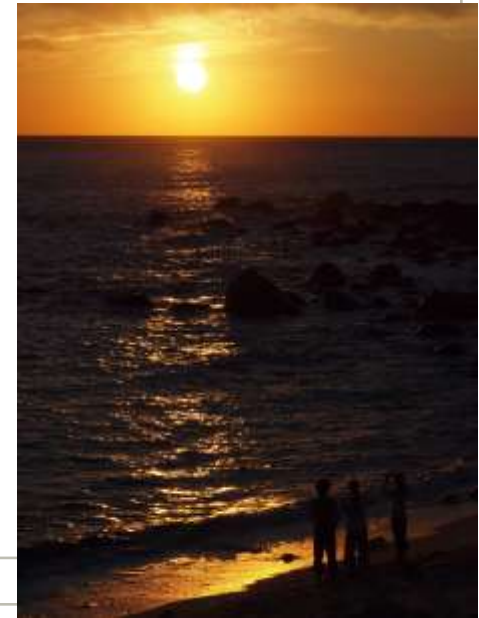
Big stone Gods



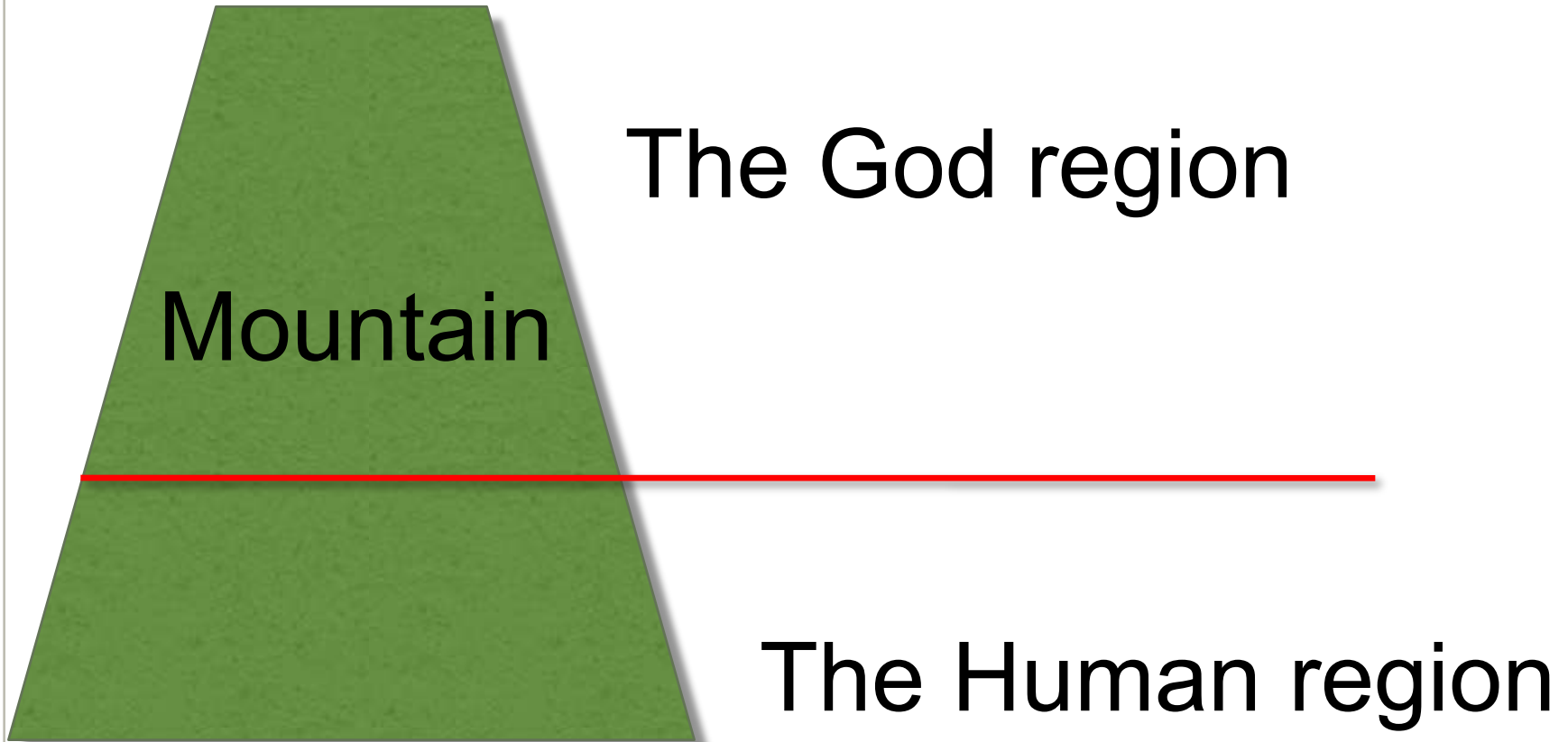
Toilet Goddess



“Otentou-sama”



# Mountains inhabited by gods



# Traditional mountain rule

- **“Takemairi”**

(make a pilgrimage to mountain)

- **“Yamankansa’ s” Day**

(It is the day that everyone must not enter the mountain.)

