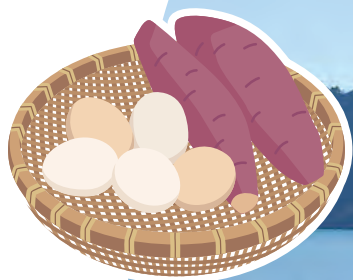




A Storybook of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park

Ibusuki Area

~ A narrative to be shared with the local community
to enhance Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park's
remarkable beauty and appeal ~



Ministry of Environment Regional Environment Office in Kyushu
Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park Office

08.2025

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About This Book

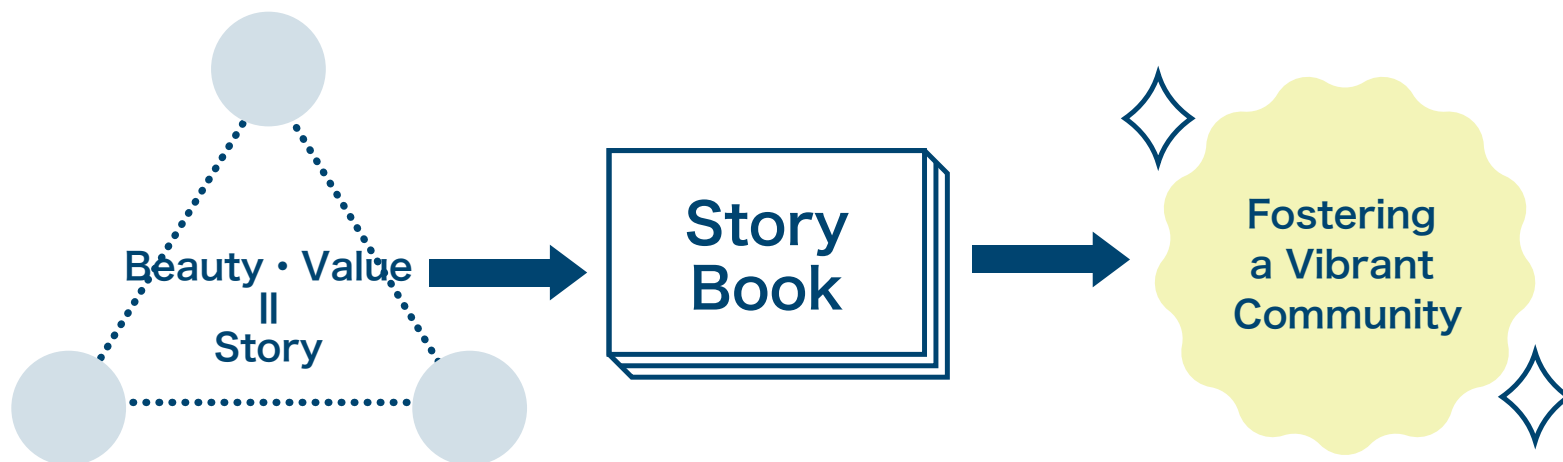
P02

As of March 2025, there are 35 national parks across Japan. These parks represent the country's most iconic landscapes and are designated to protect and utilize outstanding natural scenery that Japan can proudly showcase on a global scale. National parks worldwide are cherished and frequently visited, making them highly appealing destinations for international visitors to Japan.

Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park is one of Japan's first national parks. In addition to its breathtaking scenery, the park's rich appeal is shaped by the stories of its formation, including the culture and history nurtured by the diverse flora, fauna, and natural environment that flourish there. The brand value of national parks is enhanced when the scenic spots, history, and culture scattered throughout the park are interconnected as a cohesive story.

The conservation and management of national parks require collaboration with diverse stakeholders from local communities, each with unique perspectives. We created this storybook to share our journey with you and invite you to contribute your own unique perspectives and experiences.

We hope this storybook helps you discover and appreciate the unique beauty and significance of the Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park, serving as a gateway to understanding its remarkable heritage.

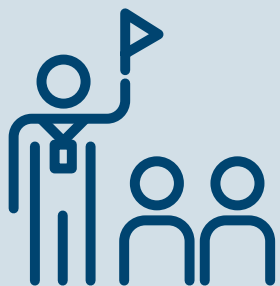


Sharing the National Park Story with Local Community

Through the collective efforts of stakeholders sharing the National Park story, we expect that Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park's unique appeal and value will be acknowledged internationally and domestically, creating a lively and thriving region.

Here, we offer examples of how to communicate the story effectively. We hope you find these useful and will join us in spreading the National Park story across the community.

To All the Tour Guides and Interpreters



We hope this storybook will be utilized to offer visitors unique experiences that align with the story of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park. Additionally, we encourage efforts to communicate the value of these regional resources to support their preservation.

