

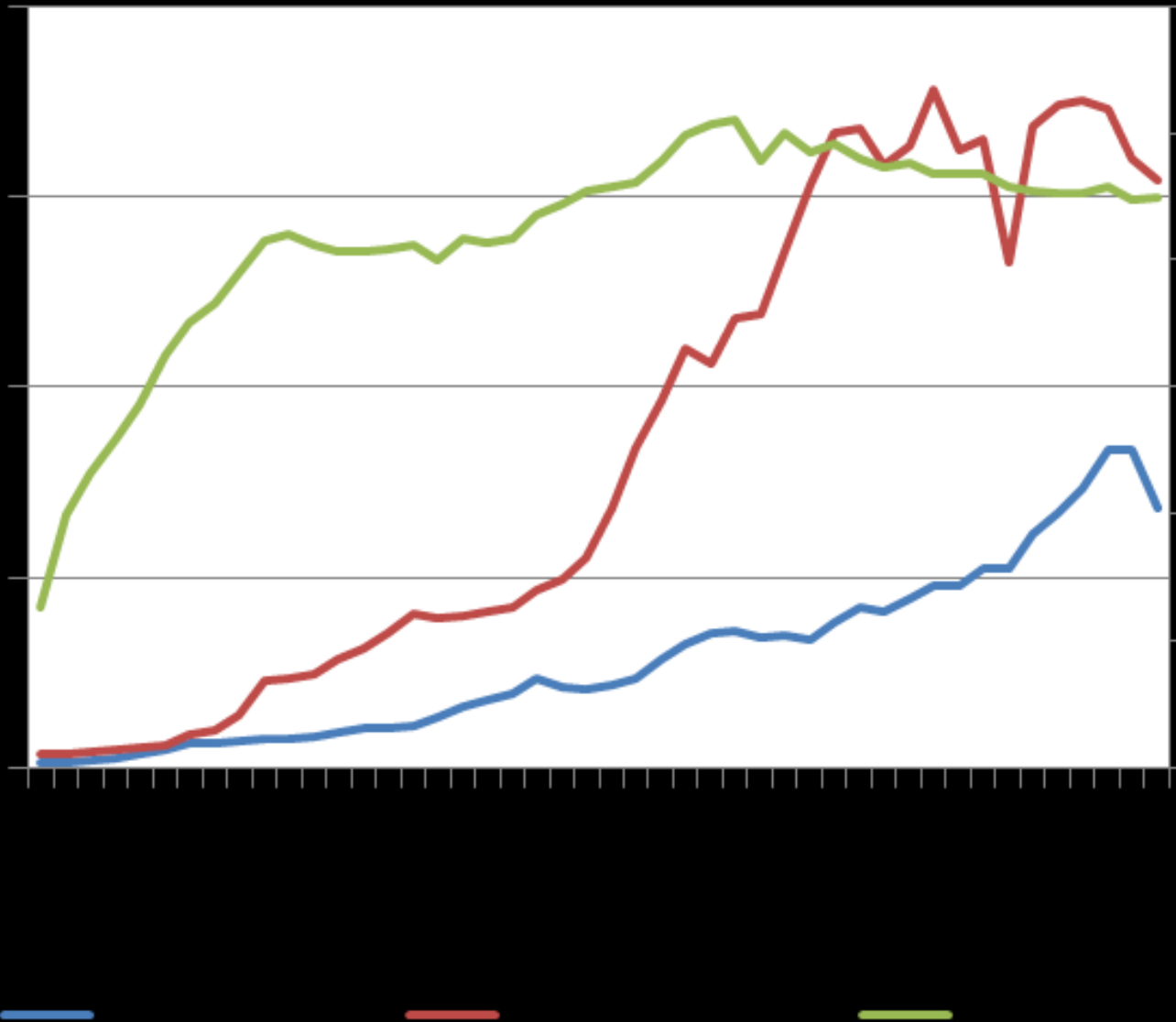
An Investigation of Inbound Nature-Based Tourism: the Case of Western Visitors to Kamikochi in the Japan Alps.