- **Every women could not enter the mountain.**  
(until Meiji Era)

and all that...



# Takemairi



During this ceremony the people pray to mountain gods For bountiful agricultural and fish harvests for safety in the home

There is different Gods in each mountain

Mt. shichigodake



Mt. Ishiduka



Mt. Miyanoura





# Take beach sand



# Climbing mountain





there is cave at the summit  
of mountain





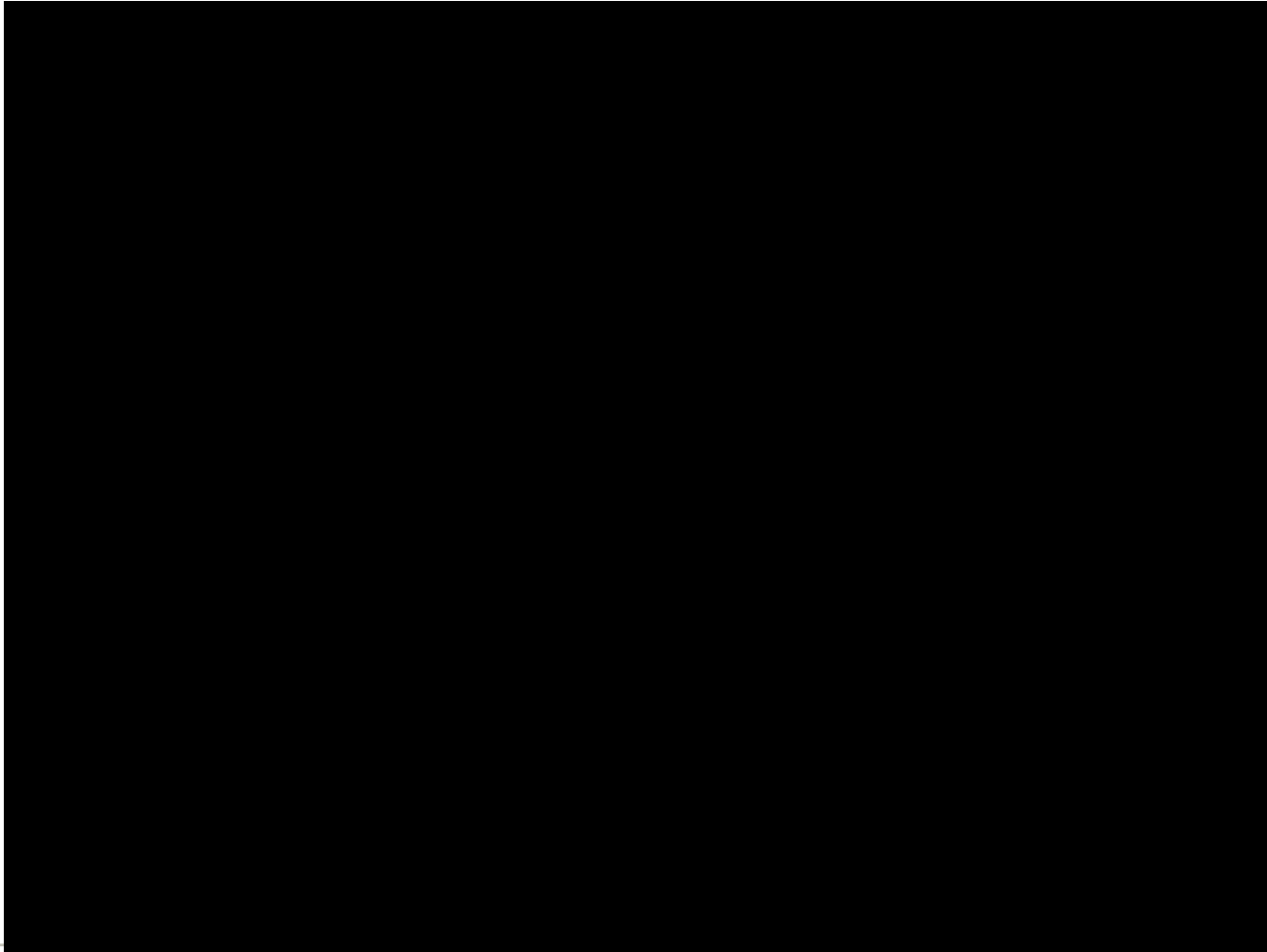
# collect plants



# Sakamukae



耳踊り mindaiko-dance



# Meaning of Mindaiko dance

- This dance mean Listening carefully the voice of God and nature.



