

Displaced by Fukushima as a case of Environmental and Forced Migration

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Nuclear Displacement: Two Patterns

Total Number of Fukushima Evacuees: 1 60 000 (May 2012)

1. From Evacuation Zones defined by the government

Mandatory Evacuation (110 000)

Recognized as legitimate evacuees/victims by the government

➡ Financial compensation and assistance

2. Outside of Evacuation Zones

Voluntary Evacuation (“Self-Evacuees”) (50 000)

Not recognized as legitimate evacuees/victims

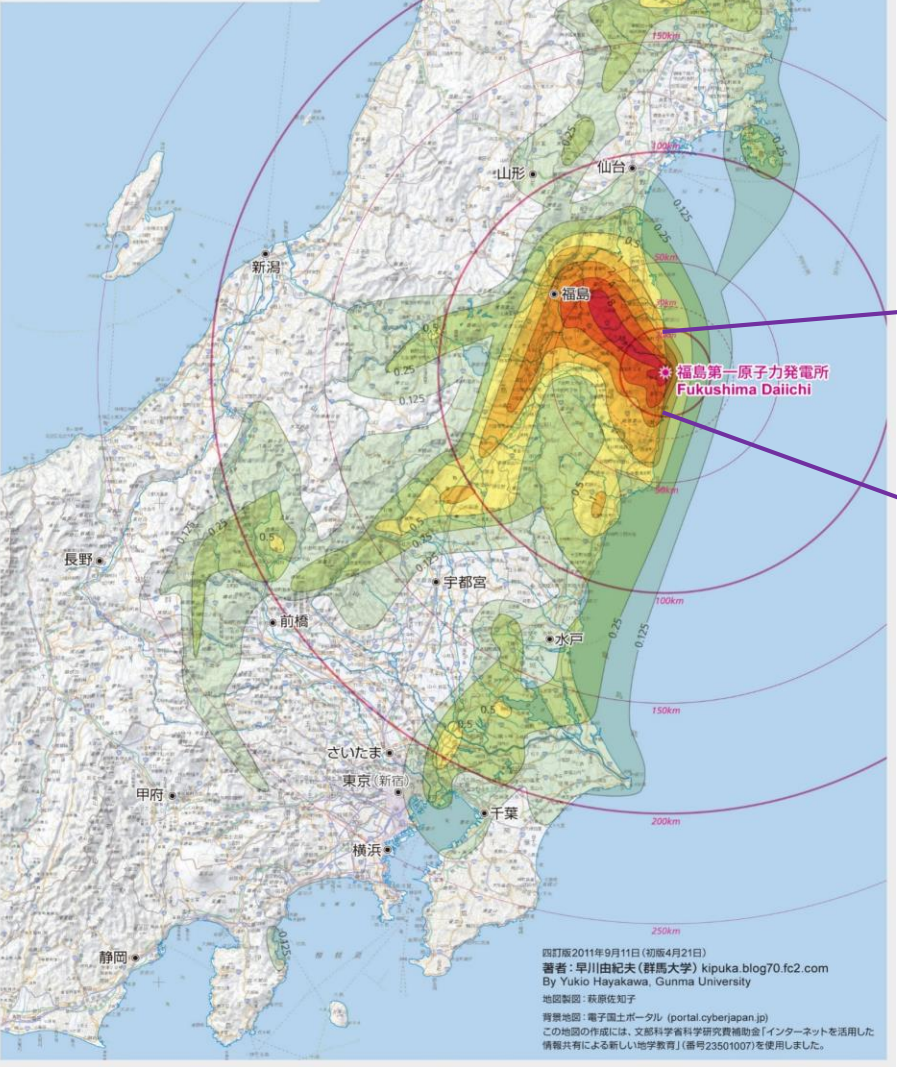
➡ No (little) compensation and assistance



