# Japanese Large Corporations' Use of Forest Certification in Social Responsibility Reporting

OWARI, Toshiaki
The University of Tokyo, Japan





#### **Forest Certification**

- Forest certification ensures that forests are managed in accordance with a set of standards considered environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable.
- It has emerged since the early 1990s as a market-based tool for promoting sustainable forest management (Stevens et al., 1998).
- Products originating from certified forests can be verified through a chain of custody system providing the ability to track them from the forest to the final product (Nussbaum and Simula, 2005).
- There have been a growing number of chain of custody certificate holders, and a total of 23,717 certificates had been issued worldwide as of May 2010 (Oliver et al., 2010).



#### Chain of Custody Certification in Japan

- Even though chain of custody certificate holders are mainly located in Europe and North America, Japan grants the second largest number of certificates outside these regions (Oliver et al., 2010).
- The number of chain of custody certificates issued in Japan has increased since the early 2000s, and a total of 1,721 certificates had been granted.
  - □ FSC: 1,107 (April 2011), PEFC: 205 (June 2011), SGEC: 409 (June 2011)
- As a major importer of forest products, Japan has a significant influence on the global development of forest certification (Owari & Sawanobori, 2007).



#### Markets for CFPs in Japan

- Paper products companies outnumber wood products companies in chain of custody certificates in Japan (Owari & Sawanobori, 2007).
- Large corporations, which are often listed on the domestic stock market, have likely driven the demand for certified paper.
- More corporations now use certified paper for social responsibility reporting (Owari & Sawanobori, 2008).
- By labeling corporate reports with certification logos, corporations can communicate their sense of responsibility to stakeholders.



#### Purpose

- Within the forest products marketing arena, an increasing number of studies have examined social responsibility reporting (Li et al., 2011; Mikkilä & Toppinen, 2008; Panwar et al., 2006; Sinclair & Walton, 2003; Toppinen et al., 2011; Vidal & Kozak, 2008a; 2008b).
- While many researchers have analyzed the social responsibility reports published by large forest industry companies, few studies have been examining those reports published by the end-users of forest products.
- To better understand the communicational role of forest certification for end-users, this study examined how large corporations use it in social responsibility reporting in Japan.



#### **Data Collection**

- This study defined 'large corporation' as a corporation listed on the first section of Tokyo Stock Exchange (n = 1,671, March 2006)
- Social responsibility (SR) reports (incl., environmental and social reports, sustainability reports, responsible care reports, etc.) published as PDF (Portable Document Format) documents were collected.
- By September 2006, 524 SR reports were downloaded successfully.
   Since 1 file was corrupted, a total of 523 reports were used for the analysis.



#### **Data Analysis**

- By referring to Nippon Foundation (2006), corporations disclosing SR activities on their own website and publishing SR reports were specified.
- In each SR report collected, the use of recycled paper and certified paper was identified by logos printed on the back cover page. The usage rate was then calculated by type of industry.
- Content analysis was conducted using the full-text search engine of Adobe® Acrobat® 7.0 Standard (Abobe Systems Inc., CA) to examine the frequency and context of using the words "forest" and "forest certification" in the text of SR reports.

