

# JEQ

## JAPAN Environment Quarterly

### FEATURE :

Online Ministerial Meeting for the Platform for Redesign 2020: Platform on Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from COVID-19

### CURRENT TOPICS :

- International Symposium "Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction"
- Japan's Policy on Exporting Coal-Fired Power Generation
- Launch of the Japan Platform for Redesign: Sustainable Infrastructure (JPRSI)
- Redesigning Work-Style amid and after the Pandemic

### NATIONAL PARKS of JAPAN :

Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park



# Online Ministerial Meeting for the Platform for Redesign 2020: Platform on Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from COVID-19

## “Redesign” and the “Three Transitions”

Join via Livestream on

3 September 2020 | 1pm - 4pm CEST

### Online Ministerial Meeting

Climate and Other Environmental Action in COVID-19 Recovery

# PLATFORM for REDESIGN 2020

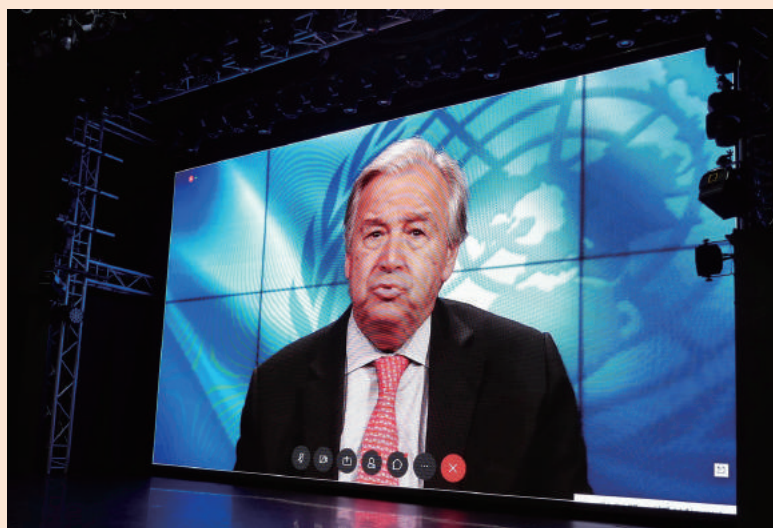
Online Platform on Sustainable  
and Resilient Recovery from COVID-19

On September 3, 2020, the Online Ministerial Meeting for the Platform for Redesign 2020 was held. During the meeting, participants from each country shared their views and concrete actions to tackle the COVID-19 crisis and measures to address climate change and environmental degradation.

#### Background

The 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) has been postponed to November 2021 due to the COVID-19 crisis. While the pandemic continues to affect the world's socio-economic systems, climate change and environmental degradations have not subsided, as extreme rainfalls and tropical cyclones continue to cause floods in many parts of the world, and increased temperatures and droughts cause wildfires.

COVID-19 stroke a massive blow to the global economy. Now is the time for us to plan for a vigorous recovery. Such recovery will be triggered by a virtuous cycle of environment and growth. As part of our recovery from the pandemic, we must move forward with tackling both climate change and environmental degradation. We have to take concrete actions to raise the level of ambition and implement both mitigation and adaptation measures. Furthermore, 2020 is an important year during which the Paris Agreement enters into force, and parties communicate and



Opening video message from UN Secretary-General Guterres

update their NDCs, leading to long-term emissions reduction strategies. To address these two crises, it is essential for all countries to cooperate and enhance inclusiveness.

Minister of the Environment KOIZUMI Shinjiro, with full support from the UNFCCC Secretariat, held the Online Ministerial Meeting for the Platform for Redesign 2020 on September 3, 2020, to bring together information from all countries on their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and climate and environmental measures. The objective was to build global momentum and make sure that climate action does not lag behind amid the pandemic.

The meeting on post-COVID-19 climate measures garnered large-scale attendance globally with a total of 96 countries participating, and ministers and vice-ministers from 46 countries sharing their initiatives. The meeting was chaired by Minister KOIZUMI, with full support of Ms. Patricia Espinosa, UNFCCC Executive Secretary. Opening messages were provided by Mr. ABE Shinzo, (then) Prime Minister of Japan, and Mr. António Guterres, UN Secretary-General.