**The First Asia Parks Congress in Sendai
November 14 to 16, 2013
Working Group No. 2
15 mins + 5 mins Q&A**

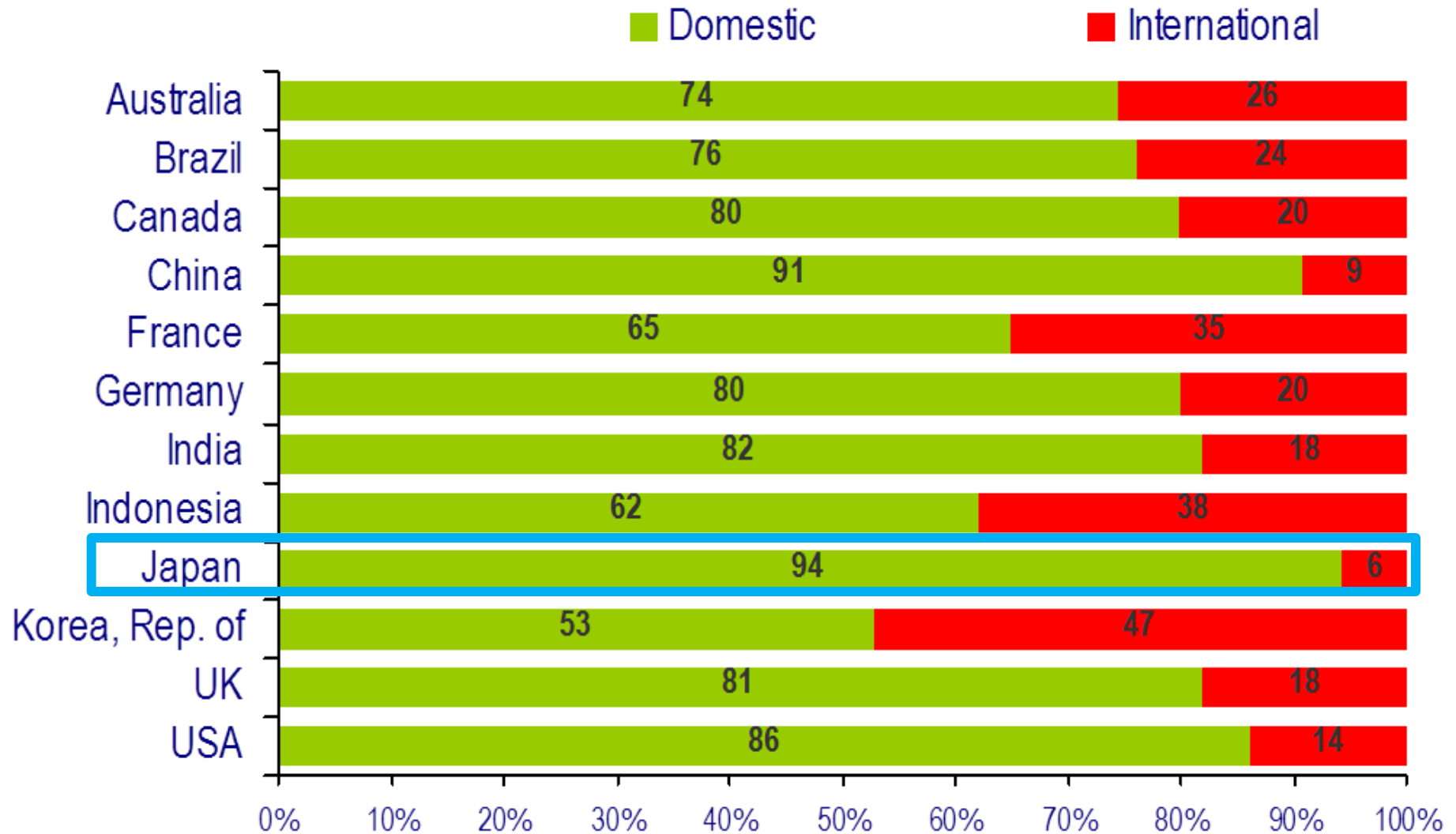
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Nature Park Visits and Inbound & Outbound Travelers 1964-2009



Breakdown of tourism-related income (2010)



Historically, attracting foreign capital among the principal policy-goals of Japan's original National Park Act (1931)

Despite carbon footprint, attracting inbound visitors remains a core target for park managers.

Aim: summarize inbound trends from Japan Alps case study

- ① questionnaire survey → descriptive results
- ② focus group → implications for marketing & management





Gifu Pref.



Nagano Pref.

