

Achieving the Society of True Prosperity

Changes in individual attitudes towards economic affluence and the environment

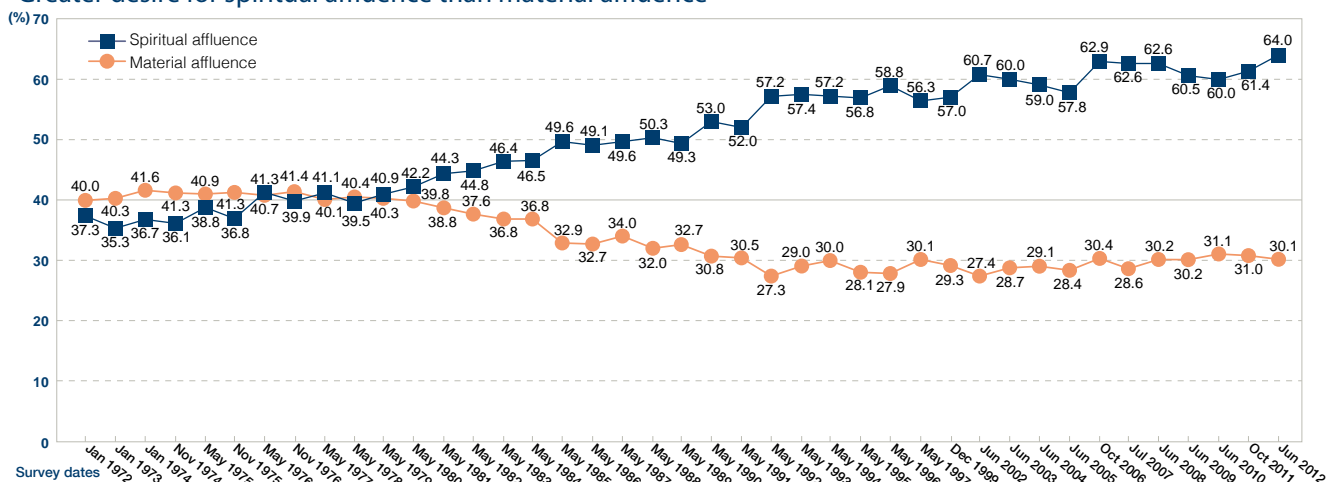
After the rapid economic growth in the 1960s, Japan's GDP per capita rose to global top levels, and life became convenient and comfortable for a large proportion of Japanese people. However, environmental problems became more serious with each passing year. Then, in 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake struck, taking large numbers of precious lives. In its aftermath, massive pollution of the environment with radioactive materials has made people rethink the ideas toward economic affluence and the attitudes to the environment.

Japan has consistently surveyed attitudes to affluence since 1972, asking people about whether in the future they would place more importance on spiritual affluence or material affluence. In the early

surveys, respondents placing importance on material affluence slightly outnumbered those placing importance on spiritual affluence. But in the late 1970s, the situation reversed, and in 2012 the number of people emphasizing spiritual affluence was more than double the number emphasizing material affluence.

A new survey in FY 2012 researched how attitudes to protecting the environment had changed after the Great East Japan Earthquake found that, for all survey items, over 45% of respondents rated environmental conservation as more important, while over 60% considered "Saving electricity and energy" and "Effects of radiation" as more important since the disaster.

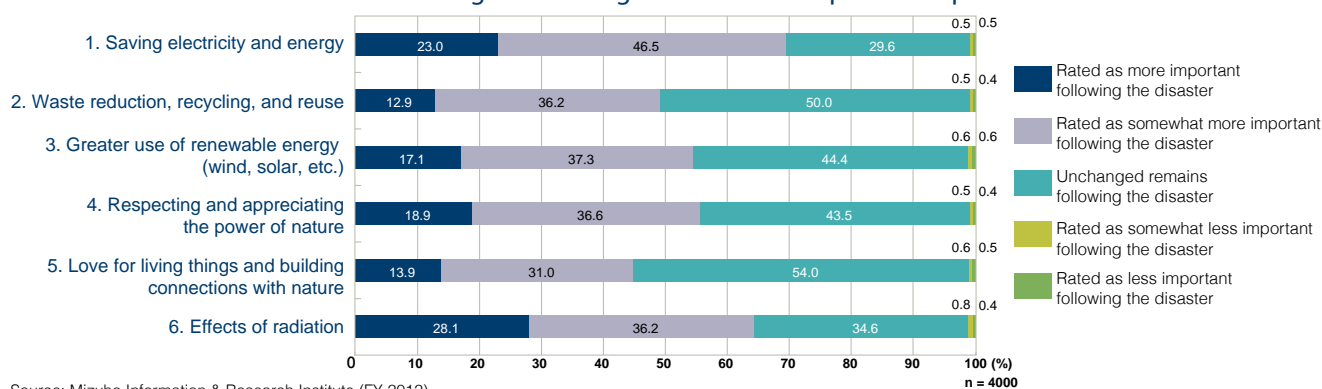
Greater desire for spiritual affluence than material affluence



Note: Spiritual affluence: "Since my lifestyle has become somewhat affluent in a material sense, in the future I would like to place importance on a spiritually rich and relaxing lifestyle."
 Material affluence: "I would like to continue to place importance on achieving a materially affluent lifestyle."

Source: Public Opinion Survey Concerning People's Lifestyles, Cabinet Office

How attitudes to the environment changed following the Great East Japan Earthquake



Source: Mizuho Information & Research Institute (FY 2012) n = 4000