

Yoshida, Kunimitsu

**Article**

## "Localness" in donburi rice bowls in a remote rural areas: The case of Noto Peninsula, Japan

Research in Globalization

**Provided in Cooperation with:**

Elsevier

*Suggested Citation:* Yoshida, Kunimitsu (2023) : "Localness" in donburi rice bowls in a remote rural areas: The case of Noto Peninsula, Japan, Research in Globalization, ISSN 2590-051X, Elsevier, Amsterdam, Vol. 7, pp. 1-11,  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resglo.2023.100147>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/331073>

**Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen:**

Die Dokumente auf EconStor dürfen zu eigenen wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und zum Privatgebrauch gespeichert und kopiert werden.

Sie dürfen die Dokumente nicht für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, öffentlich zugänglich machen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Sofern die Verfasser die Dokumente unter Open-Content-Lizenzen (insbesondere CC-Lizenzen) zur Verfügung gestellt haben sollten, gelten abweichend von diesen Nutzungsbedingungen die in der dort genannten Lizenz gewährten Nutzungsrechte.

**Terms of use:**

*Documents in EconStor may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.*

*You are not to copy documents for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the documents publicly, to make them publicly available on the internet, or to distribute or otherwise use the documents in public.*

*If the documents have been made available under an Open Content Licence (especially Creative Commons Licences), you may exercise further usage rights as specified in the indicated licence.*



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



# “Localness” in donburi rice bowls in a remote rural areas: The case of Noto Peninsula, Japan

Kunimitsu Yoshida

Rissho University, 1700 Magechi, Kumagaya, Saitama, Postal Code: 360-0194, Japan

## ARTICLE INFO

### Keywords:

Local food  
Regional promotion  
Commodification  
Notodon  
Noto Peninsula  
Japan

## ABSTRACT

This paper takes the example of “notobowl (Notodon)”, which was created as a new “local dish” in the Oku-Noto region, a peripheral area at the tip of the Noto Peninsula, Japan, to showcase how local chefs selected local ingredients to serve on bowls of rice to promote the local characteristics of the Noto (or Oku-Noto) region. This research focuses on small-scale family businesses, in the context of globalization and the global market economy. Each restaurant used products that it had already been selling locally by recommodifying them with a Notodon theme, so that they could be sold in a larger market area. I conducted semi-structured interviews with restaurant managers and other people who were part of the production process. The interviews focused on how each restaurant came up with its original dish, which considered the restaurant’s location, its existing operation, and the influence of outside actors. The interview questions also inquired about the effects of commodifying localness on small family businesses in peripheral areas. The interviews indicated that local small-scale businesses led the promotion of Notodon. The restaurants followed their own procedures when they served their local dishes, they encouraged tourists to consume their Notodon.

## Introduction

All areas are incorporated into the global economic system through globalization, regardless of whether they are core or peripheral areas, or in the Global North or the Global South (Woods, 2011). In economically marginal areas, local economic activities are being transformed as small-scale family businesses, such as family farms and small businesses with limited capital accumulation are forced to compete directly with other areas (Heley & Jones, 2012; Hung, 2013, 2014; Woods, 2007). For example, tea production is enhanced by global actors.

The peripheral regions in particular are strongly connected to the global economic system and have become caught up in inter-regional competition (McCarthy, 2008). In peripheral regions of developed economies, survival strategies related to tourism are promoted either by the local residents themselves or by various entities such as local governments, local companies, or capital from outside the region (Ilbery, Morris, Buller, Maye, & Kneafsey, 2005; McDonagh, 2013). As a result of diverse survival strategies, economically marginal areas have been turned into objects of consumption through the commercialisation of various tangible and intangible goods that evoke ‘localness’ and ‘rurality’ that are not encountered in daily life in large cities or other urban areas where populations are more concentrated (Cloeke, 2006;

Cruickshank, 2009; Halfacree, 1993; Halpern & Mitchell, 2011; Ricketts-Hein, Ilbery, & Kneafsey, 2006; Murdoch, Marsden, & Banks, 2000; Rausch, 2008, 2009; Tachikawa, 2005). Previous studies have examined how the various objects of consumption are represented, and the significance of the places themselves.

Regarding the commodification of rural space, an empirical study on how ‘power’ on a macro scale can restructure local areas is needed (Frisvoll, 2012; Takahashi, 1997). In addition, although commodification and the development of tourism can be seen in many regions, the areas studied are skewed towards the United Kingdom (Kordel, 2016). Very few studies have targeted non-Western societies (Takahashi, 1997; Tachikawa, 2005; Asakura, 2014; McMorran, 2014; Schrager, 2021a).

In Japan, personalised tourism styles are becoming increasingly prevalent, many reports using the keywords ‘commodification of rural space’ have become prominent since the 2010s (Tabayashi, 2008; Tabayashi, 2013, 2015, 2020). The research led by Tabayashi has produced the largest number of academic papers on the subject; it has also taken on the affirmation of regional promotion measures that commercialise objects in rural areas so that they can be consumed by people outside the region and increase tourism income. This research has focused on local activities and has not considered the ‘power’ of outside regions to restructure local areas.

E-mail address: [ysh-9232@ris.ac.jp](mailto:ysh-9232@ris.ac.jp).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resglo.2023.100147>

Received 27 May 2022; Received in revised form 8 July 2023; Accepted 3 August 2023

Available online 5 August 2023

2590-051X/© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Asakura (2018) describes a case study area on the periphery of the Tokyo metropolitan area. It is a tourist destination that started out as a place to experience the making of handicrafts. The rurality expressed by the handicrafts was made up in economic activity, which made the various actors uneasy and created conflict among the actors in the region. To examine survival strategies, such as tourism, from a long-term perspective, it is necessary to study the meaning that the people involved assign to the commercialised items, and how they are consumed by people who do not live in the area.

Two items that are commodified in Japan's economically marginal areas are region-specific local cuisine and ingredients (Suyama & Takahashi, 2013; Takayanagi, 2008), which is part of a growing literature on food tourism. Japan is a country with monsoon weather patterns. It also includes a range of climatic zones—from Hokkaido in the sub-arctic zone to Okinawa in the subtropical zone. A diverse natural environment, influenced by climate, has resulted in a variety of traditional local cuisines and agricultural and fishery products (Araki, 2020), through which regions express their unique character. In addition to the traditional local cuisine, new local specialties have been created e. g. train box lunches or “*Ekiben*” (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2019), which has become a standard means for promoting local economies.

Whether it be traditional local cuisine or newly created local dishes, during the commodification process some sort of label is attached to the object targeted for consumption (Ilbery et al., 2005). One of the items in this label is “localness” (Murdoch et al., 2000). Murdoch et al. (2000) analysed the new value creation process related to the production and consumption of such food items, identifying connections to the natural environment, society, and culture (history).

Since the development of actor–network theory (ANT), the various elements of the local natural environment have also been included in the network nodes constructed by human activities (Park, Park, & Lee, T., 2020; Iga, 2014; Mansfield, 2003a, 2003b). This viewpoint states that, entities affecting local materials are not only locally active individuals and developed capital external to the region, but that the natural environments surrounding a locality can become the entities that affect human decisions to take action. Considering a location that strongly reflects the local natural environment makes it easier to understand the relationship between the human and non-human elements. From this perspective, Iga (2017) has described an integrated wine production system developed in the town of Anamizu-town in Oku-Noto, where grapes had never been cultivated<sup>1</sup>. Localness is created not only by local actors but also within the balance of power between the various actors that make up the food supply chain on a more macro scale (Ilbery & Maye, 2006; Winter, 2003).

The food sector system established outside the region has an impact on local economic activity as well (Mansfield, 2003b). For example, Geographic Indication (GI) and Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) have forced changes in local agricultural practices (Jongsuksomsakul & Roebli, 2022). Selling restaurant cuisine may be taken up as an economic survival strategy in an economically marginal area, but it is not unrelated to the situation on a macro scale. Even an initiative that is local needs to be examined in the light of the interrelationship between the effects of scale from outside the region.

Few studies using Japan as an example have been published in English, particularly studies that focus on new trends in local areas that have occurred within the context of regional competition. The viewpoints of previous research vary from reporting to analytical research, including research that commends the commodification of localness in response to the demand for capital outside the region; however, such research is not sufficiently connected to a research trend in English-speaking countries (Assmann & (Ed.), 2016; Knight, 1994; Manzenreiter, Lützel, & Polak-Rottmann, 2020; Rausch, 2008, 2009; Schrager, 2021a, 2021b).

