

Consider the Increasing Bear Attacks an Emergency

クマによる人身被害が日本各地で深刻化し、住宅街にまで出没するケースが増えています。背景には、山の環境変化や餌不足など、さまざまな要因があるといわれています。政府や自治体も対策を進めていますが、地域ごとの状況に合わせた工夫が求められています。クマと人との距離をどう守るのかは、多くの地域で共通の課題です。あなたなら、どんな対策が最も効果的だと思いますか？講師と一緒に意見を交わしてみましょう。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Cases of bear-related physical harm to humans in Japan are becoming more serious. Around 80 people have been injured, and more than a dozen have already died this fiscal year. The numbers surpass the previous record of six deaths in FY 2023. Moreover, human injuries from these wild animals are occurring under different circumstances from the past.

In years past, most attacks involved people who had gone into the mountains to pick wild vegetables, where they encountered bears in the wild. However, in recent years, bears have been intruding upon populated areas. Consequently, "urban bear" incidents resulting in injuries to people in residential and commercial areas have become more prominent.

The situation has worsened considerably in 2025, with reports of bears attacking people throughout a wide swath of the country. This change is quite disturbing.

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1. Article

On October 30, the Takaichi Cabinet held a ministerial meeting to consider countermeasures for addressing the bear problem. Representatives from eight ministries participated, including the Ministry of the Environment. Implementation of comprehensive bear control measures will require close cooperation between the central government and local governments.

The background to this abnormal situation is [complex](#). This year (2025), there is a poor harvest of nuts, such as beech nuts. That has left scarce mountain sources for the foods the bears rely on. At the same time, the number of deer and other wild animals has been increasing. Furthermore, there are signs that Asiatic black bears are becoming more carnivorous as they increasingly eat the carcasses of other animals.

There is also a problem with deteriorating forest environments, which may be a [factor](#) behind the attack on humans. Renewable energy projects, such as mega solar and wind power generation, have expanded significantly in the name of decarbonization. Solar panels covering the mountainsides are compressing bear habitats. The government should also investigate the possibility that the low-frequency noise emitted by giant wind turbines is robbing the mountainous countryside of its tranquility.

The revised Wildlife Protection and Management Act allows mayors of cities, towns, and villages to order emergency hunting with guns against threatening bears that appear in urban areas. However, the pool of experienced hunters is aging, and the response system is weak. Hopefully, the national and local governments will support local communities that are affected, including by fostering professionals capable of dealing with the problem.

At the request of Akita Prefecture, Self-Defense Force units have even been deployed. Instead of actually killing bears, they will support local efforts with box traps and the disposal of bears killed by hunting association members.

Time is of the essence. In this case, it is appropriate to deploy the Self-Defense Forces, as they have rapid response and organizational strength. But let us not forget that the SDF must prepare through intensive training to face enemies stronger than bears. For 2026 onward, there should be a system that mobilizes local government officials and police officers instead of relying on the SDF.

Measures to prevent bears from coming into [inhabited](#) areas are also necessary. For example, fruit trees in settled communities attract bears. Steps need to be taken to deter bears in those areas, including [installing](#) electric fences and monitoring devices. Mowing the grass along riverbanks, which bears often pass through when they enter urban areas, could also help.

The important thing is to reestablish a zone separating the habitats of humans and bears. Locally and nationally, anyone with applicable ecological and local knowledge should be mobilized.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **residential** 住宅の、居住用の

Please drive carefully through residential areas.

2. **complex** 複雑な

Mason is solving complex problems in his college science classes.

3. **factor** 要因

Preparation and careful planning are important factors in having a successful business.

4. **inhabited** 人が住んでいる

Most of the small islands near my hometown are not inhabited.

5. **install** 設置する、導入する

Over the weekend, Nobu installed three smoke alarms in his apartment.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. How serious is the bear situation? Include details from the article.
2. What are some possible causes of the bear attacks?
3. What does the writer suggest doing to stop the attacks?
4. Which of the possible causes of the bear attacks do you think is the most likely? Why?
5. Of the solutions that the writer mentioned, what do you think would be the most effective? Why?

4. 多発するクマ被害 政府を挙げて対策強めよ

クマによる人身被害が深刻化している。今年度の死者数は10人以上で、最悪だった令和5年度の6人を上回る。人が被害に遭う状況が従来と異なる点に注意したい。

かつては山菜採りなどで山に入った人がクマと遭遇して襲われる事故が主だった。それが近年はクマが人の生活圏に入り、市街地で人を傷つけるアーバンベア事案が目立つようになった。

今年はさらに一線を越え、人を襲う行動が各地で報告される。この変化が気掛かりだ。

高市早苗内閣は10月30日、環境省など8省庁によるクマ対策の閣僚会議を開いた。自治体との連携を密に取りながら、政府を挙げて包括的なクマ対策に取り組んでももらいたい。

異常事態の背景は複雑だ。ブナの実などの堅果類の凶作で山の餌が乏しくなった。加えてシカなどが増加し、ツキノワグマが死骸を食べるうちに肉食嗜好（しこう）を強めている兆候がある。

人を襲う行動には、森林環境の劣化も関係しているのではないか。再生可能エネルギーによる脱炭素の名のもとにメガソーラーや風力発電の拡大が著しい。巨大風車の発する低周波音が奥山の静けさを奪い、山肌を覆う太陽光パネルがクマの生息域を圧迫している可能性を政府は調査すべきである。

改正鳥獣保護管理法で、市街地に出没したクマに対する「緊急銃猟」を市町村長が指示できるようになったが、ハンターの高齢化が進み、即応体制は脆弱（ぜいじゃく）だ。国と自治体は担い手育成を含めて地域を支えてほしい。

秋田県の要請で自衛隊も出動することになった。クマの殺傷ではなく、箱わな設置や猟友会が駆除した個体の処理などを支援する。事は急を要する。即応力、組織力を有する自衛隊の出動は妥当だ。ただし、自衛隊は激しい演習を通じ、クマよりも強い外敵に備えなければならない。来年以降は自衛隊に依存せず、自治体職員や警察官を動員する体制を整えるべきだ。

クマが人里に来ないようにする対策も必要だ。里山の果樹などの誘因源を整理し、電気柵や監視装置を整備したい。クマが市街地に侵入する際に通る河川敷の草刈りも効果的だ。

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4. 多発するクマ被害 政府を挙げて対策強めよ

大事なことは、「距離の再構築」による人とクマの棲（す）み分けである。生態学と地域の知恵を総動員して当たりたい。



出典：多発するクマ被害 政府を挙げて対策強めよ
[JAPAN Forward](#)