### Keywords: “Redesign” and the “Three Transitions”

Using “Redesign” as a keyword, Minister KOIZUMI indicated the need to implement the Three Transitions in all countries that will form the basis for redesigning post-COVID-19 societies. These are: the transition to a decarbonized society, the transition to a circular economy, and the transition to a decentralized society. Minister KOIZUMI received supports and agreements from many participating countries on his assertion that in order to transition to more sustainable and resilient socio-economic systems, our task is not to return to the pre-COVID-19 world, but rather to redesign our socio-economic systems to be more sustainable and resilient.

Based on the joint recognition of the need to bear in mind the virtuous cycle of environment and growth in the context of recovery from COVID-19, opinions were exchanged over three sessions.

### Session 1: Redesign of Socio-economy with the Three Transitions

Session 1 aimed to indicate a framework approach to respond to the two crises, COVID-19 and climate change. The session was facilitated

by Dr. Andrew Steer, WRI President and CEO; and joined by Minister KOIZUMI; Ms. Mary Robinson, representative of The Elders and former President of Ireland; Mr. Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, CEO of GEF and former Costa Rican Minister of Environment and Energy; Dr. Mark Carney, COP26 Finance Advisor and former Governor of the Bank of England; and Dr. Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

The effectiveness of the “Redesign” and the “Three Transitions” approach was recognized. The need to develop new initiatives focusing on sustainability as part of our economic recovery, as well as to plan and implement policies with the aim to redesign society as a whole, was noted. The Three Transitions toward a decarbonized society, a circular economy, and a decentralized society will be the cornerstone of this “Redesign.”

Concerning the transition to a decarbonized society, views were voiced on the need to recognize that while recovery from the pandemic will be accompanied by a rise in global energy demand, we cannot fall back to the same rebound in emissions that followed economic stimulus packages after the 2008 financial crisis. Therefore, it is critical to address the issues of decarbonization of both energy sectors through the development of renewable energies and the social implementation of hydrogen, as well as decarbonization in the process of energy use in industrial sectors and households.

With regards to the transition to a circular economy, views were shared on the importance of promoting economic recovery policy with climate and environmental policies to create a virtuous cycle of

environment and growth. Redesigning socio-economic systems for the transition to a circular economy requires not only recycling and proper treatment of waste, but also the acceleration of initiatives in resource circulation over entire supply chains as a business strategy in the private sector, and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Concerning the transition to a decentralized society, discussions noted that the propagation of COVID-19 has highlighted the limitations of a centralized society. In addressing the pandemic, the focus should continue to be on the importance of rebuilding our socio-economic systems and creating decentralized societies with new ways of working such as tele-working, lifestyle changes, digitalization, introduction of decentralized energy systems, and community engagement.

Implementing the Three Transitions will help prevent future environmental risks, and can be seen as a form of “vaccine” for our socio-economic system. The Three Transitions are a cost-effective way to prepare for future crises.

Session 1 also highlighted three cross-cutting issues: policies based on facts and science, the role of finance and investment, and the importance of international cooperation. In addition to facts and science-based policymaking and enhanced international solidarity, going forward we also require a just energy transition, re-investing in industrialization, more sustainable technologies and services, and various measures to secure (and distribute) funding toward restructuring the finance sector.

**Session 2: COVID-19 Recovery and Climate / Environmental Measures and Actions**

In Session 2, participating countries delivered statements on their various measures. The session was facilitated by Mr. Selwin Hart, Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on Climate Action. The content of discussions on different topics is indicated below.

**[Strengthening Climate Action]**

Various measures to enhance NDCs and commitments to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 were introduced. Countries presented examples of aligning their economic recovery measures from the COVID-19 pandemic implemented in various sectors, with their long-term strategies and national plans. This included policies such as green jobs, restructuring supply chains, efficient use of resources and waste management, and circular economy. The need for energy security was



The meeting was held online, with ministers and vice-ministers of participating countries presenting their measures

also emphasized. Participants also recognized the need for technological innovations, including mixed combustion of ammonia produced by renewable energy, and the utilization of CCUS/carbon recycling, as well as integral changes in lifestyles.