So everybody, Let's dance !



# 怪談 “KAIDAN”

(Story of strange and horror)



“Yama-hime”  
Mountain princess

“Gejibe”





# Beginning of protect environment



# About 40 years ago

A.D. 1972

Young people who went out of Yakushima had begin to action to protect the environment.

“Be hand down Yakushima’s nature to posterity”

**20 years later.**

A.D. 1993

Yakushima was registered as a World Heritage Site

**20 years later.**



# Now

- **The number of visitors keeps rising.**

1975.

**11** thousand

1995.

**25.6** thousand

2011.

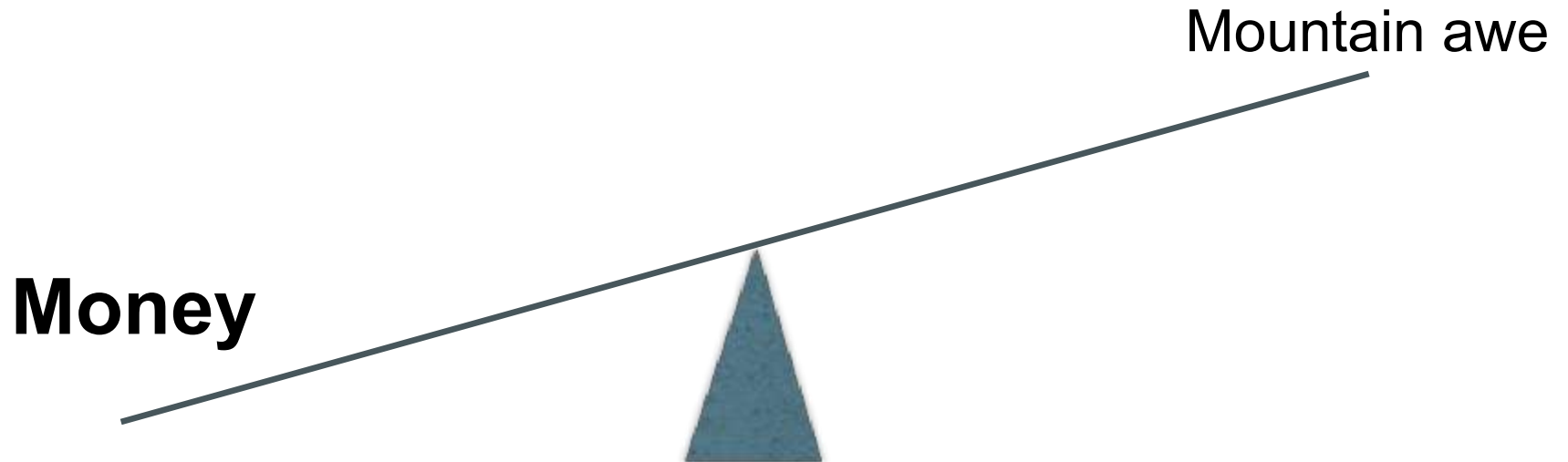
**31.9** thousand

- The problem of human waste disposal.
- Beaten roots of a tree
- It is poor quality of partial mountain guides.
- Inadequacy of mountain guide registration system.

and more...

