HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

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Japan-Russian fisheries co-operation and international law: Its contribution to sustainable fisheries in the global, regional, national and local contexts

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The article aims at giving an overview of existing legal frameworks of fisheries co-operation between Japan and Russia to see how bilateral agreements could contribute to promoting sustainable fisheries in the global, regional, national and local contexts. It describes the core structure of four bilateral agreements concluded between the two countries and the state of their implementation, including the 1984 Agreement on Mutual Relations in the Sphere of Coastal Fisheries of Both Countries, the 1985 Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Fisheries, the 1998 Agreement on Some Matters of Cooperation in the Field of Fishing Operations for Marine Living Resources, and the 2012 Agreement on Conservation, Rational Use and Management of Live Aquatic Resources in the North-West Pacific Ocean and Prevention of Illegal Trade of Live Aquatic Resources. It discusses their roles in relations to three issues, i.e. sustainable fisheries in the North-West Pacific where there exists a long history of international competition and co-operation for fisheries resources management among Japan and other coastal States, including Russia; fisheries relations in waters surrounding disputed northern islands between the two countries; and bilateral co-operation for combatting IUU fishing that may also be relevant in a global context. The bilateral legal frameworks have been working as expected. However, there are some challenges in the global context of sustainable fisheries.

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