### [Energy/Digitalization]

Most countries presented measures to promote the introduction of renewable energy. Numerous countries mentioned their hydrogen policies. Realizing a hydrogen society is a key to achieving global decarbonization. It was recognized that hydrogen has advanced to the social implementation stage by countries' efforts in conducting ongoing pilot projects such as the production of hydrogen by renewable energy and its use in the domestic sector, as well as fuel-cell vehicles and buses. Several countries have started formulating their hydrogen strategies following the measures and strategies of these leading countries. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the need for behavioral, economic, and societal changes to increase energy efficiency.

### [Transportation]

While countries have taken measures to promote electric vehicles or electric scooters, some countries are accelerating their support measures in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, and specifically in support for EVs used to respond to the increase in delivery services. In this session, many countries introduced measures such as the



Communicating Japan's domestic climate change measures to the world



Minister KOIZUMI serving as Chair of the Online Ministerial Meeting

development of low-carbon/zero-carbon public transportation networks and bicycle lanes. Research and development of related technologies are also being promoted. Human mobility over national borders has been limited during the COVID-19 pandemic. As the aviation industry was severely impacted by the mobility restrictions, some countries are imposing conditions on airline company bailouts involving commitment to decarbonization.

### [Urban Planning, Building Sector, Decentralization]

Some countries have combined measures for reducing densely populated urban spaces and promoting infectious disease control in the building sector, such as the introduction of high efficiency ventilation equipment, together with energy conservation measures. Countries presented various examples of designing smart cities and building societies with empowered communities.

### [Climate Change Adaptation: Infrastructure, Water and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)]

The importance of adaptation measures was highlighted, such

as climate-resilient infrastructure designs, as well as the mainstreaming of these adaptation measures in various policy documents, strategies and plans.

### Session 3: Panel Discussion on Non-State Stakeholder Interests

Session 3 focused on roles and expectations for non-state stakeholders. This session was facilitated by Mr. Gonzalo Muñoz, High-Level Climate Champion of Chile; and joined by Mr. Paul Polman, Co-founder and Chair, IMAGINE and Honorary Chair of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC); Ms. Kobie Brand, Regional Director of ICLEI Africa; and Ms. Sharon Burrow, General Secretary of International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). Video messages by representatives from a Japanese local government (Yokohama City) and youth organizations were also presented.

The corporate world recognizes the necessity to align business models with the ESG framework to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest. Participants recognized that in contrast to past times when

money was scarce and resources were abundant, we now live in a world where money is abundant and resources are scarce. The need for change in this current reality was highlighted, involving the concept of “regenerative economies” that generate new jobs or values through a circular economy. Regarding the roles of governments and non-state actors, participants underlined the need for national governments’ leadership in formulating long-term strategies and policies, coordinating with all stakeholders and relevant ministries, beyond those in charge of climate change and environment, and decarbonization policies and local governments’ actions directly linked to communities. Participants also recognized that the transition to a decentralized society aimed at building resilience from the community level could be supported by several dimensions of climate justice: the most vulnerable to climate change impacts, gender, intergenerational equity, different pathways for industrialization, and biodiversity and the natural environment.

**Outcomes of the Meeting and Future Developments**

As the host country, Japan achieved its objectives to enhance international solidarity and raise momentum for climate change measures at the Online Ministerial Meeting for the Platform for Redesign 2020. The meeting contributed to strengthening international cooperation by sharing ideas and concrete actions on responding to the two crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. Moreover, Japan’s fundamental shift in its policy on export of coal-fired power and Japan’s initiatives on decarbonization, such as zero carbon cities, were presented to the world, representing a major step in restoring Japan’s status as an environmentally advanced nation. The outcomes of



Countries’ environmental policies displayed on the website as of November 20, 2020

the meeting, including the Chair’s Summary, will be disseminated at various international forums on climate change, and the platform (website) will be utilized to continuously collect and disseminate information, experiences, and actions related to the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change/environment.

Results of analyses will be posted on the website (<https://platform2020redesign.org>). In anticipation of future international environmental conferences, both in-person and online, Japan will analyze best practices and information on the

recovery policies and environmental measures of various countries and share these results in the perspective to continuously contribute to international environmental policy-making.

**Platform for Redesign 2020 Website:**  
<https://platform2020redesign.org/>

**WAKASA Yuki**  
 Officer  
 International Strategy Division  
 Global Environmental Bureau

# International Symposium “Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction”

The International Symposium on “Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction” was held online on 30 June 2020.