福島第一原発から漏れた放射能の広がり
Radiation contour map
of the Fukushima Daiichi accident

2011年3月に地表に落ちた放射性物質がそのままの状態
で保存されている場所の放射線量が色分けしまし
ました。芝生など草地で現在計測される数値です。この
数値は3年で半分にになります。

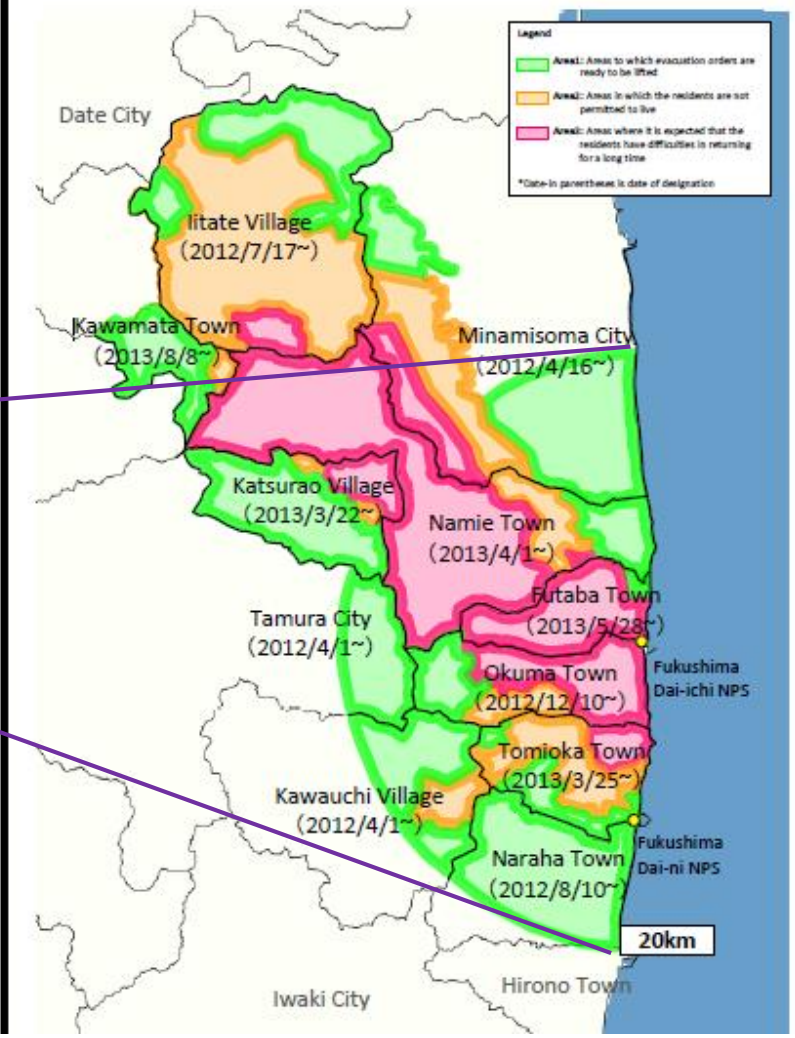
- 8 μSv/h 以上
- 4 μSv/h 以上
- 2 μSv/h 以上
- 1 μSv/h 以上
- 0.5 μSv/h 以上
- 0.25 μSv/h 以上
- 0.125 μSv/h 以上 ※ μSv/h (マイクロシーベルト/時)



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Areas to which evacuation orders have been issued

(August 7, 2013)



Source: Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) 2013



Evacuation Zone: encouraged return

- The authorities raised the radiation safety standard from 1mSv/year (international guideline) to 20mSv/year
- Return encouraged by “carrot and stick” tactics: financial incentives + cessation of shelter assistance
- Question of return highly politicized, provoking the sense of loyalty to the community and the glorified notion of “resilience”
- Only 20% of residents wish to return (More than 60 years old, deeply attached to their land) eg. Naraha town, 8% return rate (2016)
- “Unsustainable Return”: towns with no children or young generation



Outside of Evacuation Zones: encouraged to “Live with Radiological Contamination”