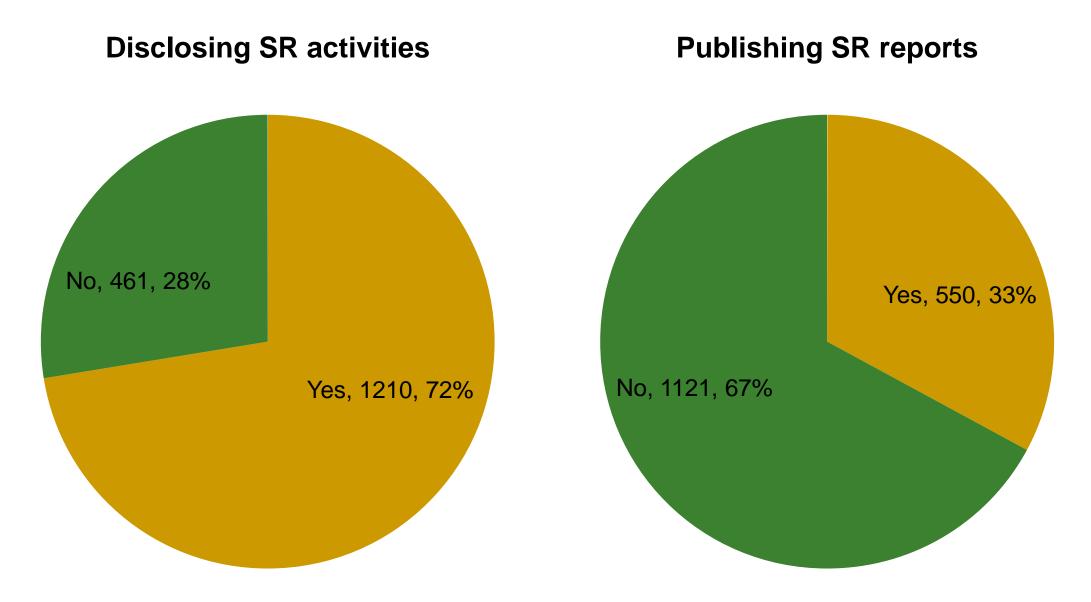


#### Results





#### Corporations' SR Communication

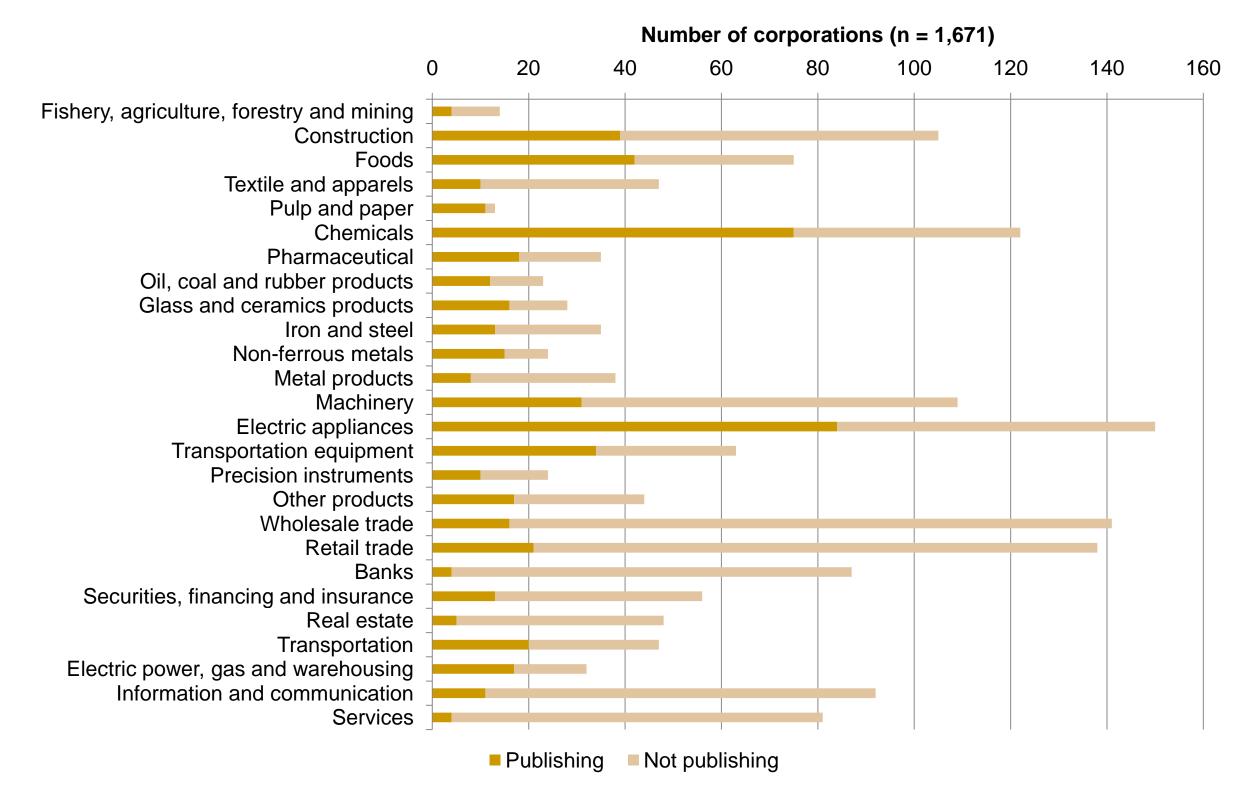


n = 1,671; The majority of Japanese large corporations seemed not yet to be active in SR reporting as of the year 2006.



