

# **THE JAPANESE IRRIGATION WATER INSTITUTION AT THE CROSSROADS**

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## **RESUMO**

For over five decades, the Japanese irrigation water institution has been in use effectively, helping the country to accumulate internal capital and shooting it into the economic stardom as one of the rare Asian economic tigers. The land improvement law that prescribes how the central government, local government and farmers' groups share roles in developing and managing irrigation water is now being challenged by both internal social changes and external pressures. The Japanese government is now at the crossroads, unable to maintain its so-called surrogate entrepreneur in this sector while the aging farmers are idling more and more farms. This paper will present empirical data of changes in two small agricultural villages in the Japanese rice bowl region of Tohoku and discuss the taken and inviting options available to Japan. It will also discuss advantages and disadvantages.

**PALAVRA-CHAVE: irrigation water management, irrigation water institution, social changes, environmental conservation, agricultural trade**