Takayama City
 Population : 94,176
 Households : 34,347
 Aged : 26.5%

K
 Matsumoto City
 Population : 227,627
 Households : 89,266
 Aged : 21.2%

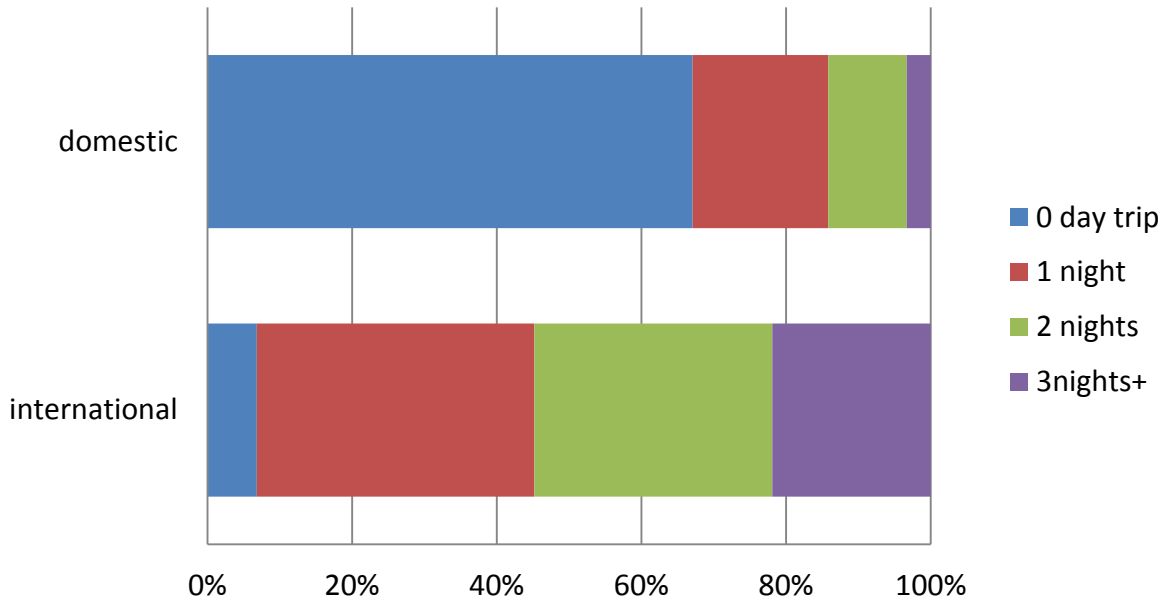


Survey period	July 19 th – August 31 st 2010		
Distribution point	20 Accommodation facilities, Bus Terminal, Visitor Centre etc		
Collection rate	Matsumoto (n=67)	Kamikochi (n=94)	Takayama (n=42)

Length of stay

Variable		Kamikochi (n=93)	Matsumoto (n=67)	Takayama (n=41)
Length of stay	Daytrip	32.3%	25.4%	4.9%
	1 night	22.6%	22.4%	31.7%
	2 nights	29.0%	28.4%	56.1%
	>3 nights	16.1%	23.9%	7.3%
Pull factor	#1 Rank	Mountain scenery; Yakedake etc (n=31)		
	#2 Rank	Nature; wild animals etc (n=16)		
Avg. daily budget		\$107.73	\$102.55	\$126.39