The expansion of economic zones through globalization, encourages large companies with significant capital accumulation to further collect capital, while small businesses are placed under their umbrella and

combined with large-cap companies in more distant locations (Woods, 2007). Japan has established a single-language, a national-based economic zone, which has been protected by national borders until now. However, with globalization removing certain economic borders, the lives of local citizens are more directly integrated into central and foreign capital through, for instance, reservation systems and electronic payment systems.

Thus, with respect to Japan's rural areas, it would be meaningful to study the persistence and transformation of small-scale family businesses, whose local capital is impacted by these drastic changes, to consider measures for resisting globalization. Most importantly, the Noto peninsula is one of the most peripheral regions in Japan; thus, it is a good example through which to consider the impact of globalization on local life.

This paper takes the example of the ‘Noto bowl’ (hereafter, ‘Noto-don’), which in general terms is known as “donburi”. Donburi is a common Japanese dish. When meat is used as an ingredient, the dish is known as *gyudon*, Yoshinoya is Japanese restaurant that specializes in *gyudon*, and is so popular that franchises exist outside Japan (Yoshinoya, 2023). Matsuya and Sukiya are two other large Japanese chains. Communities around Japan have been promoting their of donburi (Matsuya, 2023; Sukiya, 2023). The Oku-noto regions is one such area that has been promoting donburi as a form of regional promotion (Oku-Noto Welcome Project Promotion Council Secretariat, 2023), which was created as a new ‘local dish’ in the Oku-Noto region, a rural area at the tip of the Noto Peninsula, to showcase how local chefs selected local ingredients to serve in bowls to display the localness of the Noto (or Oku-Noto) region. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: First, the Oku-Noto region and the Noto-don project is introduced Second, the results obtained from interview surveys of different restaurants regarding their conception of an original Noto-don are analyzed by segregating them into the restaurants’ circumstances and external influences. Third, based on the results of the analysis, I will consider how local originality can be represented through a rice bowl’s ingredients or its toppings, and how these local ingredient and toppings become consumable objects in the market. In conclusion, the types of functions played within a globalized economy are portrayed through activities that transform localness into a consumable object.

## Materials and methods

After obtaining consent from the managers of the restaurant that served Noto-don to conduct the survey, semi-structured interviews were conducted with them<sup>2</sup> and with members of the Noto-don Business Cooperative Association. The interviews, all of which were in Japanese, were conducted in February and March 2021 and lasted from 30 min to two hours, averaging about one hour each. The restaurants were randomly sampled from the Oku-Noto region (Fig. 1), but the central areas of the city of Wajima were excluded. As Central Wajima is in the centre of the Noto Peninsula and is a national tourist destination, considering peripheralities therein would be difficult. The subjects that met the sampling criteria were the restaurants in towns and villages with struggling economies, such as the towns of Suzu and Noto-town. All interviewees were asked the same questions about their restaurants: 1) What prompted you to start serving Noto-don? 2) How did you select the menus, and on what basis did you choose your ingredients? and 3) Have there been changes to your customer base after you introduced Noto-don? Question 1 was used to obtain data on whether the restaurants actively started to serve Noto-don or whether they passively started to serve it in response to someone’s encouragement. Question 2 was used to obtain data on how each restaurant perceived the surrounding natural and social environment and obtained the local ingredients from what was locally available. Questions 1 and 2 helped to understand each restaurant’s rationale for selecting ingredients from the local natural environment, while being influenced by the feedback of tourists (using the analysis in 4.1). The purpose of Question 3 was to measure the

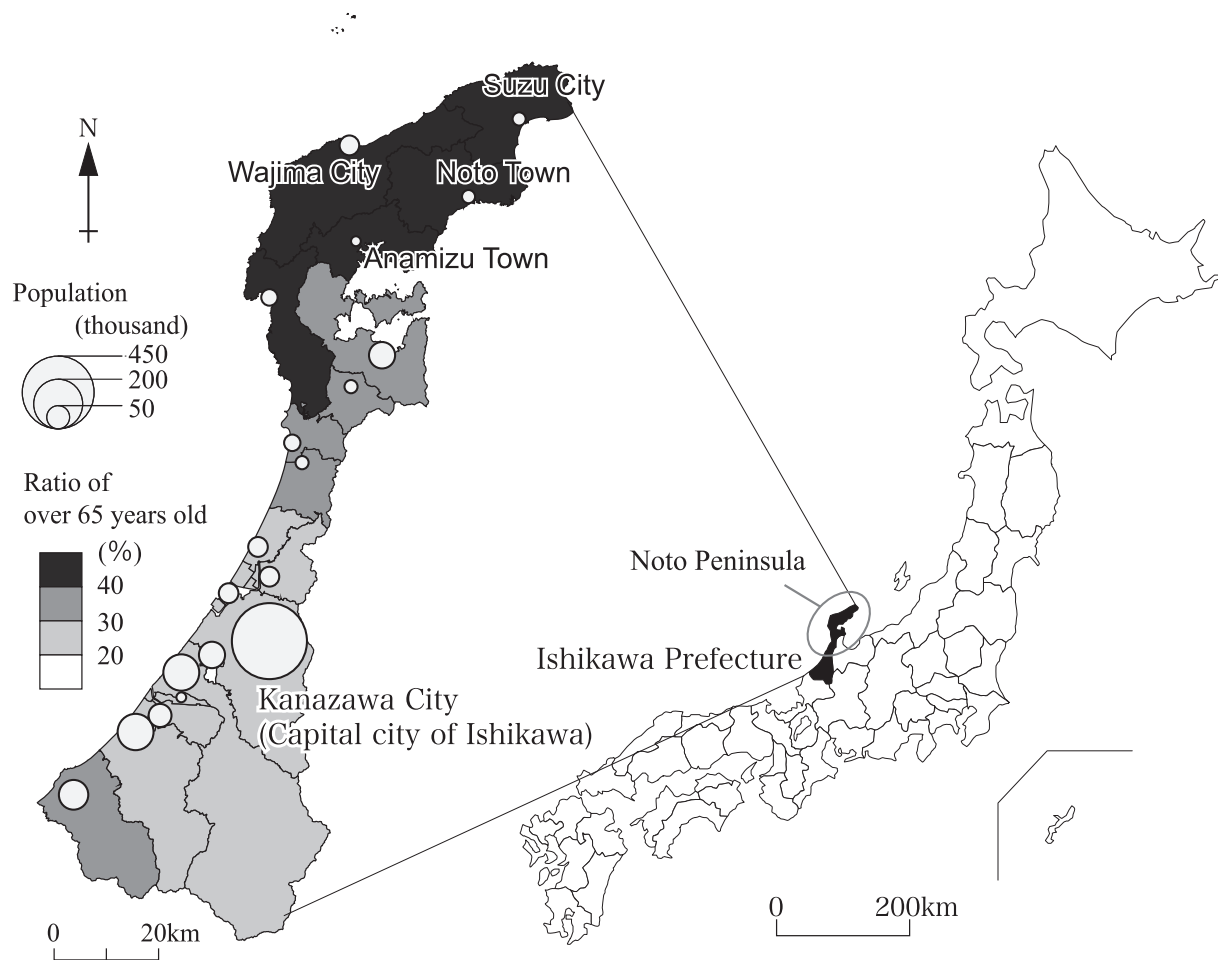


Fig. 1. Study area. Source: National Census 2015.

economic benefits that Notodon brings to each restaurant's business, and how tourists consumed the localness that is presented in Notodon (using the analysis in 4.2). All statements from the interviewees are based on interview field notes. None of the interviews were audio-recorded. The interviewees' statements were edited slightly, but the meaning was preserved so that they could be translated into English. Abbreviated interview responses include sections on related conversations, such as depopulation and aging in the Noto Peninsula, and the direction of the economic climate. Interview responses are limited to matters related to decisions regarding menus or Noto-don ingredients from Questions 1 to 3, and topics related to the status of customers' orders. The words in parentheses were added by the author.

The Notodon Business Cooperative Association was asked about 1) the creation and operation of the association, 2) how it is involved with the restaurants, and 3) the tendency for restaurant to give up offering Notodon and the reasons for it. From the results of these interviews, the author first uncovered the regional conditions leading to the development of Notodon, the 'local dish', and the various ways in which Notodon is served.