## Overview of the Symposium

At the symposium, Ms. MIZUTORI Mami, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), gave the keynote speech on international trends in disaster risk reduction (DRR). This was followed by a panel discussion with representatives of related ministries, international organizations and experts. Then, there was an open dialogue on future concrete initiatives, and international contributions by Japan, between Mr. KOIZUMI Shinjiro, Minister of the Environment, Mr. TAKEDA Ryota, (then) Minister of State for Disaster Management, and Special Representative MIZUTORI.

## Keynote speech

Special Representative MIZUTORI pointed out that responses to climate change, which wields major impacts on our world, are not being carried out with the same level of urgency as responses to COVID-19. She asserted that if we do not respond to and prepare for climate change with a sense of urgency based on lessons learned from COVID-19, all aspects of our lives and livelihoods will no longer be sustainable. She also stressed the importance of raising momentum in Japan to simultaneously address the three pillars of climate change measures, DRR, and the realization of the SDGs.

## Panel discussion

The invited panelists were representatives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Republic of Kiribati, and JICA, as well as experts in DRR and finance. In the discussion, facilitated by Dr. TAKEMOTO Kazuhiko of the United Nations University, the panelists discussed Japan’s potential contribution to international cooperation to enhance synergies between the three global agendas (the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for DRR, and the SDGs).

During the discussion, comments were made on the importance of user-friendly ways of providing Japan’s knowledge and technologies, such as Eco-DRR and scientific technology, in international cooperation. Moreover, it was pointed out that even closer cooperation among the Ministry of the Environment, the Cabinet Office, JICA, and the Japanese academia is crucial to facilitate contributions to achieving the SDGs through Japan’s outstanding knowledge on climate action.

## Open dialogue

The open dialogue between Special Representative MIZUTORI, Minister KOIZUMI, and Minister TAKEDA was led by remarks from the two ministers’ respective views which were incorporated into the joint message mentioned below. Opinions were then exchanged on how to advance DRR that factors in climate change (the synergy between climate action and DRR) while applying lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Joint message

In conjunction with the symposium, the “Strategy for Enhancing the Synergy between Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction in the Era of Climate Crisis,” a joint message from Minister KOIZUMI and Minister TAKEDA, was released on the same day.

The message conveyed the concept of “Adaptive Recovery,” whereby recovery after a disaster strikes is not confined to the idea of simply restoring the affected area to the way it was before, but rather involves resilient measures, including the control of land use, to advance adaptation to climate change.

Going forward, based on this message (strategy), the Disaster Management Bureau of the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of the Environment will work together to promote coordinated initiatives.



Open Dialogue

## International Symposium “Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction”

URL <https://bousai2020.tokyo/>

YouTube (archive)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXbCMJ\\_vHf0&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXbCMJ_vHf0&feature=emb_title)

Strategy for Enhancing the Synergy between Climate Action and Disaster Risk Reduction in the Era of Climate Crisis (PDF)

[https://bousai2020.tokyo/pdf/Joint\\_message\\_bousai2020\\_E.pdf](https://bousai2020.tokyo/pdf/Joint_message_bousai2020_E.pdf)

**TAKAHASHI Kazuaki**  
Director  
Climate Change Adaptation Office  
Global Environment Bureau



# Japan's Policy on Exporting Coal-Fired Power Generation

In the outline of the new government strategy for infrastructure exports released in July, the government has undertaken a review and tightened the policy on assisting exports of newly-planned coal-fired power plants based on Japan's intention to take a responsible part in the global efforts towards effective decarbonization.

## New policy

The new policy is as follows.

To achieve the goals set out in the Paris Agreement, it is crucial to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions in an effective manner. The energy situation is changing rapidly and drastically, such as energy transition led by cost reduction of renewable energy. There is also the reality that coal is the only economic and stable energy source for some countries. Due to this reason, these countries have selected coal-fired power generation as their electricity source. While there is a policy of coal divestment, it seems essential to deeply engage with such countries in their energy and climate change policies and encourage behavioral change and commitment towards decarbonization by offering a feasible plan with a long-term perspective, as we seek the realistic and steady path towards global decarbonization, instead of crippling opportunities for these countries to enhance energy access and eliminate power shortage risks for the welfare of people and economic growth.