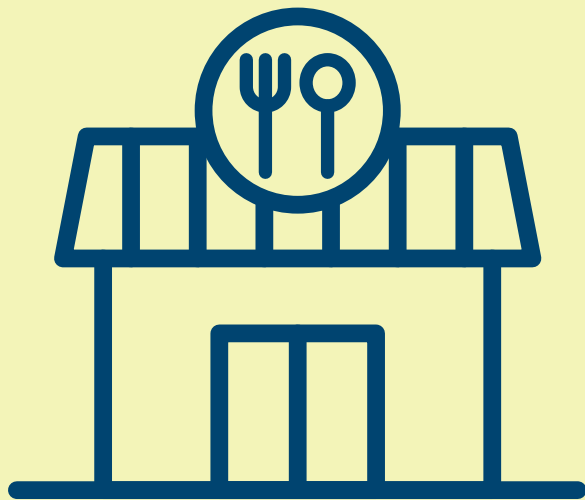
Example

- Incorporate the "story" into guided narratives, exhibits, brochures, websites, and other materials.
- Use "The Experience We Want Visitors to Have" as a reference when designing the tour.

Expected Outcomes

When visitors engage with the region's unique story, their tours and activities become more meaningful and personal. This deeper connection helps them appreciate the area's distinct beauty and value, often transforming them into loyal enthusiasts who return again and again.

To All Restaurants



Use the story as a tool when offering visitors the unique local cuisine nurtured by Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park.

Example

- Incorporate the "story" into the products and menu.
- Incorporate the "story" when the employee explains/introduces the ingredients to restaurants.

Expected Outcomes

By offering locally grown ingredients and dishes along with their stories, it meets the visitors' desire to taste something unique to the area, while also enhancing their satisfaction by allowing them to experience the local food culture developed over time.

To all Accommodation Operators



Use the story as a tool to convey the charm and stories of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park to visitors.

Example

- Incorporate the "story" in the menu for meals, brochures, and decorations.
- Incorporate the "Showcase Places and Activities to Discover" as a reference when guiding visitors on sightseeing courses at the front desk or similar locations.

Expected Outcomes

By experiencing local food culture, visitors not only enjoy greater satisfaction but also discover a deeper connection to the region's heritage. When accommodations showcase these culinary traditions, they become gateways for guests to immerse themselves in local culture, creating a more meaningful and enriching travel experience.

To all the Souvenir Shop Staff



Use the story as a tool to develop the products that allow visitors to take home the story of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park.

Example

- Incorporate the "story" when developing products or designing packaging.
- Incorporate the "story" into conversations with customers.

Expected Outcomes

When visitors purchase souvenirs and local specialties linked to the story, they are prompted to recall their experiences in the region. This could lead to continued purchases through online services, mail order, or other means. Additionally, those who receive the souvenirs may become new visitors themselves.

To All the Transportation Operators



Use the story as a tool to share the beauty and story of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park with visitors.

Example

- Incorporate the "story" into the announcements on board planes, cars/buses, and ships.
- Use the "story" as a tool when creating brochures and other materials.

Expected Outcomes

As visitors discover the region's story throughout their journey, they develop a deeper appreciation for the area. These meaningful encounters create lasting memories that visitors can reflect upon and cherish long after returning home.

To All School Staff



Use the story as a tool to help the local children and students rediscover the beauty and value of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park.

Example

- Use the "story" as teaching material during integrated activities or inquiry-based learning sessions.
- Use "Showcase Places and Activities to Discover" as a tool when choosing field trip destinations.

Expected Outcomes

It is expected that by learning the region's story, children and students who will shape its future will develop a stronger sense of attachment and pride in their community.

To All the Government Employees



Use the story as a tool to promote Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park in various ways, both within the region and beyond.

Example

- Use the "story" when introducing the value and beauty of the region
- Use the "story" when creating policies for resource conservation.

Expected Outcomes

It is expected that not only will the beauty and value of the region be understood by people inside and outside the area, but the story will also serve as a guideline for the conservation and utilization of each resource.

KIRISHIMA-KINKOWAN NATIONAL PARK

What is the Purpose of National Parks?

Our purpose is to preserve Japan's natural landscapes while promoting their use, contributing to the public's health, recreation, and education, as well as supporting biodiversity conservation.

The Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park is divided into the Kirishima, Sakurajima-Inner part of Kinkowan Bay, Ibusuki, and Sata Areas.