Next, from the interview data, I analysed the process by which each restaurant came up with their original dish, focusing on the restaurant's location, its existing format, and how it was influenced by outside actors. Information was also obtained about the history of the restaurant and the chef, especially the cooking techniques they have used local business practices, and the business relationships they have established within the local community. By examining governments and other entities that wield power beyond the local scale, in addition to tourists as outside actors, the impact of the political and economic situation at a macro scale on local restaurant practices can be captured (Mansfield, 2003b).

By organising these results according to scale, I examined how "localness" is expressed and served in a bowl. Finally, I will discuss the significance of the commodification of "localness" on small family businesses in the economically marginal areas.

## Background information: The Noto Peninsula and Notodon

### The Noto Peninsula

The Oku-Noto region is a typical rural Japanese area made up of the City of Wajima and the towns of Suzu, Noto, and Anamizu at the tip of the Noto Peninsula. The Oku-Noto region is located around 2 h by car from downtown Kanazawa, the capital of Ishikawa Prefecture. Even though Anamizu is connected by rail to Kanazawa, the only public transport serving the other towns are buses on fixed routes. It takes over three hours to reach Anamizu, the closest town to Kanazawa, using public transportation. The Noto Airport is located on the border between Wajima, Noto, and Anamizu. These are two daily scheduled flights to Tokyo's Haneda Airport that take about one hour.

Because of these inadequate transportation conditions, many young people graduate from high school and immediately leave for Kanazawa, Tokyo, or Osaka, to finish their education and start working. Depopulation has been evident since the 1950 s, with the outward migration of young people as the major contributing factor (Shoji et al., 2019). Wajima, with a population of 27,000, is the most populous settlement. Anamizu has a population of just under 9,000. The towns have an ageing population, with more than 40% of the population over 65 (the national average is 26.7% and the average for Ishikawa Prefecture is 27.9%) (MIC, 2015).



In Japan, the central government and prefectural governments are investing in subsidies to correct regional disparities between these rural areas and major cities, as well as providing various promotion and depopulation measures (Nishino, 2010). However, many programmes become useless once the subsidies cease (Baba & Yoshida, 2015). In particular, in the Noto Peninsula, including the Oku-Noto region, various initiatives give examples were launched that were supported by Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) in June 2011 (Fao, 2023), but these were not projects originally intended to promote commercial revitalisation. As a result, the economic benefits may not have met the expectations of the local residents. In addition, many projects that were designed to revitalise businesses were implemented in conjunction with the opening of the Hokuriku Shinkansen (bullet train) between Kanazawa and Tokyo in March 2015, but the majority of them disappeared at the end of the project period.

### The Notodon project

It was within this context that the Notodon project was launched on 1 December 2007, as a government-led initiative. Notodon was developed by a team *Syokusai kikou* involved in food tourism within the Ishikawa prefectural office as a part of the Oku-Noto Welcome Project (Oku-Noto Welcome Project Promotion Council Secretariat, 2023). The project was originally designed as a regional promotion plan to attract tourists from outside the region in preparation for the opening of the Hokuriku Shinkansen line in 2015. However, the project's launch was brought forward to 2007 because of the significant damage to the Oku-Noto region caused by the Noto Earthquake in March 2007. The project was intended to serve an additional purpose of disaster reconstruction<sup>3</sup>.

Notodon is defined by three elements—food (donburi), tableware (dishes), and cooking method it is one of the most popular traditional dishes in Japan. The main ingredients in Notodon are the *koshihikari* rice produced in the Oku-Noto region, the local water, the seafood caught in the Oku-Noto region, and the local meat and vegetables (Fig. 2). Traditional pickled cordiments from the region are also used. For tableware, the dishes require the use of Noto products such as pottery, lacquerware bowls, and chopsticks. The chopsticks used are often made of Wajima lacquerware and are given to customers to take home with them after the meal. The cooking methods are said to be healthy, employing less sodium and fat.

The main feature of the Notodon project is that it allows each restaurant to devise its own, original, menu. Each restaurant devises a different Notodon using its own concept of 'Oku-Noto-rashisa' (hereafter, 'Oku-Noto-ness') and prepares and serves it to customers at their restaurants in the Oku-Noto region. The common understanding is that about 80% of the ingredients should be locally sourced, but there are no strict limitations. They share the label Notodon under a very loose definition. In other words, Notodon is a representation of what each restaurant sees as 'Oku-Noto-ness' served in a bowl.

Initially, about 60 restaurants served Notodon, but as of 7 March 2021, there were only 6 restaurants in Anamizu-town, 14 in Noto-town,

9 in Suzu, and 15 in Wajima<sup>4</sup> for a total of 45 restaurants (Table 1).

In terms of location, 44.4% of the restaurants are on the south shore, 31.1% on the north shore, and 24.4% are in the hilly inland area. The Notodon at the 45 restaurants can be classified into 22 sashimi bowls, 18 cooked seafood bowls, and 16 bowls that use Noto beef<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 3). Several restaurants offer multiple types of Notodon, such as sashimi bowls and tempura bowls.

Of the 45 restaurants, 75.6% are small- and micro-scale family businesses. Because of this feature, each restaurant is relatively free to decide its menu. The nine restaurants with head chefs and that are located in large- and medium-sized hotels and public facilities, example airport and public hall, update their menus according to the decisions of the head chefs. For example, ID13 updates their menu every 1 to 4 years—four new items were added to their menu in July 2020. These new items were a Noto squid bowl, crab bowl, blowfish and rice cake bowl, and steak bowl. At some of the restaurants, Notodon is ordered by local people, but at almost all the restaurants it is ordered by tourists. Local people had never ordered Notodon at more than half of the restaurants in the survey.

In general, most of the Notodons are bowls of rice topped with sashimi made from various kinds of fish, or topped with shredded Noto beef or steak. Other Notodons, known as speciality products, use ingredients such as blowfish from Wajima or squid from Noto-town. Notodon, which has existed for over 10 years, has received official commendation as an exemplary regional promotion project<sup>6</sup>. Other local dishes around Japan have, for example, om-curry consisting of a curry omelet from Furano City, Hokkaido, and Namie fried noodl from Namie-town, Fukushima<sup>7</sup>, which were not only new local foods but also represented other kinds of regional associations<sup>8</sup>. Food, in the form of donburi, has become a medium for expressing localness as interpreted by each restaurant within the Oku-Noto region.

### Results: The Notodon creation process

Through interviews with the restaurants' chefs, I analysed the process by which each restaurant developed their original dish, categorised it according to the attributes of the restaurant, and how it has been influenced by outside actors.

#### Reasons for restaurants' selection of ingredients

#### The location

Almost all of the restaurants that had participated since the beginning of the Notodon project were motivated by the 'Oku-Noto Welcome Project'. All restaurants located in the hilly inland areas of Noto-town and Wajima prepared bowls using Noto beef. In contrast, all restaurants located on the coast, except for four restaurants in Suzu and ID10, used seafood in their bowls (Table 1). When the Notodon initiative started, each restaurant selected their ingredients and cooking method. There was no prior discussion on menus among the participating restaurants; however, they are generally classified into seafood or meat



Fig. 2. Notodon. Source: Captured by the author in February 2020.

**Table 1**

The list of restaurants serving Notodon in March 2021.