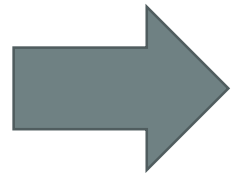
- Concerned population: about 1 million
- With the new safety limit of 20mSv/year, the authorities reassure and encourage residents to stay despite contamination
- Many mothers with children evacuate, leaving husbands to stay working (family separation) eg. 50% split in two or more locations
- Without financial assistance, those who have financial means, family network and social capitals leave
- “Voluntary evacuation” = a taboo subject
- 20-30% of Fukushima City residents still wish to evacuate (Fukushima city, 2012; 2013)



Divided families and communities



Nuclear Post-Accident Policy on displacement: encourage return and to live with radiation risk



Explore the status of nuclear evacuees in normative frameworks and international laws

- Nuclear Evacuees = IDPs?
- or Environmentally displaced persons?
- or Environmental migrant?



IDPs

- **Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement** (UN, 1998)

“Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, of human rights or natural **or human-made disasters**, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.”

- **Kampala Convention** (2009) (the first legally-binding instrument on internal displacement) recognizes IDPs due to the effects of climate change.



Environmental displacement/migration

- Jacobson (1988) identified a type of environmental refugees as: “those who migrate because environmental degradation has undermined their livelihood or poses unacceptable risks to health”
- Reuvers and Warner (2007) related to the concept of environmental refugees into three categories:
 - environmentally displaced migrants (“reluctant migrants” (the worse)
 - environmentally forced migrants (“have to leave” with decision-makings)
 - environmental refugees (extreme events, disasters)

Is evacuees under evacuation order “environmental refugees”?

Is “self-evacuees” of nuclear disasters “environmentally forced migrant”?



“Climate Refugees”

- In a background paper prior to the launch of **the Nansen Initiative**, Walter Kälin (2008) proposed three criteria to identify environmental displacement: **permissibility, factual possibility and reasonableness of return.**
 - Is it permissible to make people return (to a situation where their life or limb is at risk)?
 - Is it physically, administratively or legally possible?
 - Is it reasonable to send people back to a situation with no assistance or zones considered inhabitable?
- The notion of “**well-founded**” **fear** in the case of environmental migration or voluntary evacuation after nuclear disasters (Interview with W. Kälin in 2012)



Gaps

Examining nuclear disaster displacement through the notion of IDPs and environmental forced migration, we can identify the following gaps:

- Three main debates surrounding the notion of environmental migrants/refugees (e.g. Castles 2002): 1. the terminology “environmental refugee”; 2. whether environmental factors are the root cause of displacement; and 3. who should provide protection (Renaud et al. 2007). In the case of nuclear displacement, the second and third questions are irrelevant.
- Because nuclear accidents are human-made disasters, there is a factor of operator’s and state’s responsibility/liability issues as well as considerable political and economic interests in managing the aftermath.
- For the protection of environmentally forced migrants, there is clearly a gap in international normative frameworks and instruments, compared to IDPs (which was much aspired from refugee protection principles). Kälin calls it “legal and operational limbo” (Kälin 2008)



Relevancies

Recognizing them as IDPs, the competent authorities are to follow the recommendations made within Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (UN, 1998) and the Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs (UN, 2009) including:

- “under no circumstances should IDPs be encouraged or compelled to return or relocate to areas where their life, safety, liberty or health would be at risk” (UN, 2009: 12)
- Three durable solutions are to be proposed to the displaced: voluntary return, local integration or resettlement.
- “the rights, needs and legitimate interests of IDPs should be the primary considerations that guide all policies and decisions relating to internal displacement and durable solutions” (UN, 2009: 16)



Concluding remarks

- The Nansen Initiative for internal displacement?
- The precautionary principle in environmental law
Eg. Rio's declaration, 1992, Art.15
- Following these notions, mandatory/voluntary evacuation after a nuclear accident could be understood as a legitimate mitigation/protection strategy.

