



## Human population



The course of structural change in human society will be experienced in the coming few decades due to the declined birth rate and aging of Japanese society. The low birth rate and aging populations are not only a matter of human society. Time and spatial fluctuations in the demography affect land uses, and it will subsequently impact on biodiversity conservation and sustainability of ecosystem services. In reality, lack of labor force will become more and more severe in remote areas making Satoyama maintenance and forestry impractical. Rare and/or endangered species occur not only in intact and pristine ecosystems, but quite a few species are well adapted particularly to Satoyama or man-made ecosystems. ThinkNature's research projects have revealed such contributions of Satoyama habitats to Japan's biodiversity. Abandoned countryside landscapes, where previously had human interventions, now accelerate ecological successions, which alter habitat conditions of secondary forests, grasslands and farming landscapes, and drive those specific species locally extinct. Thus, the human population decline has a tight link with threats to biodiversity conservation via drastic land use changes.

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