	ID	Location	Type of cuisine	Bulding type	Management	Type of Notodon	Who orders a Notodon?	Interviewed
<b>Suzu City</b>	1	South shore	Japanese restaurant	Independent	Family business	Crab, roast beef, fresh oyster	Tourists	Done
	2	South shore	Restaurant	With hotel	Public sector	Beef steak	Tourists and local people	Done
	3	South shore	Japanese dining	With guest house	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish), fresh oyster, turban shell, deep-fried goosefish	Tourists	Done
	4	South shore	Sushi	Independent	Family business	Crab, sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	5	South shore	Café	With public hole	Public sector	Roast beef	–	
	6	South shore	BBQ (yakiniiku)	With guest house	Family business	Beef steak	Tourists	Done
	7	South shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Crab, roastbeef, fresh oyster	Tourists	Done
	8	North shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Beef steak	–	
	9	North shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
<b>Noto Town</b>	#	South shore	Restaurant	With hotel	Public sector	Beef bowl	Tourists	Done
	#	South shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish), grilled pork	–	
	#	South shore	Dining	Independent	Family business	Grilled squid, pork bowl	–	
	#	South shore	Restaurant	With hotel	Public sector	Sashimi (raw squid)	Tourists	Done
	#	Hilly inland area	Restaurant	With botanic garden	Public sector	Beef steak	–	
	#	South shore	Restaurant	With hotel	Public sector	Whale meat	Tourists	Done
	#	South shore	BBQ (yakiniiku)	Independent	Family business	Crab, sashimi (raw fish)	Mainly tourists, sometimes local people	Done
	#	South shore	Sushi	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	South shore	Japanese restaurant	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	South shore	Japanese restaurant	With guest house	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	Tourists	Done
	#	Hilly inland area	Japanese restaurant	Independent	Family business	Grilled beef	–	
	#	Hilly inland area	Dining	With hotel	Public sector	Beef bowl	Tourists and local people	Done
	#	Hilly inland area	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Sukiyaki	–	
	#	Hilly inland area	Japanese dining	With hotel	Public sector	Various tempura, roast beef	Tourists	Done
	#	Hilly inland area	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Beef bowl	–	
<b>Subrub Wajima</b>	#	North shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Conger eel tempura, sashimi (rawfish)	Tourists	Done
	#	North shore	Japanese dining	With guest house	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish), boiled globefish	–	
	#	North shore	Café	Independent	Family business	Globefish tempura	Tourists and local people	Done
	#	Hilly inland area	Café	With temple	Family business	Beef bowl, tacos rice, haikara-don	–	
	#	Hilly inland area	Restaurant	At Noto Airport	Public sector	Beef bowl	Tourists	Done
	#	Hilly inland area	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Pork bowl	–	
<b>Central Wajima</b>	#	North shore	Japanese restaurant	Independent	Family business	Globefish tempura, sashimi (rawfish)	–	Excluded from this research
	#	North shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	North shore	Sushi	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	North shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	North shore	Sushi	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	North shore	Japanese dining & bar	Independent	Family business	Boiled globefish, sashimi (raw fish)	–	

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (continued)

	ID	Location	Type of cuisine	Bulding type	Management	Type of Notodon	Who orders a Notodon?	Interviewed
	#	North shore	Japanese dining (soba)	Independent	Family business	Grilled globefish, sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	North shore	Sushi	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	North shore	Curry dining	Independent	National chain	Curry with seafood cutlet	–	
Anamizu Town	#	Hilly inland area	Restaurant	With golf course	Unknown	Seafood cutlet	–	
	#	Hilly inland area	Sushi	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	Tourists and local people	Done
	#	South shore	Sushi	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	Tourists, sometimes local people	Done
	#	South shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	
	#	South shore	Japanese dining	Independent	Family business	Seafood or oyster tempura	–	
	#	South shore	Sushi	Independent	Family business	Sashimi (raw fish)	–	

Source: Field survey and the brochure of Notodon.

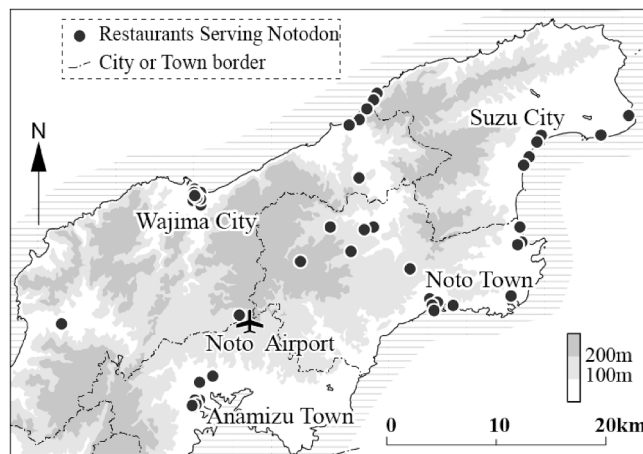


Fig. 3. Distribution of restaurants serving Notodon in March 2021. Source: Field survey.

Notodon, depending on the location of the restaurant. According to the manager of a restaurant in the hilly inland areas:

*There was no tacit understanding among the association's members that restaurants in the hills would serve beef and those near the sea would serve sashimi. I never thought I would try sashimi bowls. (Public sector diner serving cooked seafood)<sup>9</sup>.*

Even though the members shared the assumption that they had free choice, restaurants in the hilly inland areas found seafood difficult to choose as an ingredient. Furthermore,

*I decided on the menu based on foods that can only be eaten in Suzu. I thought I would select ingredients that other areas did not have. (Family business diner serving cooked seafood)*

Thus, the restaurant's locale was one factor contributing to the selection of ingredients.

#### Supply routes, knowledge, business styles

Next, the selection of ingredients was based on the ingredient supply routes, knowledge accumulated at the restaurants, business styles, and the chef's experience.

More than half of the restaurants in Suzu selected beef, even though they were on the coastal area. The following two restaurants that selected beef had primarily served beef before Notodon started.

*We were originally a Korean barbecue restaurant, so we could obtain high-quality beef. Hence, we chose steak bowls. (Family business diner*

serving beef).

*We had relationships with suppliers and wholesalers built up over many years of doing business. (Publicly held restaurant serving beef).*

Therefore, the selection of ingredients was related to supply routes established over long years of operation in the region. For restaurants that grilled beef for steak bowls rather than boiling the beef for shredded beef bowls, the ability to procure top-quality meat was very important as the quality of the beef had considerable impact on the flavour.

The supply networks established in the region played a significant role in the case of sashimi bowls as well. In addition to the ability to procure fresh fish, knowledge and skill to maintain freshness and control inventory are necessary when using raw fish. Twenty-two restaurants served sashimi bowls. Of them, eight were sushi restaurants. Almost all of the other restaurant types, such as traditional Japanese restaurants, purchased fish directly from fishing households<sup>10</sup>. These restaurants had always handled raw fish.

*We are a sushi restaurant, so we immediately decided to put sashimi bowls on the menu. We have been serving high-quality chirashi sushi, so we could start serving Notodon simply by purchasing the tableware and rearranging things a little. (Family business restaurant serving sushi and sashimi).*

*Our main dish is sushi. (Family business restaurant serving sushi and sashimi).*

*We run a fish wholesaling business. (Family business high-tier traditional Japanese restaurant serving sushi and sashimi).*

*All you have to do to make sashimi bowls is to cut up sashimi and lay it on top of rice, but we would have a hard time procuring nearly 10 types of fish. (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).*

Therefore, because they were businesses that had traditionally served sashimi, they were able to procure the ingredients. They already knew how to purchase fresh fish and how to control their inventory. It can be said that the cooking and commodification techniques developed by individual restaurants and the ingredient supply chain networks established at the local level were influential in the selection of ingredients.

#### Histories of family or chefs

Some restaurants near the seashore or fishing ports have their own fishing boats or fixed shore nets. These restaurants serve their own catch in their bowls.

*It was easy to make a crab bowl because we had been buying crab from a ship-owner at Ogi Fishing Harbour who we have known for a long time; plus we had originally served crab sunomono. (Family business Japanese dining serving cooked seafood).*

*We use conger eel that we both purchase and catch ourselves in a small, fixed shore net. We have had conger eel on the menu before. We first thought*

to serve sashimi bowls, but we decided to concentrate on conger eel bowls because the association had approached us about using seal eel. (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

*The president of the association insisted on having ingredients that we caught in our own nets. We can catch gomafugu (Takifugu stictodon) in our fixed shore nets all year round. Even though we can catch various other types of fish, we can't get them all year round.* (Family business restaurant serving cooked seafood).

Another restaurant became specialised in Korean barbecue:

*In terms of labour, it is not feasible (for the owner) to make crab or sashimi bowls while grilling meat. He was confident that he could handle fish because previously he had worked as a chef at a high class Japanese-restaurant in Kanazawa. His 89-year-old father had a fishing boat and fished on a small scale, so the owners felt strongly about serving fish.* (Family business Japanese dining serving cooked seafood).

The above comments indicate that while restaurants are able to use the experience passed down at a restaurant level, there are limits to the labour available in a family business.

*We worry when we are asked 'Don't you have sashimi bowls?', but from an operational standpoint, we cannot prepare sashimi while grilling meat at the same time.* (Family business diner serving beef).

Regardless of whether meat or seafood is selected, the choice of ingredients depends on the restaurant's business policies, the history of the family that runs the business, and the labour situation at the restaurant.

In addition to the operating skills that have been passed down through the generations at a restaurant level, such as the 'way my father made a living' described above, the choice of ingredients is also influenced by daily life experiences at an individual level.