# Have they lost mountain awe ?

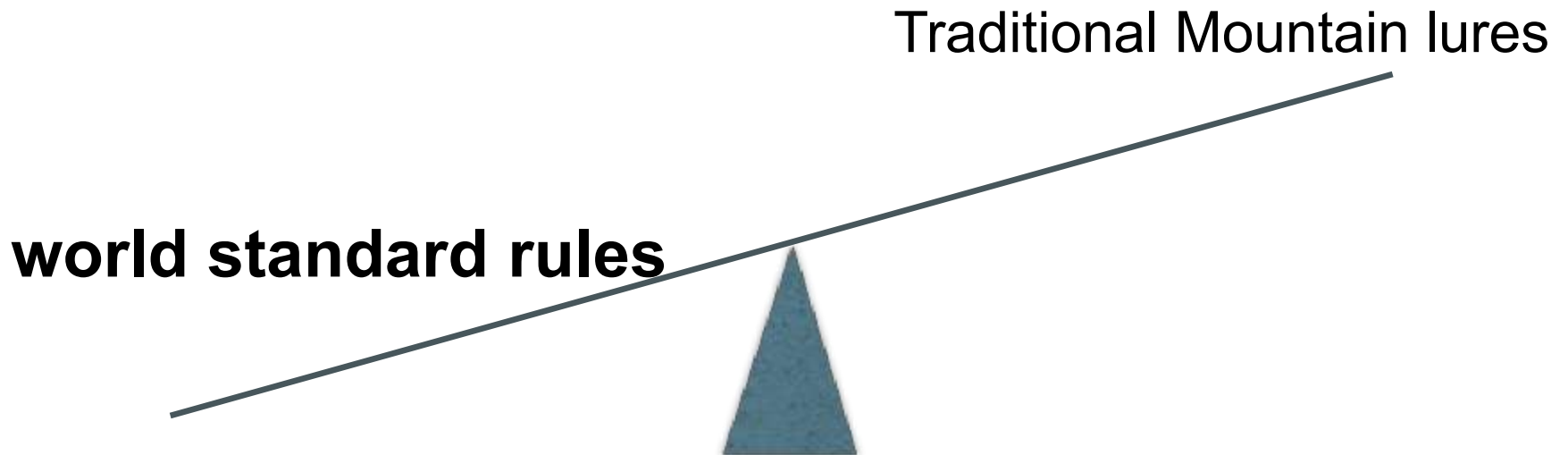
The introduction of the world economy





# Do they stick to traditional rules ?

Yakushima became heritage for  
people all over the world



**But, they can't be helped.**

~~We Inheritance only natural  
heritage.~~

**Individual's life**

**Nature**

**Culture**

The islanders have been living with nature.

Mountains and the islanders have created a original cultures  
and natural beauty.

# Our programs



# Concept

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**Develop human resources that can  
hear nature voice.**



# Participants

- Islanders & Visitors
  - From elementary school kids to adults



We educate ca.7000 people every year.

# Our program at village area





# Our program at village area





# Our program at mountain area



# How to educate

*Cleyera japonica*



*Illicium anisatum*

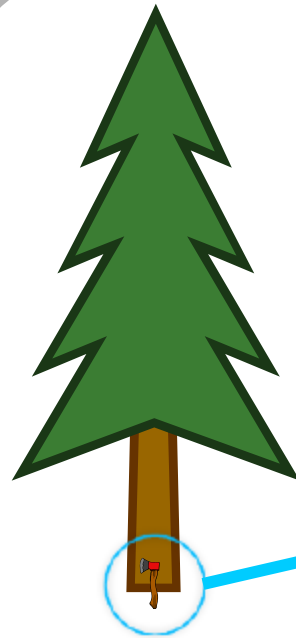


# How to educate

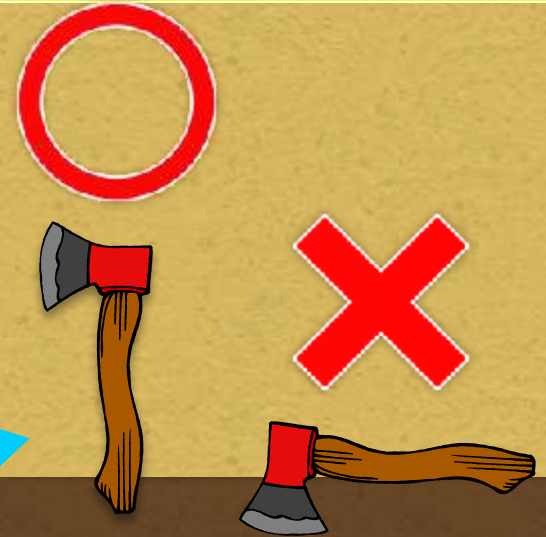




# Jochiku Tomari



whole night later



- The overnight hours make you think whether should cut the tree.
- If someone is against cutting down the tree he can prevent people from cutting the tree by falling the axe.
- **The ceremony to confirm the Gods**

results

# Voice of participants

昔から引き継がれ、守られてきた文化・自然を自分達を守っていくかなければ  
ならない。そのために、今回の体験から学んだことを生かし、自分中自然  
を管理、していくかなければならない。

歴史と今とを結びつけられたいと思います。昔があったの今なんだということも  
感じることができ、お話を聞くことができました。普段生活していきながら

自然をよく見てみると、昔のことも見えてくる。ということも発見しほいた  
感動

And many many more !!



# He is a result





**Standing on the shoulders of giants**



**END**



**Bow to the feet of giants**