

## Landscape of Abukuma highland and its biodiversity

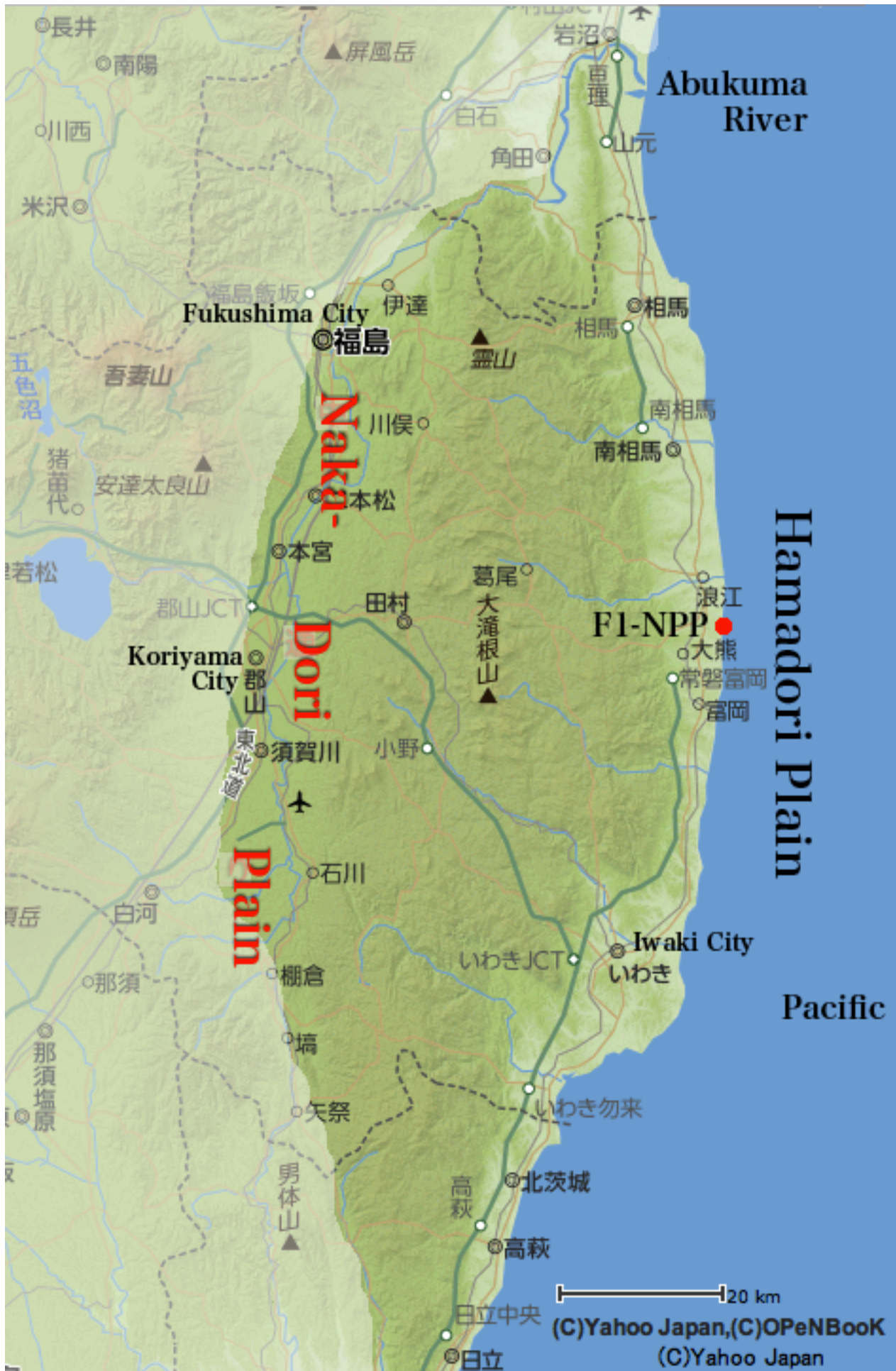
Abukuma mountains has the area of about 170 km south - north ward, and 40 km east - west ward, surrounded by the 10 km wide narrow plain along the Pacific coast to the east (“Hamadori” area), Abukuma River plain to the west (“Nakadori” area) and the north, and Kuji River valley to the south (Fig. 2). F1-NPP locates the central east at the Pacific coast of Hamadori plain. Just behind the Hamadori plain, there are small valleys with steep streams up to about 400 m in altitude. In this slope, there are few houses and less human activity. Abukuma highland with gentle hills of mostly around 600m in altitude and up to 1,192m, has a landscape which is the mixture of paddy field, farm land, secondary deciduous forest and evergreen conifer plantations. The dominant natural tree species are *Fagus japonica*, *Carpinus tschonoskii*, *Zelkova serrata*, *Aesculus turbinata*, *Pterocarya rhoifolia*, *Acer mono*, *Abies firma* and so on. Main plantation species are *Cryptomeria japonica* and *Chamaecyparis obtusa*. There are also many small streams and ponds scattering among agricultural fields and the forest. The ecosystem structure is heterogeneous and there are plenty of niches for wildlife. We say such heavily human induced natural landscape as “Satoyama”, in Japanese. \*

Western Abukuma mountains is a gentle slope and there is human residence surrounded by “Satoyama” landscape with plenty of small sections of paddy field. The streams are in abundance, and small hills are covered with natural forest. Most of this western area was escaped to suffer a high radiation exposure, and human activity is continuing .

[Please see also the pictures]

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\* Japanese “Sato” means area with human residence and activity, and “Yama” is hill, mountains with mostly including, we say, the cover of forest.



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