*My family netted crab and fish in Niigata Prefecture, so I am used to preparing crab.* (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

Similar responses were obtained from ID7 and ID23. Thus, an individual's family experience, that is unrelated to their current business influences their choice of ingredients. Furthermore, similar to crabs being consumed as a snack, cases of cuisines eaten at home regularly with family as a local lifestyle, or perhaps at a larger scale, are also seen. Further, in addition to ingredient collection and cooking techniques, an individual's consumed food also acts as an influence on.

#### *Influence of outside actors or forces*

##### *Influence of the government*

The principal actors that influence a restaurant's selection of ingredients are the local government, other restaurants, and tourists.

The local government promotes the use of local seafood and agricultural products that have long been local speciality products.

*The nearby Ogi fishing harbour is famous for catching squid, so the town called for the slogan 'The One Using Squid'.* (Public sector Japanese restaurant serving sashimi).

*Japanese oysters<sup>11</sup> were not originally sold commercially, but at some point someone discovered that they were edible; so the city of Suzu recommended that we use them.* (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

Restaurants that selected squid have updated their menus five times, they have only been using squid for four years.

The local government has also been encouraging the use of Noto beef to promote economic development.

*The roast beef bowl was a new development six to seven years after Notodon was started. It was devised after the town hall recommended including 'something using Noto beef'.* (Public sector diner serving cooked seafood).

*We added a roast beef bowl (1,500 JPY) to the menu later. We heard through the association (actually, the city of Suzu): 'Why don't you try using beef?'* (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

In the Oku-Noto region, the Suzu City office and Noto-town office actively promoted Noto beef<sup>12</sup>. Of the 16 restaurants in the two towns, 13 serve Notodon with Noto beef, which is clearly promoted on the

menu. Eight of the 16 restaurants or diners are attached to other facilities, for example hotel, public hall or airport, where chefs work in shifts or part-time workers do the cooking. These restaurants tend to serve shredded beef bowls that use boiled beef.

*In restaurants where the head chefs also work in shifts, the chefs update the menus themselves. They do not consult other staffs. The head chefs let the experts use their own initiative. They are thinking about ease of preparation for everyone.* (Public sector Japanese restaurant serving beef).

*Squid on cold noodles is easy, because all you have to do is put it in a bowl.* (Public sector restaurant serving sashimi).

Outside actors influence the ingredients used, but the business style of the restaurant influences the cooking methods. For restaurants under corporate management, it is important to be able to serve food prepared through division of labour rather than dishes that require an individual with diverse cooking skills.

##### *Influence of other restaurants*

The following statements were made with regard to the influence of other restaurants:

*Noto beef is expensive to purchase; plus there are large price fluctuations. It is particularly expensive just before Christmas, New Year, and during the summer holiday season. It would be difficult to make money on it. There were more (restaurants using beef) than I expected, so I quit.* (Family business, diner serving cooked seafood).

*(At the start of the meeting) many restaurants decided on sashimi bowls; there were hardly any handling meat, so I decided to do a steak bowl, which was easy.* (Family business diner serving beef).

Other restaurants did not intervene in the process of menu creation. However, restaurants considered the competitive trends when deciding their menu. In other words, they expressed 'Noto-ness' using dishes that other restaurants did not. This is one way that menus of restaurants influenced one another.

##### *Influences of tourists*

New dishes were sometimes added to menus in response to requests from tourists for the Noto-ness<sup>13</sup> they cherished.

Examples:

*We thought we would serve deep-fried monkfish, but we were asked (by tourists) 'Don't you have sashimi bowls?' so we began serving sashimi bowls because we felt bad that they had come all the way to our restaurant, and we didn't have them. We had originally served sashimi, so we were able to make the arrangements. Recently, we stopped serving anything but sashimi bowls. However, there is a lot of inventory loss with sashimi bowls - it is not commercially viable.* (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

*We added sashimi bowls about 10 years ago, because tourists were asking for them. We are mainly a Korean barbecue restaurant, but we had a sashimi assortment plate on the menu, so we could serve sashimi Notodon.* (Family business Japanese dining serving cooked seafood).

These restaurants had traditionally served sashimi, so technically in terms of supply routes and operations they could respond to the demand. For example, at a family-run diner serving cooked seafood, the chef was someone who possessed the knowledge and skills to purchase fish directly from the fishing harbour, which was a big factor.

A restaurant that did not comply with requests from outside actors, for example tourist, had been asked.

Example:

*'Don't you have sashimi bowls', but we could not provide them. When we say to our local customers, 'They can't catch that kind of fish in the fixed nets over there', they understand.* (Family business restaurant serving cooked seafood).

*We have the supply route, but fish is more perishable than meat, so you have to raise prices to factor in the disposal risk (We can't charge a high enough price for it), so we don't serve it.* (Family business diner serving beef).

*We served sashimi bowls up until six years ago. It is hard for tourists to take the coastal train and reach our restaurant (because it is located off the*



main tourist route). It is impossible to bring in raw ingredients for high-priced products (since we cannot expect a stable number of customers). (Public sector Japanese-style restaurant serving beef).

We are sometimes asked (by tourists), 'Don't you have sashimi bowls?', but after we say we don't have them, we introduce the tourists to other restaurants that do. (If we comply with the customers' demands, we end up serving dishes that they can eat anywhere. (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

Even though it is possible to obtain ingredients from their own regions and from other communities in Oku-Noto, the choice of ingredients depends on the existing restaurant management style, the difficulty of managing ingredients, the limitations of the labour force in a small-scale family business, cooking techniques, and the feelings of the chef. Additionally, menus using raw fish are avoided because distance from tourist routes adversely affects customer numbers. In both instances, outsiders' demand for 'Oku-Noto-ness' is accommodated to the extent possible by utilising knowledge and local networks. Even if the motivation is tourist demand, the decision over what ingredients to put in the bowls depends on whether the restaurant can provide them without going too far out of their way.

#### The other influences

Restaurants that depend on lodging fees as their main source of revenue are greatly influenced by capital from outside the region.

The prices listed (for lodging) on the Internet are very low. It is more profitable for us to make reservations directly (without paying fees to an intermediary). However, most guests reserve their stays over the Internet. When they reserve using the Internet, they only choose the cheapest accommodations and meals. (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

Although the consumption of Notodon itself is not affected by external capital, the operations of restaurants that serve Notodon are influenced by it. In addition to influencing the choice of menus to attract tourists, outside capital affects the operations of the restaurants. For many restaurants, Notodon has increased the number of customers and diversified the customer base.

Many sushi restaurants in Japan do not display prices; hence, new customers hesitate to try them (Silva & Yamao, 2006). The atmosphere at restaurants may seem to suggest that they serve only local customers making it even more difficult for new customers to enter. In the Notodon initiative, products and their prices are clearly displayed in pamphlets placed at (Fig. 4), for instance, tourist information centres, Noto Airport, and Kanazawa train Station, and the Notodon flag is displayed outside all the participating restaurants. The pamphlets solve the problem of unclear prices, and the flags function as a sign that the restaurants

welcome new customers.

Women, in particular, have begun to come. We are serving more lunches to female customers. They are coming from Tokyo. (Family business sushi restaurant, serving sashimi).

This was a feeling expressed in many interviews. The same trend was observed at diners, which are in a lower price tier than sushi restaurants. This was particularly true of restaurants that served mainly local customers, which, as in the case of sushi restaurants, were frequented by locals. In addition to the restaurants' atmosphere that made new customers hesitate to enter, many of them had outdated shop fronts. Because of this, very few tourists who came from afar dined at these restaurants. However,

With Notodon, the number of customers has certainly increased. (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

Up to now, the average age of our customers was on the high side, but lately we have begun to get groups of younger people or women-only groups. (Family business diner serving beef).

There was an increase in the number of customers from various age groups; customers came from a wider area as well. Some restaurants had several customers visiting from Tokyo, as often as twice or three times a year. Furthermore, at many restaurants almost all of the orders for Notodon come from tourists, rather than from local customers. Because of this, even though Notodon is commodified as 'Noto-ness' for tourists, it is presented as a product in a form preferred by the local restaurants.0.

Most of the restaurants that went out of business did so due to the staff ageing or due to the absence of successors. However, a few restaurants were dismissed by the association because they did not carry out adequate improvements after receiving guidance about maintaining good quality, or they closed down operations because the tourist numbers did not increase as expected. Hospitality for tourists needs to be different from the service provided to regular local customers. For some, the increase in the number of guests did not make up for the psychological burden of providing hospitality services to tourists.