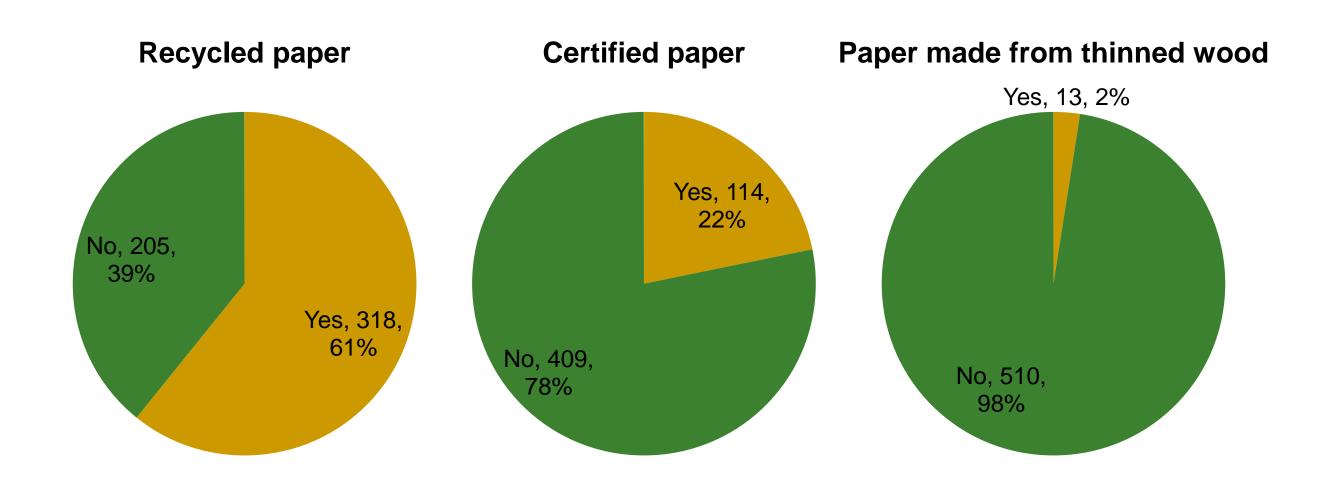
#### Publishing SR Reports by Industry







#### Paper Used for SR Reports

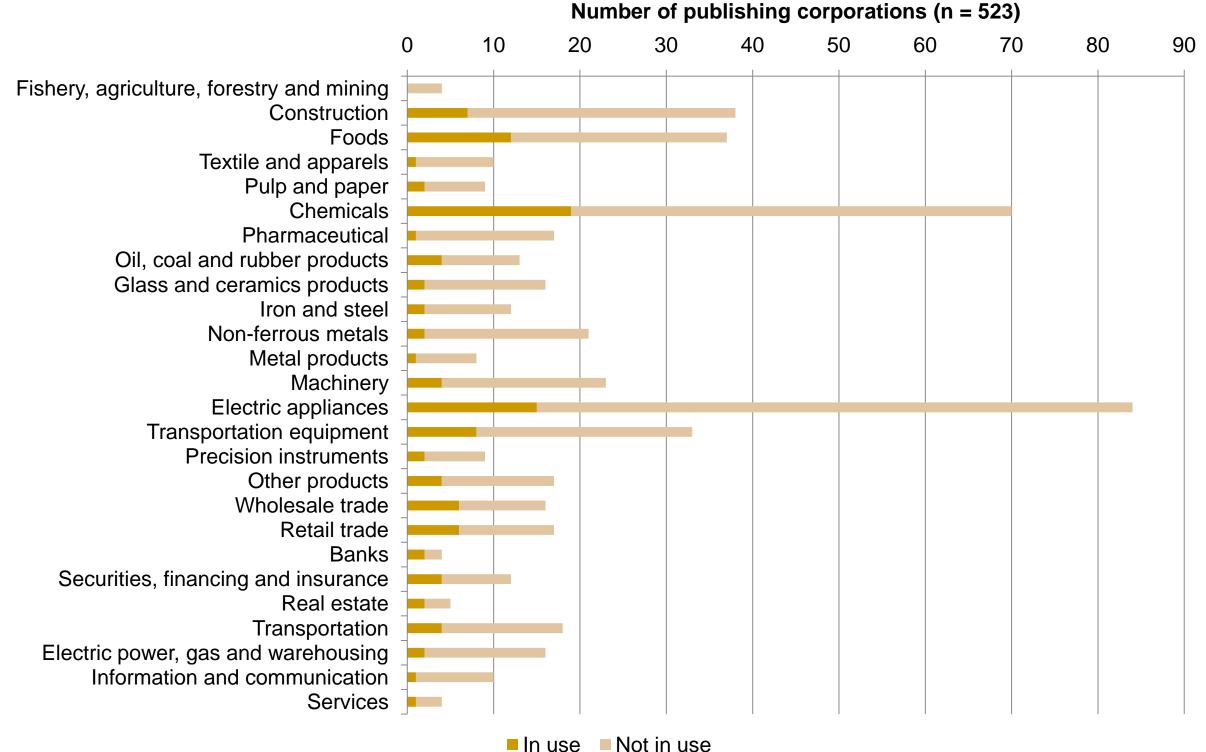


n = 523; The majority of Japanese large corporations seemed not yet to be active to use certified paper in SR reporting as of the year 2006.



#### Using Certified Paper for SR Reports







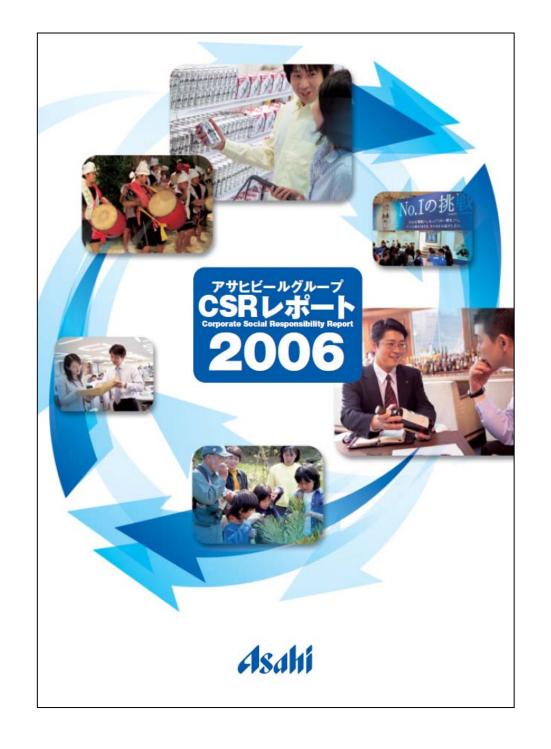
## Electric Appliances: Toshiba Corp.







