

Fishing and *Sodabushi* in Tosashimizu

The settlement of Matsuo, which is located just west of Cape Ashizuri and its plentiful fishing grounds, has a long history of open-water fishing. The local people have fished for skipjack and bullet tuna since the Edo period (1603–1868), when the necessary techniques were introduced to the region from present-day Wakayama Prefecture. It is rare to find these open-water species so close to the coast, but here Matsuo has benefited from its proximity to the great Kuroshio (Japan Current), on which the tuna travel north to colder waters.

Matsuo is part of the city of Tosashimizu, Japan's leading producer of *sodabushi*: smoked, dried, and fermented fish fillets made from bullet tuna (*sodagatsuo*). The aromatic flakes shaved from the fillets are used mainly to make soup or stock, but can also be eaten as they are or used as toppings for various dishes. About 70–80 percent of all *sodabushi* consumed in Japan comes from Tosashimizu, where some of the huts used to dry and smoke the fish can be visited as part of a “*sodabushi* experience” that also includes tasting.