Therefore, Japan will make responsible inter-agency efforts towards global decarbonization by strengthening its engagement with partner countries, in accordance

with their development stages. In order to lead the effort towards global decarbonization, the basic policy of the government will be to promote the support of infrastructure exports which will guide countries to further their energy transitions towards decarbonization. Based on a deep understanding of the needs of partner countries, Japan will offer all available options for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions including renewable energies such as wind, solar and geothermal energy, hydrogen, energy management techniques and CCUS/carbon recycling. Japan will support developing policies such as a long-term strategy under the Paris Agreement with a view to attaining decarbonization.

Regarding newly-planned coal-fired power generation projects, the government will not, in principle, support the installation of the projects in countries whose energy issues and decarbonization policies have not been deeply accounted for in the bilateral context such as at energy and environmental policy dialogue frameworks. On the other hand, as a special case in countries where coal-fired power is currently an indispensable option due to energy security and economic reasons, and if the country requests Japan's highly efficient coal-fired power generation for its transition to decarbonization, Japan will support the installation of coal-fired power generation that is at or above USC with top-class environmental performance which utilizes Japan's cutting edge technology (i.e. USC plants with the power generation efficiency of 43% or higher, IGCC plants, as

well as plants with co-combustion technologies or CCUS/carbon recycling that emit CO<sub>2</sub> per unit of electricity generated at the same level as IGCC plants or lower), taking into account OECD rules, consistent with the partner country's energy and climate change policies, provided that the country will make efforts for behavioral change in accordance with its development stage with policy and project support from Japan.

## Glossary

**CCUS:** Carbon capture, utilization and storage technology to capture and collect carbon dioxide from thermal power plants' exhaust gas, to be effectively utilized elsewhere or stored underground.

**USC:** Ultra-supercritical power generation creates steam at a higher temperature and higher pressure than conventional boilers to produce electricity more efficiently and with less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

**IGCC:** Integrated gasification combined cycle technology converting coal into gas and generating power in a combined cycle of both a gas turbine and steam turbine. Power generation is more efficient than USC and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are diminished.

## TADA Yuto

Section Chief  
Office of Director for International  
Strategy on Climate Change  
Global Environmental Bureau





# Launch of the Japan Platform for Redesign: Sustainable Infrastructure (JPRSI)

On 8 September 2020, the Japan Platform for Redesign: Sustainable Infrastructure (JPRSI) was established together with 277 Japanese groups and organizations.

## Overview of the platform

JPRSI will support Japanese companies and other relevant actors' initiatives aimed at developing high-quality environmental infrastructures overseas, along with adapting this infrastructure to partner countries' environmental needs. The platform will share information on local needs, in parallel with disseminating information on Japanese technologies and initiatives, coordinating with parties involved, and offering business matching opportunities.

Additionally, the platform will communicate on the Ministry of the Environment's support for the formulation of projects, applications for financial support and on recruitment information, as part of

the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) financial support scheme and City-to-City Collaboration Programme aimed at decarbonization. The dedicated website and seminars will provide Japanese companies looking to develop projects overseas with valuable information on environment-related funding and good practices from past projects.

As such, comprehensive support will be provided throughout the development of these projects, from project formulation based on the needs of partner countries to infrastructure installation.

## Inaugural ceremony

All organizations involved in technological cooperation with other countries in the field of environmental infrastructure were invited in the inaugural ceremony (service industry including consultants and experts 36%, manufacturing 20%,

construction 16%, trading companies, wholesalers 7%, infrastructure industry 5%, local governments and related organizations 4%, others). A panel discussion was conducted on environmental infrastructure technologies' development abroad, with representatives from the private sector, local governments, and financial institutions.