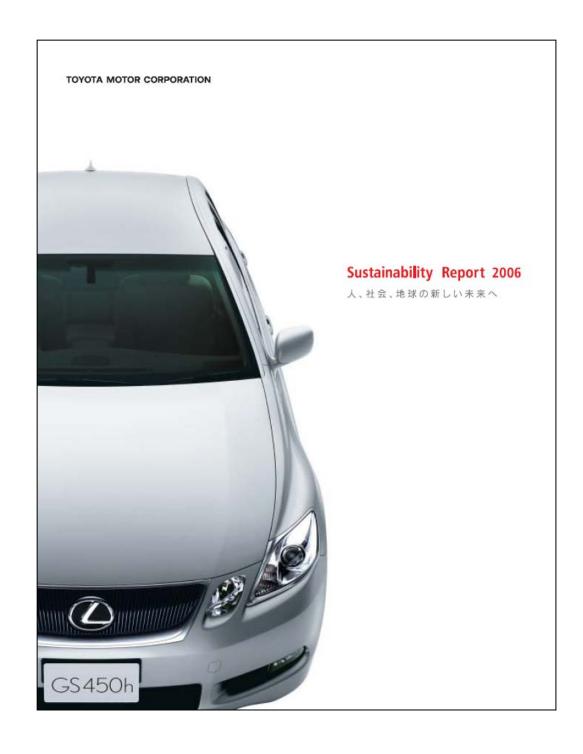
#### Foods: Asahi Breweries, Ltd.

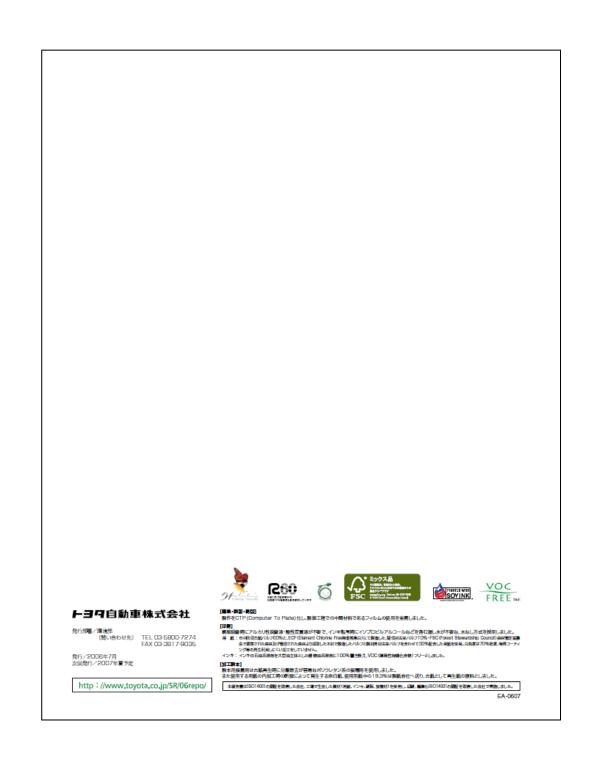






#### **Transportation Equipment: Toyota**

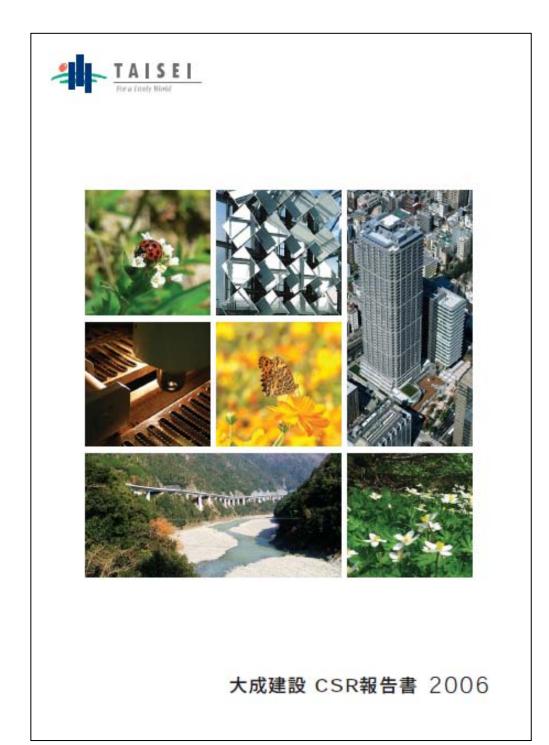




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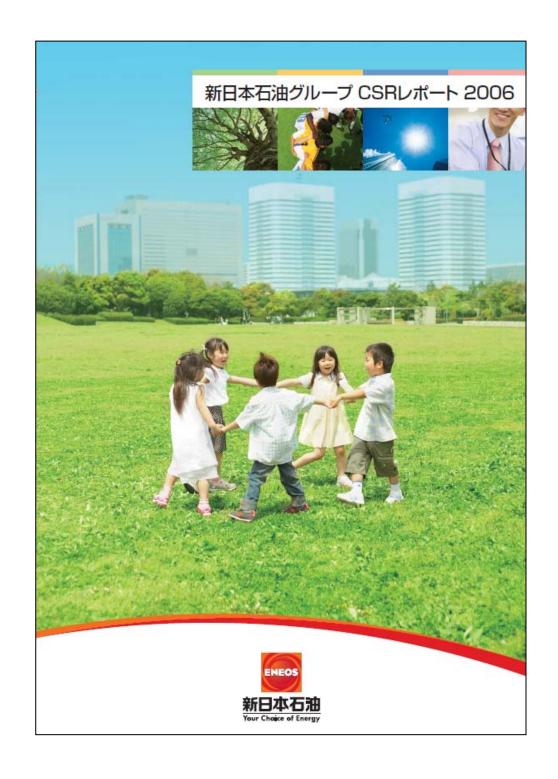
#### Construction: Taisei Corp.