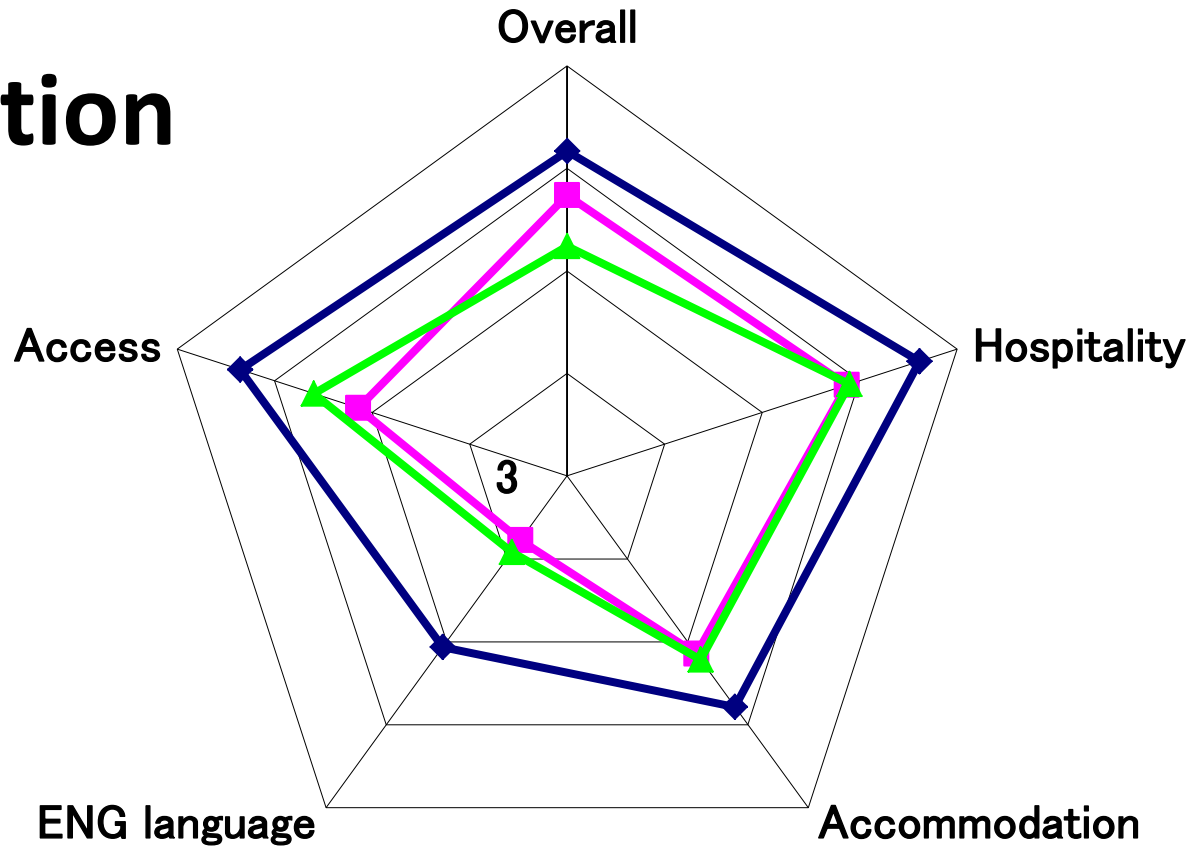
Length of stay at Kamikochi



◆ 2/3 of Kamikochi visitors stayed overnight

◆ 2/3 of Takayama visitors stayed for >2nights

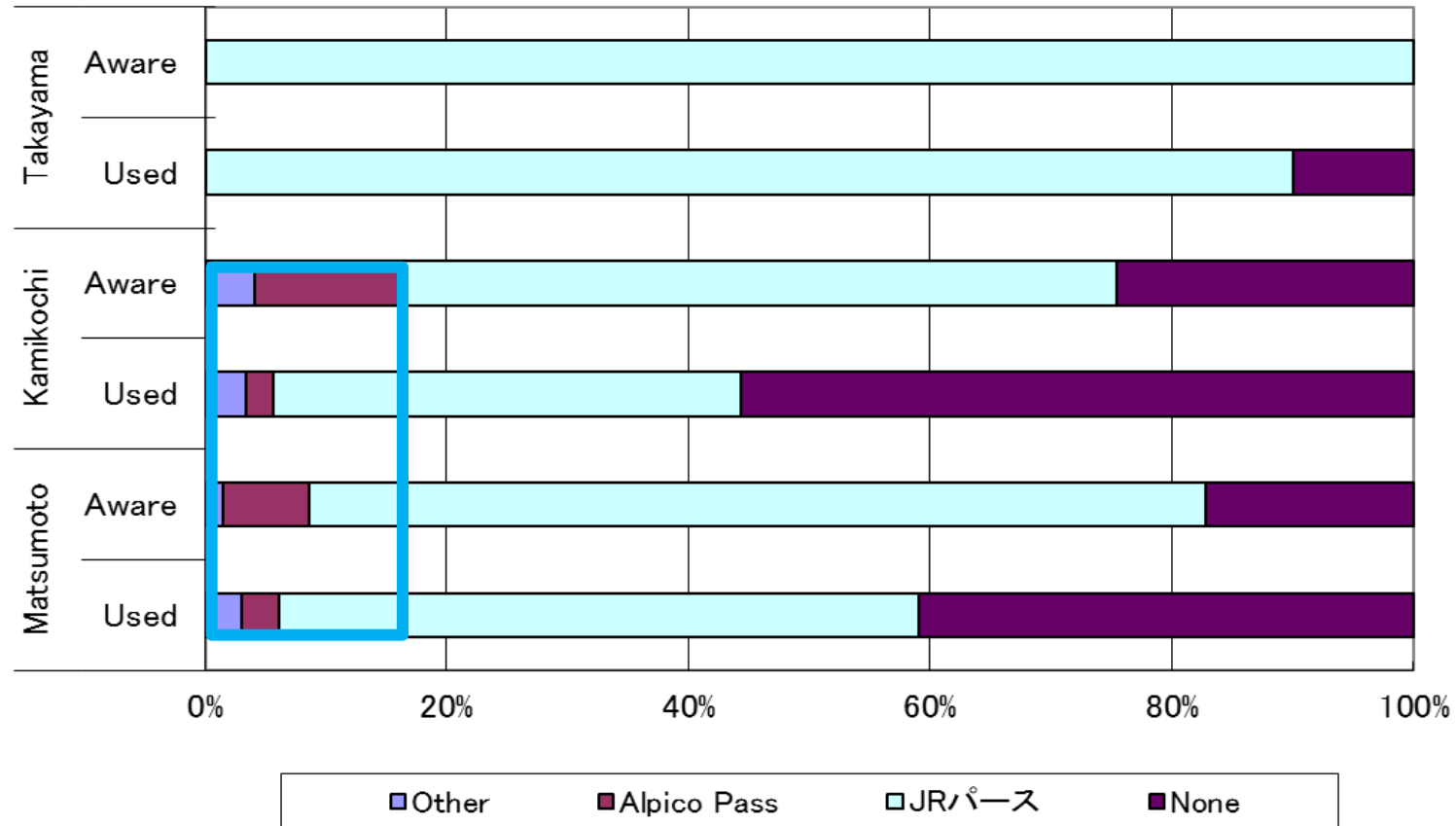
Satisfaction



◆ Matsumoto (n=62) ◆ Kamikochi (n=84) ◆ Takayama (n=40)

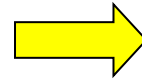
- ◆ overall high scores (avg. 4.1 – 4.6 on 5 point Likert scale)
- ◆ ENG language & Access need improvement → free comments

Access



- ◆ High use rate and awareness of JR pass, especially at Takayama
- ◆ Low use rate and awareness of newly established Alpico pass

Marketing implications



Marketing implications (cont.)



- ◆ (Western) inbounds more interested in live volcanoes and Kamonji; interpreting resources to fit the audience needs

Management implications



- ◆ Tension between...
- ◆ Marketing strategies: seek to promote macaques as tourism assets

But...

- ◆ Management strategies: seek to drive off the monkeys as a nuisance; aim to preserve integrity of natural environment

Management implications

Please more signs in English!
M28, Switzerland



More English language signs needed on the trails (very easy to get lost) *F43, Australia*

- ◆ More generally, need for information tailored for int. market; e.g. multilingual trail signs; information on culture as well as nature → help to understand RULES (e.g. ban on cars)

Conclusion

- Preliminary survey on inbound NBT market segment
- Despite impacts (and no formal NBT framework), inbound visitors already fulfill many of the criteria for NBT, especially the tendencies to stay longer and explore more of the valley
- Different needs has implications for
 - i) Marketing – how to tell Kamikochi’s story
 - ii) Management – how to explain rules & customs etc.
- due attention to Visitor Services to alleviate frictions, e.g. the macaque monkeys etc.



- Lack of English language signs, and accredited guides etc.
- Linking national park destinations into tourist itineraries
- Implementing a joined up policy to protect & promote parks

Opportunities



- Inviting international visitor guests one of the founding aims
- Growth potential of the inbounds could help revitalize stagnant domestic markets (c.f. signs, accredited guides etc.)
- Implementing a joined up policy to protect & promote parks

Thank you – Arigato gozaimashita



Special thanks to Matsumoto City & SCOP <http://npo-scop.jp/>