When you look at the restaurants in this district that quit, they were the ones that thought of new menus aimed at tourists. However, there are some restaurants that did not continue with it and quit. (Family business diner serving cooked seafood).

One can assume that in some cases people exhausted themselves by continuing to accommodate tourists' demands, or through excessive compliance. Some restaurants currently serving Notodon appear to be struggling. Tourists bring possibilities to consume local restaurants of their uniqueness. Thus, connecting small-scale family businesses to national markets through partnerships with external capital brings with it the risk of undesirable consequences.

#### a) pamphlet



#### b) flag



Fig. 4. The pamphlet and the flag of Notodon 2020 version. Source: Field survey.

## Discussion: Uniqueness served on bowls and localness as a target of consumption

During the process of developing the Notodon concept, restaurants stuck close to their existing menus as a small-scale measure. They expressed 'Noto-ness' within the scope of what they could handle in terms of cooking techniques, operations, and inventory management skills, as well as their existing labour capacity. In addition to the restaurant identity that says, e.g. 'We are a sushi restaurant', individual motives such as the career paths of the chefs or their predecessors, the work involved in running a business, and current everyday life experiences, influence the localness that is expressed in a bowl of Notodon.

Next, I examined the pressure exerted from local governments for the regional development of Oku-Noto. Noto beef, which is produced across the entire Noto Peninsula, Noto-town squid, Wajima blowfish, and Japanese oysters from Suzu are speciality products being promoted actively. Therefore, these ingredients are suitable for Notodon. To promote the economy of the Noto region, Ishikawa Prefecture was advancing a Noto beef branding strategy at almost the same time as the Notodon project (Ishikawa Prefecture, 2023); hence, it was thought that Notodon, which could be made from beef, was an attractive idea. Because the local government wanted to promote these ingredients, Notodon was a convenient medium because it was known in external markets. For example, Donburi is easy to plan on packaging tours and lunch coupon in trip tours, so it is easy to recommend Notodon to promote. It was promoted under the leadership of the local government, and based on decisions made by local restaurants. As the owner of a restaurant that handles beef stated:

Examples:

*Since the beginning of Notodon, we started referring to the Korean barbecue on our traditional menu as 'Noto beef' to appeal to customers. Locals didn't know it as 'Noto beef'. They thought it was 'ordinary tasty beef' or 'this is regular beef'. They didn't know there was such a thing as Noto beef. Even the restaurants thought of it as the same old beef. We began to be conscious of branding after Notodon started. We got a reaction from customers as well. We began to be aware once more of its appeal (the uniqueness of the Noto area) as 'branded beef'. (Family business diner serving beef).*

This was the first time that local people became conscious of the product value of the beef that they had been consuming, in terms of its localness. Restaurants too became aware that beef could be a medium for delivering 'Oku-Noto-ness'.

Within the Oku-Noto region, the scope of each restaurant varies, including the creation and maintenance of supply chains for purchasing

locally produced ingredients that possess 'Oku-Noto-ness'. While the nodes were the identities that were maintained on a restaurant scale and other factors attendant on business style, the connections between the various among actors—farm families, meat, fish, and produce wholesalers of the Oku-Noto region—mediated by ingredients, were reinforced by 'Oku-Noto-ness'.

The relationships among the restaurants that provide Notodon in the Oku-Noto region have created a general framework for ingredient selection. However, local environmental conditions, although considered in the ingredient selection process, did not wield a direct influence on it, nor did these conditions play a significant role in the process of development on a store scale (Fig. 5).

Finally, when I focused on power at the national scale, the impact of the tourist industry and consumers in that market was particularly significant. The image of regions described as e.g. 'by the Sea of Japan', 'Ishikawa Prefecture', and 'Noto Peninsula', on a national scale is one of fresh seafood (JTB, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c). The interviews conducted with each restaurant indicated that tourists, who were the main customers for Notodon, asked for sashimi. Sashimi is derived from the natural environment, but it is not something limited to the 'Noto' area. It is also a general image embraced by remote seaside areas, which is introduced through tourist guidebooks and television programmes (JTB, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c). Among the restaurants serving sashimi, there is a minority that originally did not have sashimi dishes as main menu items but began to offer generic sashimi bowls. In many cases, the existing menu was altered to express 'Oku-Noto-ness' and was advertised as Notodon, as though to say, 'We are a sushi restaurant, so we serve sashimi bowls.' Each restaurant could alter their menus without going to too much trouble.

The donburi is framed as "Notodon", which promote the consumption of local ingredients. While the localness displayed through each local donburi is certainly part of an image put together by outsiders, not every restaurant abides by it. Although several restaurants, because they are both inns and provide meals, have joined national-scale markets and are affected from outside the region, the commodification of Notodon has been pursued under the leadership of various local actors, primarily restaurants. Small-scale family businesses are generally not incorporated into external capital-led product chains, such as travel and advertising agencies, but by expressing localness as the object of consumption using their own initiatives and commodifying it as Notodon, they are creating a situation in which the Notodon product itself is not exhausted.

In contrast to thus small-scale regional promotion, to promote

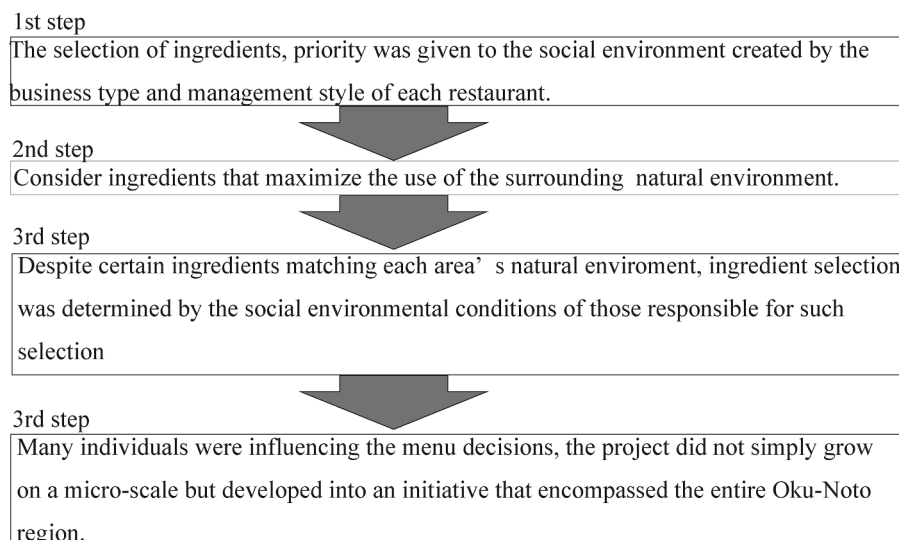


Fig. 5. The ingredient selection process Notodon. Source: Author.

Japan's economic recovery after World War II, industrial development was concentrated in the urban areas on the Pacific side of the country, furthering the population outflow to large urban areas. As a result, almost all regions excluded from intended development lost their local population, making the autonomous economic zones impossible. Central financial subsidies is essential to compensate for economic difficulties that hinder independence, a burden carried by local communities (Knight, 1994). Therefore, restaurants that chose menus based on what tourists wanted rather than what was profitable for the restaurant, were unable to continue serving Notodon. Conversely, emphasizing local cultures may foster excessive protectionism (Hung & Lien, 2018; Takeda, 2008). In a global market economy, core capital containing areas trying to protect their own regions may create new borders, reducing the number of exportable products from the marginal to the core areas (Hung & Lien, 2018). Even if globalization creates new borders, the core areas can continue to develop the economically marginal ones, but it limits the marginal areas' options for autonomous economic growth. This issue is not limited to the Global South, but is common to economically marginal areas in the Global North as well. Deciding whether to put on the dependency to receive the various subsidies available for acting according to the requests from the central government, is a struggle among limited options. In the global economy, the power exerted by small local businesses on other regions remains weak, despite their emphasized localness. As a result, while small local businesses emphasizing local cultures as with Notodon example, they may face excessive competition, - these small business in the periphery area unable to affect the core regions with all the capital.

## Conclusion

This paper examines Notodon, which is a newly created 'local dish' for the economic promotion of the Oku-Noto region, and examined how 'Oku-Noto-ness' expresses 'localness in a bowl'. I analysed how local donburi ingredients were chosen by local restaurants to create their own versions of Notodon. Local small-scale restaurants were leaders in promoting Notodon, and they sold it using their own menus.