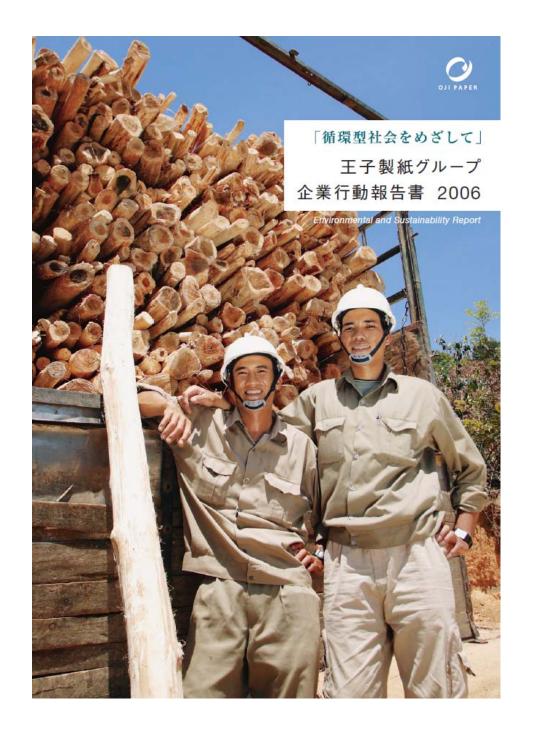
#### Oil Products: Nippon Oil Corp.







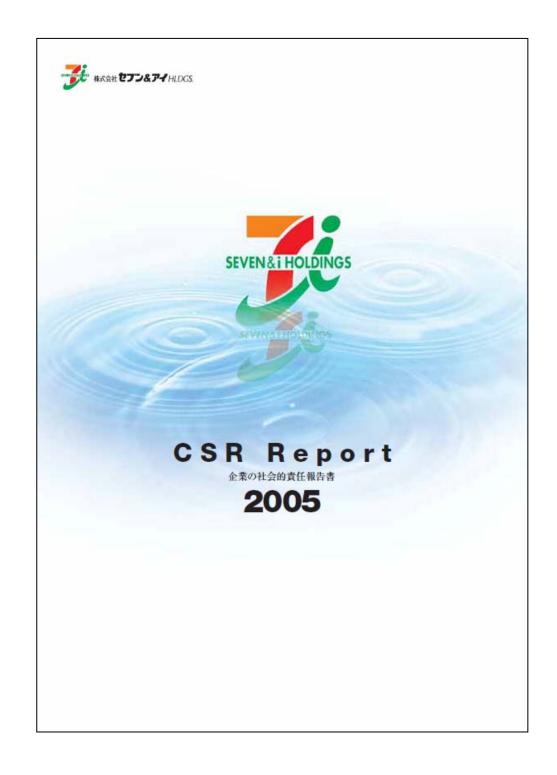
#### Pulp & Paper: Oji Paper Co. Ltd.







