# People's preferences for future development scenarios in Miyako Island, Japan

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**Abstract**

Many regions encounter a dilemma of how economic growth should be pursued with cultural and environmental conservation under global competition. While there are several articles that examine the relationship between development and environment, little is known about how people in a region prefer future development scenarios across economic growth and conservation. We pose a research question of how Miyako Island (MYK) people in Japan prefer a future development scenario over the growth vs. the conservation as well as rural tourism vs. urban one. It is hypothesized that (i) prosocial people and/or with an identity "I am a MYK person" prefer conservation by rural tourism and (ii) people with long residential time in MYK prefer economic growth by urban tourism. We conducted online choice experiments with permanent and temporary residents, collecting the data over their preferences for the scenarios, prosociality, experiences and socioeconomic factors. The results show that (i) people who have spent a relatively long period of their lives in (outside) MYK prefer the growth (conservation), (ii) a majority of MYK people are prosocial and do not prefer economic growth by urban tourism and (iii) prosocial and/or environmentally concerned people support conservation by rural tourism. Overall, we interpret that how people have been associated with MYK as residents or outsiders causes their preference gap, however, the gap will get resolved to conservation by rural tourism as people become prosocial and environmentally concerned. In addition, it is concluded that the current development process that follows economic growth by urban tourism in MYK is unlikely to contribute to the residents' wellbeing due to discrepancy with what the residents prefer on the basis of our results.

**Key Words**: future development scenarios; economic growth; environmental concern; social value orientation