The promotion and selling of Notodon is a conceivable way for rural areas to resist globalization. The restaurants did not serve the tourists from Tokyo or Osaka 'what they wanted'. Notodon was 'what they wanted to serve' or 'what they were able to serve. Notodon acts as a frame is a node that connects the local restaurants in the Oku-Noto region with tourists from other areas such as Tokyo. The 'Notoness' served in a bowl has become an object of consumption by tourists; however, the 'Noto-ness' consumed by tourists and the 'Noto-ness' provided by the local restaurants are not the same. Generally, establishing production and consumption requires supply and demand to reach equilibrium. Despite not reaching this equilibrium, production and consumption can be established in the case of Notodon. There is an ongoing debate on the risk of local areas losing their uniqueness because of the influence of external factors (Urry, 1990). Notodon became an activity, that connected the economic cycle of the region to the central region, without becoming exhausted. Due to the economic effects caused by a temporary increase in tourists, it could not be completely distributed within the global economic cycle. Selling Notodon is an example of an attempt to promoting economic development of a peripheral rural area using local products while resisting external cultural and economic forces.

Under these circumstances, the Notodon initiative focuses on small-scale family businesses, an actor whose scale of investment is negligible in the global market economy. However, each restaurant has put into circulation products that they had already been selling within their own regions, re-branding them via the Notodon frame so that they can also be sold to more distant areas. This seems to have become a resistance tactic against globalization (de St. Maurice, G., 2017).

## Endnote

1 However, Iga (2014) is critical of the view that divides all entities forming nodes into humans or non-humans, and does not use the term "ANT." However, the notion of including entities whether they are human or non-human is strongly connected to the idea of ANT.

2 Interviews had been conducted with 16 people as of 21 March 2021.

3 According to interviews with the Notodon Business Cooperative Association.

4 Nine of the restaurants are located in the central part of Wajima. One restaurant closed due to COVID-19.

5 Dishes using Noto beef, which was registered as a regional collective trademark in October 2007, consist primarily of steak bowls, roast beef bowls, or shredded beef bowls.

6 The leaders who initiated the project were awarded the 2008 Ishikawa TOYP Prize (Ishikawa Block Council, Hokuriku Shin-Etsu District, Junior Chamber International Japan), and the Notodon project itself won the 2018 Regional Development Award and Minister's Award from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, among others. <https://tadaya.net/nototsuduri/people/detail5/> (accessed on 1 September 2021).

**Namie Yakisoba**, <https://kyoudo-ryouri.com/en/food/2146.html> (accessed on 8 July 2023)

8 *Zenkoku Kakuchi no Chiiki ga Tsudou "Zenkoku Chiiki Okoshi Gotouchi Donburi Kaigi"* (A National Network of Local Donburi), <https://www.okunoto-ishikawa.net/don-summit/cms/index.php> (accessed on 8 July 2023).

9 IDs are not shown in Table 1 so that individual restaurants cannot be identified. Only the type of restaurant, main ingredients, and business form are shown.

10 Includes self-sufficiency fishing as well.

11 The scientific name is *Crassostrea nippona*.

12 According to interviews with the Notodon Business Cooperative Association.

13 Since tourists do not distinguish between the Oku-Noto region and the Kuchi-Noto region, we use the term 'Noto-ness' when tourists are the actors.

## Funding

This work was financially supported by Egashira Hospitality Promotion and JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 19K13442. I would especially like to thank those who helped with my fieldwork in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. All errors remain mine.

## Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

## References

- Araki, H. (2020). The nature and culture of food: Fudo in Monsoon Asia. In S. Yokoyama, J. Matsumoto & H. Araki (Eds.), *Nature, culture, and food in monsoon Asia* (pp. vii-xvii). Springer. 10.1007/978-981-15-2113-3.
- Asakura, M. (2014). Seikatsu Kukan heno Kanko no Manazashi to Jyumin no Taiou: Tokushima Ken Miyoshi Shi Higashi Iya Chiiki wo Jireitoshite (Local residents' responses to the tourist gaze on their life spaces: The case of the Higashi-Iya area of Miyoshi City, Tokushima Prefecture). *Jinbun Chiri (Japanese Journal of Human Geography)*, 66(1), 16–37. <https://doi.org/10.4200/jjhg.66.1.16>
- Asakura, M. (2018). Syohinka suru Nouseon Kuukan ni okeru "Shinsei" de Tayou na Ruuriritexi no Kouchiku to Heiritsu: Gunma Ken Minakami Cho Takuminosato wo Jireini (Construction and coexistence of various 'Authentic' ruralities under the commodification of rural space: The case of Takumi-no-sato, Minakami Town



