

**MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION
BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF JAPAN
AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
IN THE FIELD OF NATIONAL PARKS**

The Ministry of the Environment of Japan and the U.S. Department of the Interior (hereinafter referred to individually as “Participant” and collectively as “the Participants”),

Recognizing the momentous occasion of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America;

Celebrating the U.S. government’s ongoing efforts to hold Freedom 250 (“F250”) commemorations in Japan, which are strengthening U.S.-Japan ties and advancing shared priorities and values;

Recognizing the upcoming centennial of the establishment of the National Park System in Japan in 2031;

Emphasizing the Participants’ desire to strengthen the existing friendly relations between the two countries in the field of national parks; and

Recognizing that cooperation between the two countries could enhance the effective conservation and management of national parks and promote their proper use,

Have reached the following recognition in accordance with the laws and regulations of their respective countries:

Section I: Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Cooperation (“Memorandum”) is to reaffirm the commitment to strengthen, promote, and develop mutual cooperation in the field of national parks, thereby enhancing the conservation and management of national parks and promoting their appropriate use for both Participants.

Section II: Areas of Cooperation

The Participants intend to collaborate on cooperative activities from the following mutually identified areas related to national parks:

1. Conservation and management of national parks, including volunteer systems, interpretation plans, visitor management, disaster countermeasures, etc.,
2. Protection and management of wildlife, such as for rare plant and animal species, invasive species, wildlife protection and management, etc.,
3. Conservation of biodiversity (e.g., natural regeneration),
4. Recreation and ecotourism,
5. Environmental education,
6. Monitoring techniques and data management, and
7. Information dissemination.

Section III: Focal Point

To ensure the effective implementation of activities under this Memorandum, the Participants designate focal points to act as their respective representatives for all related matters. The focal point for the Ministry of the Environment of Japan is the Director of the National Parks Division, Nature Conservation Bureau. The focal point for the U.S. Department of the Interior is the Assistant Secretary for Insular, International, and Ocean Affairs.

Section IV: Forms of Implementation and Cooperation

Within the scope of financial resources provided by each Participant, the Participants jointly decide to encourage and promote cooperation through appropriate forms, including the following:

1. Before the end of 2026, finalizing new Sister Park Arrangements between their respective national parks possessing similar characteristics, such as natural landscapes, rich ecosystems, and wildlife habitats,
2. Holding dialogue meetings,
3. Promoting the exchange of information, knowledge, techniques, experience, best practices, lessons learned, and expertise between

- public and private entities of both Participants through workshops and training programs,
4. Encouraging personnel exchanges between staff of both Participants, and
 5. Promoting mutual tourism and visits to the other Participant's national parks.

Section V: Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual property rights arising from activities conducted under this Memorandum are expected to be exercised in accordance with the laws and regulations of each country and may be further detailed in separate documents as necessary.

Section VI: Confidentiality

Each Participant is expected to maintain the confidentiality and sensitivity of documents, information, and other data received from or provided by the other Participant during the implementation period of this Memorandum and other documents created pursuant to this Memorandum. The contents of Section VI do not infringe upon the provisions of laws and regulations in force in each country. Neither Participant intends to disclose any sensitive information received from the other Participant under this Memorandum without prior written notice to the other Participant.

Section VII: Modification

This Memorandum may be modified at any time by mutual written decision of the Participants.

Section VIII: Resolution of Differences

Any differences arising out of the interpretation or application of the contents of this Memorandum are intended to be resolved amicably through consultation between the Participants.

Section IX: General Matters

The cooperation under this Memorandum is intended to commence on the date of signature and continue for a period of five years. It may be extended by mutual written decision of the Participants or may be discontinued at any time by written notice given by either Participant to the other Participant.

Discontinuation of cooperation is not intended to affect the duration of any ongoing project or activity until its completion, unless otherwise determined by either Participant. This Memorandum does not affect or create any rights or obligations under domestic or international law.

Signed in Tokyo, Japan, on March 13, 2026, in duplicate, in the English language.

FOR THE MINISTRY OF
ENVIRONMENT OF JAPAN:

FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
INTERIOR:

ISHIHARA Hirotaka
Minister of Environment of Japan

Douglas J. Burgum
Secretary of Interior of the United
States of America