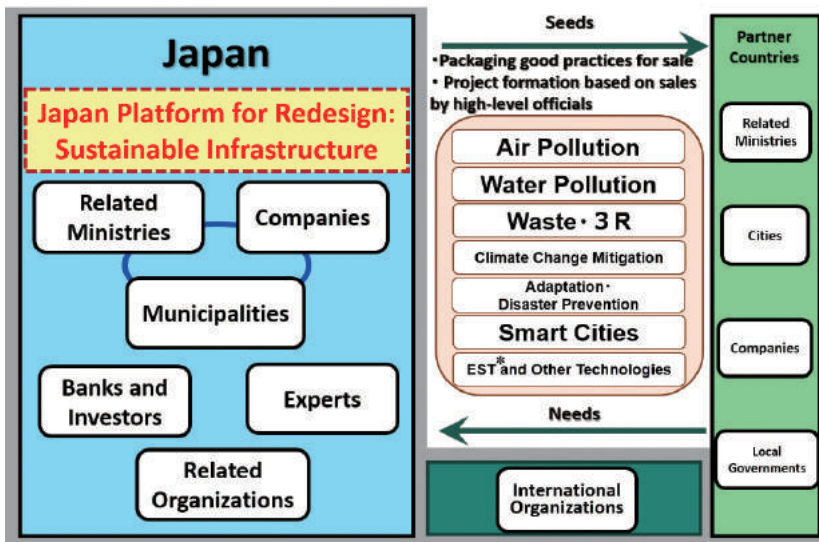
## Future developments

Going forward, JPRSI will encourage the development of projects by providing information to its members and promoting business matching via opportunities such as the Japan Environment Week Workshop.



Group photo of the inaugural ceremony

Japan Platform for Redesign: Sustainable Infrastructure (JPRSI) URL: <https://www.oecd.or.jp/jprsi/>



\*EST: Environmentally Sustainable Transportation

Organizational structure of JPRSI

**SUGIMOTO Ryuzo**  
 Director  
 International Cooperation and Sustainable Infrastructure Office  
 Global Environmental Bureau

# Redesigning Work-Style amid and after the Pandemic



Minister Koizumi setting a workation example (Bandai-Asahi National Park)

By promoting “workation” and demonstrating a new lifestyle combining “business with leisure” in national parks, we aim to support regional economies and revitalize tourist sites by encouraging longer stays.

“Workation” is a newly coined portmanteau of “work” and “vacation.” Workation combines taking a holiday and working remotely from a tourist destination.

## Initiatives from the Ministry of the Environment

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of the Environment was quick to advocate the idea of workation in Japanese national parks. As part of this year’s emergency

economic measures, the Ministry established a subsidy scheme aiming to adapt national parks to receive teleworkers. A total of 270 initiatives are receiving support to upgrade their Wi-Fi access and to plan and conduct nature tours and events for teleworkers, implemented by local businesses and relevant organizations.

In order to promote workation, working conditions must be re-examined. In July 2020, the Ministry revised its “Telecommuting Guidelines,” allowing employees to telecommute from locations other than their homes. Accordingly, “Workation Days” initiative was put forward by first-year ministry officials to actually experience

workation. Soon after, in September, ten employees went on workation. Out of the ten, 90% reported that their “motivation to work was enhanced” and that they “felt healthier both mentally and physically.” Likewise, 70% of these employees reported that their “work efficiency improved.”


## Workation at national parks

While national parks have an important role to play in the preservation of our rich natural environment, in a pandemic and post-pandemic age, they also provide a working environment avoiding the Three Cs (Closed spaces with poor ventilation, Crowded spaces with many people nearby, and Close-contact settings), along with the

# Promotion of workation in national / quasi-national parks and hot spring destinations

**Summary**

**Implementation of workation in Campsites**



**② Implementation of workation at inns etc.**

◆ MOEJ will provide the following supports to tourism businesses such as campsites / inns / hotels, DMOs, and regional councils in national / quasi-national parks and national hot spring destinations.

- ① Planning and Implementation of workation tours, etc.
- ② Planning and Implementation of programs for kids
- ③ Promotional support
- ④ Implementation of working environments with upgraded WI-FI access

## Promotion of Workation

potential to contribute to regional revitalization and the rediscovery of regional charms.

Workation allows for working remotely at national parks or other locations surrounded by lush nature. Doing so not only has health benefits by preventing infections, but also involves other benefits for the working population, such as inspiring new ideas. Likewise, long-term stays at tourist sites are beneficial to local

communities. We believe workation is well suited to becoming the “new normal” amid and after the pandemic.

Many regions have already shown considerable interest in promoting workation. The Workation Alliance Japan was founded in November 2019 to promote the nationwide expansion of workation. At the time of the organization’s launch, 65 local governments had joined the alliance, but since then,



Workation facility near Myoko-Togakushi Renzan National Park

this figure has grown to 118 (as of October 8 2020.) Initiatives are progressing in many different regional communities and from various perspectives. In addition to revitalizing tourist sites, these initiatives lead to the creation of new businesses, benefit local communities, and attract more people to settle.