#### Retail Trade: Seven & i Holdings









#### Bank: Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ Bank



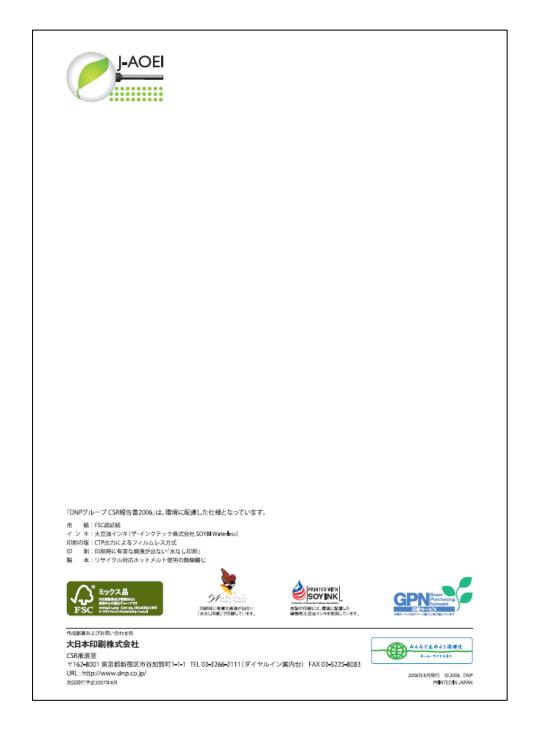


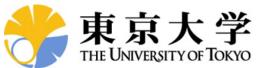




#### Other Products: Dai Nippon Printing

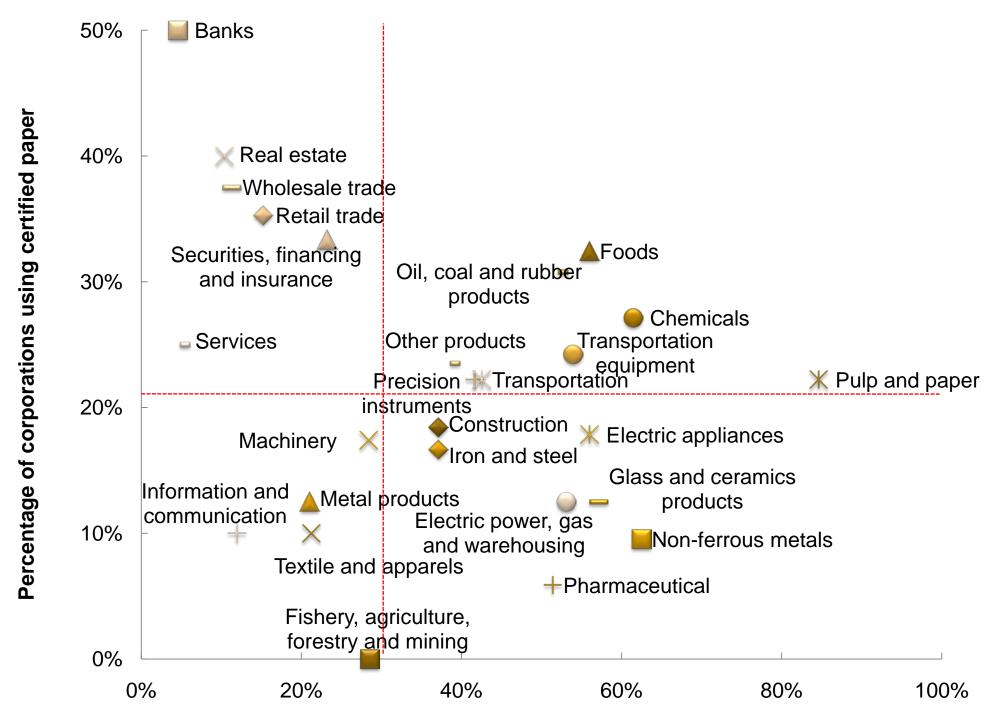








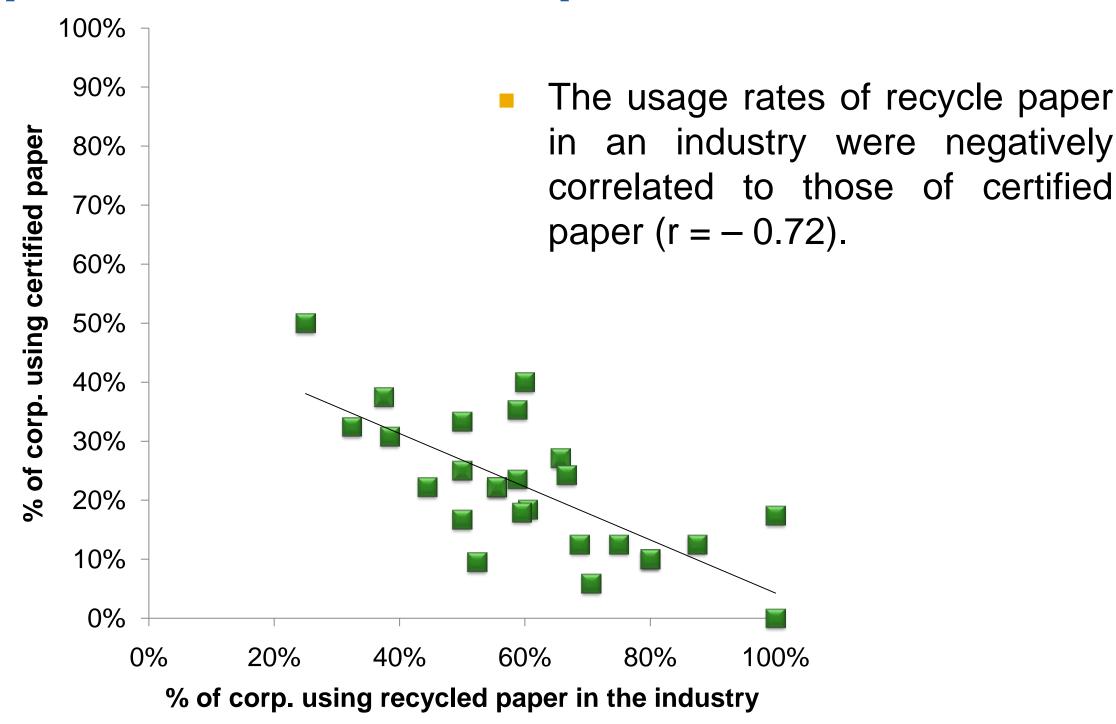
#### Publication-Use Relationships



Percentage of corporations publishing social responsibility reports