- Gunma Prefecture. *Chirigaku Hyoron* (Geographical Review of Japan. Series A., 91(6), 437–461.
- Assmann, S., & (Ed.). (2016). *Sustainability in contemporary rural Japan*. Routledge.
- Baba, C., & Yoshida, K. (2015). Nagano Ken Kijimadaira Mura Nukasen Chiku ni okeru Chiiki Dukuri no Genjyo to Kadai (Present conditions and problems of regional planning in the Nukasen District, Kijimadaira Village, Nagano Prefecture: Focusing on activities by local government, local residents and some universities). *Chiri kukan* (Geographical Space), 8(1), 1–18. [10.24586/jags.8.1.1](https://doi.org/10.24586/jags.8.1.1).
- Cloke, P. (2006). Conceptualizing rurality. In P. Cloke, T. Marsden, & P. H. Mooney (Eds.), *Handbook of rural studies* (pp. 18–28). Sage.
- Cruikshank, J. A. (2009). A play for rurality: Modernization versus local autonomy. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 25(1), 98–107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2008.06.005>
- de St. Maurice, G. (2017). Kyoto cuisine gone global. *Gastronomica*, 17(3), 36–48. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26362459>.
- Fao. (2023). Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi, Japan | Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems [WWW Document] accessed on 8 July 2023 <https://www.fao.org/giahs/giahsaroundtheworld/designated-sites/asia-and-the-pacific/notos-satoyama-and-satoumi/en/>.
- Frisvoll, S. (2012). Power in the production of spaces transformed by rural tourism. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 28(4), 447–457. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2012.06.001>
- Halfacree, K. (1993). Locality and social representation: Space, discourse and alternative definitions of the rural. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 9(1), 23–37. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0743-0167\(93\)90003-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0743-0167(93)90003-3)
- Halpern, C., & Mitchell, C. (2011). Can a preservationist ideology halt the process of creative destruction? Evidence from Salt Spring Island, British Columbia. *The Canadian Geographer*, 55(2), 208–225. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0064.2010.00333.x>
- Hashimoto, A., & Telfer, D. J. (2019). Ekiben, the travelling Japanese lunchbox: Promoting regional development and local identity through food tourism. In E. Park, S. Kim, & I. Yeoman (Eds.), *Food tourism in Asia. Perspectives on Asian tourism*, 103–122. Springer. [10.1007/978-981-13-3624-9\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3624-9_8).
- Heley, J., & Jones, L. (2012). Relational rurals: Some thoughts on relating things and theory in rural studies. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 28(3), 208–217. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2012.01.011>
- Hung, P. (2013). Tea forest in the making: Tea production and the ambiguity of modernity on China's southwest frontier. *Geoforum*, 47, 178–188. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2013.01.007>
- Hung, P. (2014). Frontiers as dilemma: The incompatible desires for tea production in southwest China. *Area*, 46(4), 369–376. <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12120>
- Hung, P., & Lien, Y. (2018). Anxiety of food nationalism: Dilemmas of bordering in the Vietnam-Taiwan tea trade. *The Geographical Journal*, 186(2), 186–197. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12326>
- Iga, M. (2014). Changing agri-food systems in the global economy. *Japanese Journal of Human Geography*, 66(6), 64–76. <https://doi.org/10.4200/jjh.66.6.552>
- Iga, M. (2017). Noto Chiiki ni okeru Wain Senyousyu Budou no Kyoukyuu Taikai no Seisei (Creation of the wine grape supply chain in the Noto Region: From the perspective of construction of knowledge and technology). *Keizai Chirigaku Nenpu* (Annals of the Association of Economic Geographers), 63(2), 115–135. (JE) [10.20592/jaeg.63.2.115](https://doi.org/10.20592/jaeg.63.2.115).
- Ilbery, B., & Maye, D. (2006). Retailing local food in the Scottish-English borders: A supply chain perspective. *Geoforum*, 37(3), 352–367. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2005.09.003>
- Ilbery, B., Morris, C., Buller, H., Maye, D., & Kneafsey, M. (2005). Product, process and place: An examination of food marketing and labelling schemes in Europe and North America. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 12(2), 116–132. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0969776405048499>
- Jongsuksomsakul, P., & Roeb, K. (2022). Co-creative media: Capacity building with participatory communication to adopt good agricultural standards practice for people's health. *Research in Globalization*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resglo.2022.100092>
- Jtb. (2022a). Rurubu Akita, Kakunodate, Nyutou Onsenkyo '22. JTB Publishing. (in Japanese).
- Jtb. (2022b). Rurubu Matsue, Izumo, Iwamiginzan, Adachibijyutukan '22. JTB Publishing. (in Japanese).
- JTB. (2022b). Rurubu Ishikawa, Noto, Wajima, Kanazawa, Kagaonsenkyo '22. JTB Publishing. (in Japanese).
- Knight, J. (1994). Town-making in rural Japan: An example from Wakayama. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 10(3), 249–261. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0743-0167\(94\)90052-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0743-0167(94)90052-3)
- Kordel, S. (2016). Selling ruralities: How tourist entrepreneurs commodify traditional and alternative ways of conceiving the countryside. *Rural Society*, 25(3), 204–221. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10371656.2016.1255475>
- Mansfield, B. (2003a). Fish, factory trawlers and imitation crab: The nature of quality in the seafood industry. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 19(1), 9–21. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0743-0167\(02\)00036-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0743-0167(02)00036-0)
- Mansfield, B. (2003b). From catfish to organic fish: Making distinctions about nature as cultural economic practice. *Geoforum*, 34(3), 329–342. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0016-7185\(03\)00004-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0016-7185(03)00004-6)
- Manzenreiter, W., Lützel, R., & Polak-Rottmann, S. (Eds.). (2020). Japan's new ruralities: Coping with decline in the periphery. Routledge.
- Matsuya, (2023). Mtsuya [WWW Document] accessed on 8 July 2023 <https://www.yoshinoamerica.com/our-story>.
- McCarthy, J. (2008). Rural geography: Globalizing the countryside. *Progress in Human Geography*, 32(1), 129–137. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132507082559>
- McDonagh, J. (2013). Rural geography I: Changing expectations and contradictions on the rural. *Progress in Human Geography*, 37(5), 712–720. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132512474404>
- McMorran, C. (2014). A landscape of 'undesigned design' in rural Japan. *Landscape Journal*, 33(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.3368/lj.33.1.1>
- MIC. (2015). Kokusei Chy\_osa (National census 2015). <https://www.stat.go.jp/data/kokusei/2015/kekka.html>.
- Murdoch, J., Marsden, T., & Banks, J. (2000). Quality, nature, and embeddedness: Some theoretical considerations in the context of the food Sector. *Economic Geography*, 76(2), 107–125. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-8287.2000.tb00136.x>
- Nishino, T. (2010). Regional policies for sustainable development of mountain villages in Japan. *Geographical Review of Japan, Series B*, 82(2), 323–335. <https://doi.org/10.4157/geogrevjapanb.82.126>
- Park, K., Park, S., & Lee, T. (2020). Analysis of a spatial network from the perspective of actor-network theory. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 22, 653–665. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2363>
- Ishikawa Prefecture, 2023. *Notoushi ni tuite* (About a Noto beef) [WWW Document] URL <https://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/tikusan/chikusan/chikusann/notoushi.html> (accessed on 8 July 2023).
- Rausch, A. (2008). Place branding in rural Japan: Cultural commodities as local brands. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 4(2), 136–146. <https://doi.org/10.1057/pb.2008.2>
- Rausch, A. (2009). Japanese rural revitalization: The reality and potential of cultural commodities as local brands. *Japanstudien*, 20(1), 223–245. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09386491.2009.11826981>
- Ricketts-Hein, J. R., Ilbery, B., & Kneafsey, M. (2006). Distribution of local food activity in England and Wales: An index of food relocalization. *Regional Studies*, 40(3), 289–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343400600631533>
- Schrager, B. (2021a). Local food beyond fixed scales and values: The scalar politics of Japan's *jidori* chicken mosaics. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 81, 116–126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.08.056>
- Schrager, B. (2021b). Risky but raw: On (not) regulating one of the most high-risk dishes in Japan. *Gastronomica*, 21(3), 32–44. <https://doi.org/10.1525/gfc.2021.21.3.32>
- Shoji, G., Yoshida, K., & Yokoyama, S. (2019). Japan: Government interventions and part-time family farming. In E. Thompson, J. Rigg, & J. Gillen (Eds.), *Asian smallholders in comparative perspective* (pp. 81–107). Amsterdam University Press.
- Silva, D., & Yamao, M. (2006). A yen for sushi: An analysis of demographic and behavioural patterns of sushi consumption in Japan. *Journal of Foodservice*, 17(2), 63–76. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-4506.2006.00021.x>
- Sukiya, (2023). Sukiya [WWW Document] accessed on 8 July 2023 <https://www.sukiya.jp/en/>.
- Suyama, S., & Takahashi, K. (2013). Keihan Tanjo (Creation of *keihan* (rice with chicken soup)). *Chikigaku kenkyu* (Regional Review (Komazawa University)), 26, 53–72. <http://repo.komazawa-u.ac.jp/opac/repository/all/33685/>.
- Tabayashi, A. (2008). Regional development owing to the commodification of rural spaces in Japan. *Geographical Review of Japan, Series B*, 82(2), 103–125. <https://doi.org/10.4157/geogrevjapanb.82.103>
- Tabayashi, A. (Ed.). (2013). *Shouhinka suru Nihon no Nouson Kukan* (Commodification of rural space in Japan). Norin Toukei Syuppan.
- Tabayashi, A. (Ed.). (2015). *Chiiki Shinko toshitenou Nouson Kukan no Syounhinka* (Commodification of rural space for regional development), Norin Toukei Syuppan. (J).
- Tabayashi, A. (Ed.). (2020). Kanada niokeru Toshi-Noouson Kyopusei Shisutemu: Nouson Kukan no Syounhinka to Chiiki Shinko (Urban-rural symbiotic systems in Canada: The commodification of rural space and regional promotion), Norin Toukei Syuppan. (J).
- Tachikawa, M. (2005). *Posuto Seisansyugi heno Ikou to Nouson ni taisuru "Mananazashi" no Henyou* (Post-productivist transition of rural Japan and transformation of its social representation). *Nenpu Sonraku Syakai Kenkyu* (Annual Bulletin Rural Studies), 41, 7–40.
- Takahashi, M. (1997). Nouson Hendou to Komyuniti ni Saihen: Atarashii Nouson Komyuniti Kenkyuu ni Mukete (Rural changes and the reorganization of local communities: Toward an alternative rural community study). *Chiri Kagaku* (Journal of Geographical Sciences), 52, 88–106. <https://doi.org/10.20630/chirikagaku.52.2.88>
- Takayanagi, N. (2008). Rural revitalization with sunflowers as amenity crops in a Japanese countryside. *Geographical Review of Japan, Series B*, 82(2), 78–88. <https://doi.org/10.4157/geogrevjapanb.82.78>
- Takeda, H. (2008). Delicious food in a beautiful country: Nationhood and nationalism in discourses on food in contemporary Japan. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 8(1), 5–30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-9469.2008.00001.x>
- Urry, J. (1990). *The tourist gaze: Leisure and travel in contemporary societies*. Sage.
- Oku-Noto Welcome Project Promotion Council Secretariat, 2023. Welcome Okunoto [WWW Document] URL <https://www.okunoto-ishikawa.net/modules/donmap/> (accessed on 8 July 2023).
- Winter, M. (2003). Embeddedness, the new food economy and defensive localism. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 19(1), 23–32. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0743-0167\(02\)00053-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0743-0167(02)00053-0)
- Woods, M. (2007). Engaging the global countryside: Globalization, hybridity and the reconstitution of rural place. *Progress in Human Geography*, 31(4), 485–507. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132507079503>
- Woods, M. (2011). *Rural*. Routledge.
- Yoshinoya, (2023). Our Company [WWW Document] accessed on 8 July 2023 <https://www.yoshinoamerica.com/our-story>.