According to an opinion poll conducted by the JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Co. on “Changes in lifestyles and perceptions due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the return to travel,” approximately 75% of people hope to continue telecommuting by working online. The momentum for workation is building with peoples’ increased desire to stay healthy and work creatively in regional communities including national parks, where they can enjoy abundant nature with a low risk of infection.

The environment must not be left behind in efforts to restore the post-coronavirus economy, and it is essential to redesign our economy to be more sustainable and resilient. As a part of our efforts to promote the charm of national parks, the Ministry of the Environment views the sudden expansion of remote working due to the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to redesign current socio-economic systems. The Ministry will continue to pursue environment-related improvements that facilitate workation and contribute to regional economies.

### MIYAKE Yusuke

Deputy Director  
National Parks Division  
Natural Conservation Bureau

### INASAKI Taiki

Staff Member  
National Parks Division  
Natural Conservation Bureau





# Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park

A diverse array of volcanoes and natural bounty enveloped in magnificent history and myth



Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park, with its diverse array of volcanoes and natural bounty enveloped in magnificent history and myth, is comprised of three distinctive areas: the Kirishima area, the Sakurajima-Interior Kinkowan Bay area and the Ibusuki-Sata area.

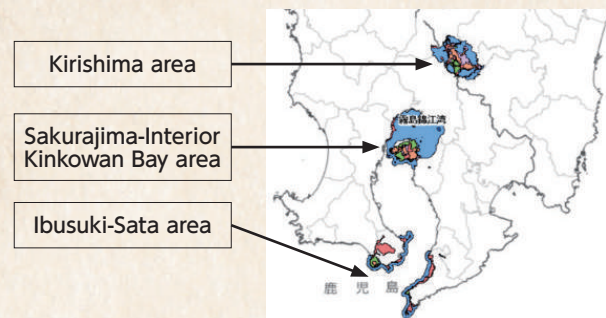
## Overview of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park

Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park was designated a national park in 1934 and was among the first national parks in Japan. Comprising a row of three giant caldera volcanoes, the Kakuto-Kobayashi caldera, the Aira caldera, and the Ata caldera, this national park is one-of-a-kind in Japan. It consists of the Kirishima area, made up of the compound volcanoes of Kirishima Massif, and the Kinkowan Bay area, boasting scenic views of Japan's coastal calderas which are second to none. The Kinkowan Bay area is further divided into the Sakurajima-Interior Kinkowan Bay area and the Ibusuki-Sata area. The park in its entirety has a 1,700-meter difference in elevation from sea level to the highest summit. Visitors can enjoy a diverse array of geographical features, landscapes and ecosystems.

## Three areas of the park

The Kirishima area is situated at the southern flank of the Kakuto-Kobayashi caldera, where over twenty volcanoes and numerous volcanic lakes converge in a volcanic mountain range like none other in Japan. Volcanic activity is still quite lively, with Mt. Shinmoedake erupting in 2011 for the first time in roughly 300 years, and Mt. Iouzan erupting in 2018 after a 250-year interval. The area is shrouded in myth and legend. At the summit of Mt. Takachiho stands "Amenosakahoko", a spear said to have been thrust into the mountain by a god descended to Earth in the Legend of the Sun Goddess' grandson. The Sakurajima-Interior Kinkowan Bay area contains the large depression of the Aira caldera, formed from a massive eruption. Volcanic activity is ongoing today, exemplified by the active Sakurajima volcano. The area offers distinctive views of the harmony between nature and human civilization, including not only dynamic land formations and bountiful hot springs, but also historical and cultural

resources connected to the feudal Satsuma Domain. In the Ibusuki-Sata area, visitors can see sub-tropical plants, along with expansive views from bluffs and a diverse array of volcanic land formations. The Ibusuki-Sata area offers a variety of volcanic scenery resulting from the Ata caldera, including Lake Ikeda, Mt. Kaimon and Cape Nagasakibana, and is popular with tourists for its therapeutic hot springs and scenic views.



Mt. Takachiho



Cape Sata

Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park URL  
<https://www.env.go.jp/en/nature/nps/park/kirishima/index.html>

## YOSHIZAWA Taisuke

Director  
 Kyushu Regional Environment Office  
 Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park Office