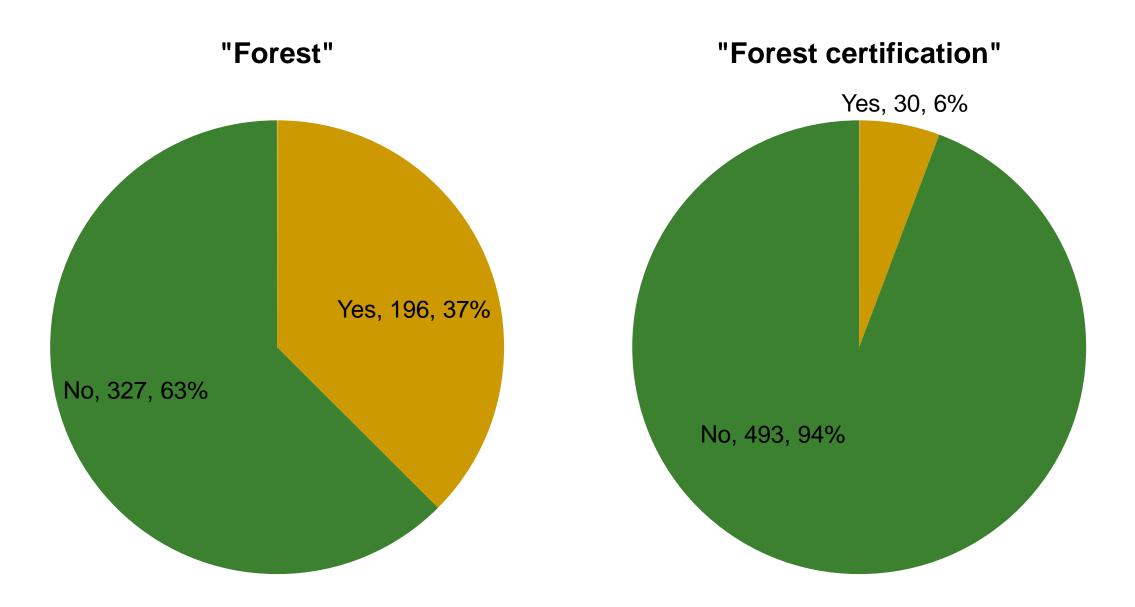


# Relationship between the Use of Recycle Paper and Certified Paper

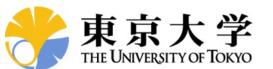




#### "Forest" & "Forest Certification" in SR Reports

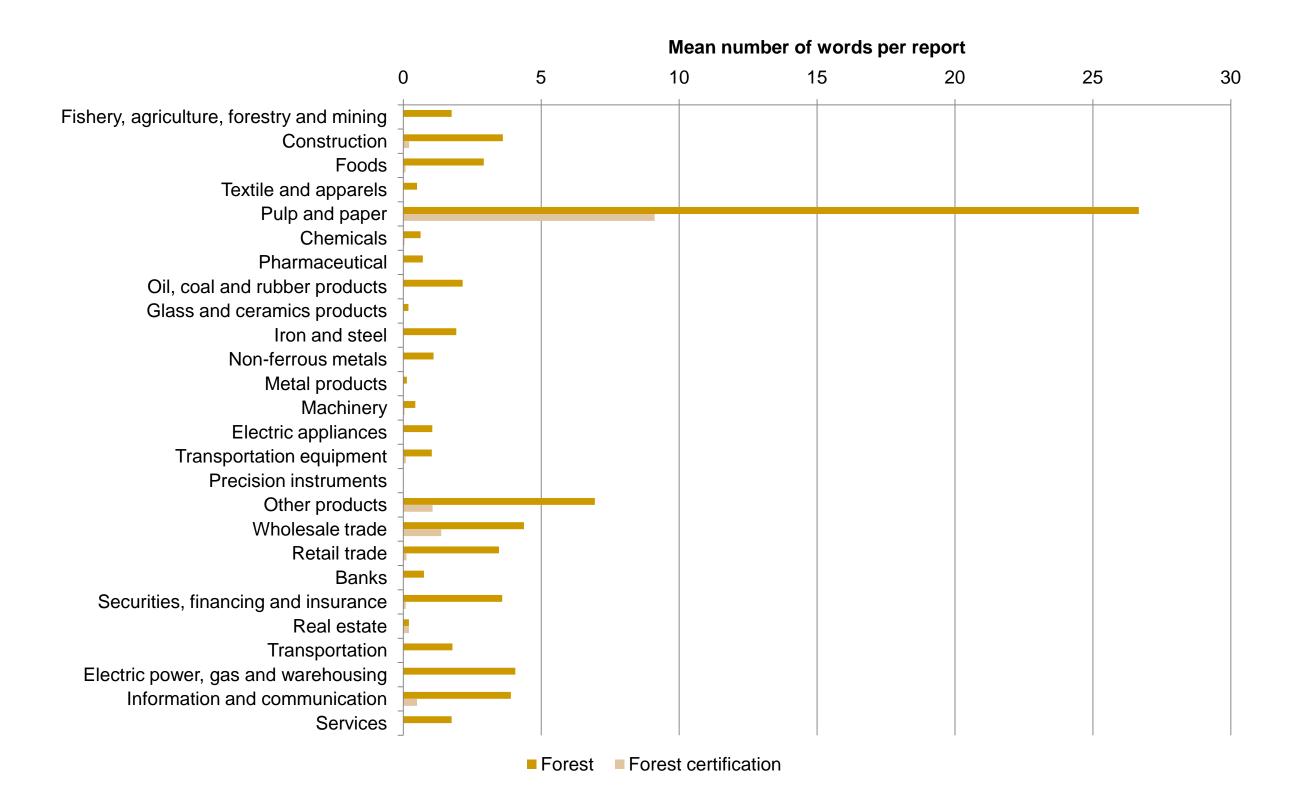


n = 523; Few corporations used the word "forest certification" in the SR report.





