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COALITIONS OF PEASANTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN JAPAN: SEEKING AGROECOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND POLITICS

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While agroecology has gained prominence in many countries and regions through movements led by peasants and civil society organizations, coalitions of hegemonic powers and transnational corporations have sought to reverse this trend and protect their interests in agri-food markets and politics. Against this backdrop, a research question arises: How do coalitions of peasants and civil society organize themselves, and what discourses do they construct to pursue an agroecological society and politics? Japan, the world fourth economy and known for its history of organic and natural farming and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA, or Teikei in Japanese), serves as a pertinent case, as a Japanese peasant organization, a member of La Via Campesina, and allied civil society organizations (consumers organizations, cooperatives, organic farmers organizations, NGOs, academics, journalists, etc.), sometimes with international partners, have advocated for agroecology and food sovereignty. This study employs an interdisciplinary approach to political economy and sociology of agriculture and food and provides empirical evidence based on analyses of

public policies, statistics, literature, and participant observations of coalitions of peasants and civil society organizations engaged in agroecological movements in Japan from 2019 to 2025. The findings demonstrate that (a) the coalitions criticize the greenwashing of biotechnologies, such as genome editing and radiation breeding, both under consideration for organic certification by the government. Their movements resulted in the closure of an aquaculture factory producing genome-edited fish and more municipalities refusing genome-edited seeds and seedlings; (b) their actions pushed the government to support agroecological school feeding programs and contributed to a rise in municipalities engaging in agroecology; (c) amid the rice shortage and price spike in recent years, the coalitions organized riots in many parts of the country in 2024 and 2025 and pressed the government to reform public policies to realize food security and food sovereignty.

Palavras-chave: agroecology; peasant; civil society; biotechnologies; japan.