#### "Forest" & "Forest Certification" in SR Reports





#### **Context of Forest Certification in SR Reports**

- Of the 30 corporations used the word "forest certification", 19 stated that it was important for environmental protection.
- 3 corporations mentioned forest certification in relation to resource and social sustainability.
- 8 corporations merely explained forest certification and the use of certified paper in the text and did not give any reasons why they took part in the forest certification program.



#### Foods: Meiji Co., Ltd.



#### ●紙パッケージにおける森林保護

IUFRO Oregon (Owari, T.)

紙素材のパッケージは、90%以上が古紙混入 紙となっていますが、フランのパッケージでは、 環境保全の観点から「PEFC」(欧州を中心とする 世界最大の森林認証団体) の認証を得た紙を日本 で初めて使用しています。フランに使用している 板紙は、適切に管理された森林から伐採された木 材を使用していますので、森林減少に役立ちます。







この籍は、PEFCの認証をうけたフィンランドの森林の木材を原料 としています。PEFCは環境を配慮した森林や木材を証明するし

明治製菓(株)は、地球環境を保全する森林が、いつまでも元気で いられるように願い、環境に配慮した紙製品の利用に努めています。 詳しくはhttp://www.pefcasia.orgをご覧ください。

「フラン」のパッケージ裏には、世界最大の森林認証団体の承認を受けた ことが表示されています。



#### Wholesale Trade: Itochu Corp.



#### 生活資材・化学品カンパニーのCSRとは

#### 自然環境の保護と安全管理 ~事業投資先を含めたCSRの推進

当カンパニーは、自然環境の保護及び危険・有害化学物質の安全管理をCSRの中心課題として考えています。

生活資材部門では、森林資源に関わるビジネスの比率が高く、その原料の調達に当たっては原産地の国・地域への環境・ 社会的側面に配慮することが重要です。具体的には、自然林の保護や森林認証の取得を通じた自然環境保全を推進していくと同時に、資材調達における原料トレーサビリティの確立も目指します。

化学品部門においては、頻繁に更新される化学品関連法規 を正確に把握し、これを遵守すること、グループ会社の工場運営 における労働安全衛生環境の向上などが中心課題です。

当カンパニーでは「トレーディング」と「事業投資」の相乗効果を活かしたビジネスモデルを進めており、グループ会社を含めたCSRの推進が非常に重要な課題です。



#### Summary

- In Japan, large corporations in manufacturing industries are relatively active in SR reporting.
- The majority of corporations had not used certified paper for the SR reports. The use was relatively frequent in some industries.
- The usage rates of recycle paper in an industry were negatively correlated to those of certified paper.
- Few corporations used the word "forest certification" in the text of the SR report.



#### Discussion (1)

- In Japan, large corporations in manufacturing industries are relatively active in SR reporting.
  - Industries using more natural resources and energy for their business activities are probably more active in SR reporting.
- The majority of corporations had not used certified paper for the SR reports. The use was relatively frequent in some industries.
  - To mitigate environmental impacts: air (automobile), water (breweries), resources (printers) (Ito et al., 2004)
  - To improve investor relations: Dow Jones Sustainability Index (largest corporations) (Owari, 2007)



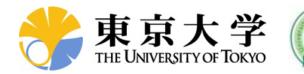
#### Discussion (2)

- The usage rates of recycle paper in an industry were negatively correlated to those of certified paper.
  - Certified paper is used as an alternative to recycled paper. As the use of recycled paper becomes the norm, certified paper is probably considered as an environmentally friendly substitute (Owari & Sawanobori, 2007).
  - The Green Purchasing Network revised its purchasing guidelines in Oct. 2005: "In addition to recycled pulp, virgin pulp produced from certified forest timber can be considered green."
- Few corporations used the word "forest certification" in the text of the SR report.
  - To demonstrate their environmental friendliness
  - Complicate to explain why a corporation needs to promote sustainable forest management? Due to low level of awareness?



### **Concluding Remark**

- This study was intended to provide insight into the Japanese market for certified forest products and large corporations' use of forest certification in social responsibility reporting.
- However, they may have changed the use of forest certification and the way of social responsibility communications.
- Follow-up studies are therefore needed to anticipate the market development of certified forest products in Japan.





#### Thank you!





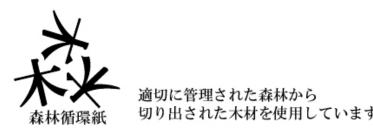














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(Corresponding address: <a href="mailto:owari@uf.a.u-tokyo.ac.jp">owari@uf.a.u-tokyo.ac.jp</a>)