The Kirishima Area features a spectacular volcanic landscape formed by more than 20 volcanoes of varying sizes. This dramatic terrain showcases nature's power through its diverse features - from crater lakes and steaming fumaroles to vast plateaus and therapeutic hot springs. The Kirishima Mountain Range holds deep cultural significance as a sacred site, which is legendary in Japanese mythology as the place where the sun goddess Amaterasu's grandson (Ninigi no Mikoto) descended to Earth. There are high-quality hot springs scattered throughout the foothills, with Kirishima Onsen Area being a notable hub of these natural thermal waters. In the Sakurajima-Inner part of Kinkowan Bay Area, the active volcano Sakurajima dominates the landscape, creating a remarkable setting where the sea meets volcanic terrain. Local communities have adapted to life in close proximity to this active volcano, creating a unique coexistence between nature and human settlement. Heading south, you'll find two notable features: Mt. Kaimon, located in Ibusuki Area, nicknamed 'Satsuma Fuji,' rises as a landmark on the Satsuma Peninsula, while Sata area includes Cape Sata on the Ōsumi Peninsula, marks mainland Japan's southernmost point, its subtropical plants creating a tropical feel.

Volcanoes that continue to erupt not only bring "disasters" but also nurture a variety of hot springs and food culture, providing countless blessings to people's lives.

Land, sea, and people
coexisting with active volcanoes

Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park
Designation: 03.16.1934

Area: 36,624ha (Land Area), 37,855ha (Marine Area)

Extend Across Kagoshima and Miyazaki Prefecture

Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park features active volcanoes and enormous caldera formations created by large-scale eruptions in the past. These dramatic geological features emerged from tectonic plate activity, where one plate slides beneath eastern Kyushu. A remarkable chain of calderas—the Kakuto, Kobayashi, Aira, and Ata—stretches in a north-south alignment across southern Kyushu, telling the story of the region's volcanic history.

The Sakurajima-Inner part of Kinkowan Bay Area showcases remarkable volcanic features, with the Sakurajima volcano rising from the southern edge of the Aira Caldera, while the Ata Caldera lies further south. The Aira Caldera, now a scenic inland bay, was formed by an enormous volcanic eruption and subsequent collapse. This maritime caldera stands as one of Japan's most spectacular geological formations, where land meets the sea in a dramatic fashion. As its name suggests, Sakurajima (the jima of Sakurajima means “island”) was once an island. Although once separate, a lava flow from the 1914 Taisho eruption has attached it to the Osumi Peninsula, making it part of the mainland. ※Saigo Takamori, who lived during the late Edo and Meiji periods, would have viewed a different landscape of Sakurajima than the one we see today.

The volcanic landscape of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park is constantly evolving, offering visitors a rare glimpse of Earth's raw power in action. Here, you can not only contemplate our planet's ancient geological history but also witness and experience these dynamic natural forces firsthand—a unique feature that makes this region truly extraordinary.

※Saigo Takamori : A Japanese samurai, politician, and military leader during the late Edo and early Meiji periods. Born in the Satsuma domain (now Kagoshima Prefecture). He is still widely respected in Japan as a hero due to his loyalty, integrity, and commitment to his principles.

Sakurajima and Kinkowan Bay

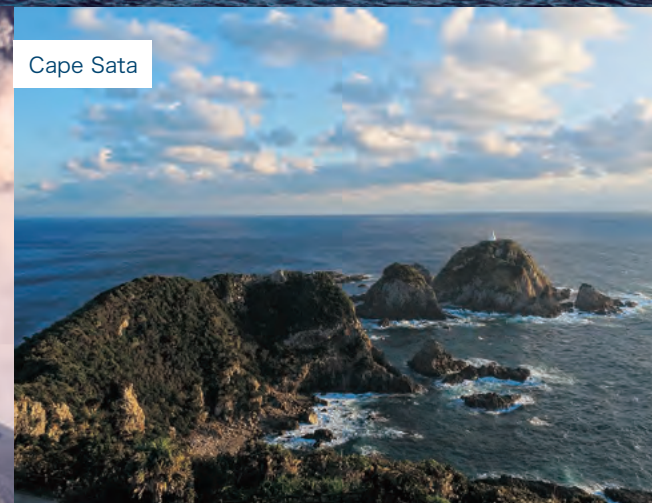


The diverse landscapes of mountains and seas created by the caldera clusters

Eruption of Mt. Shinmoedake



Cape Sata



Sakurajima, Kagoshima's iconic active volcano, looms over Kinkowan Bay, just 4 kilometers from downtown Kagoshima city, home to 600,000 people. Despite its frequent eruptions, 3,500 residents live on the volcano. The ever-present volcanic risks significantly influence their daily lives. Residents regularly check ashfall forecasts and stay alert for potential eruptions, with weather reports often including wind direction to help them prepare. This adaptation to living alongside an active volcano stands as one of the most striking examples of human resilience and coexistence with nature.

Local residents have built their livelihoods around the volcano, harnessing its benefits for farming, fishing, and tourism while respecting its powerful presence. While ashfall is a major threat to agricultural products, it sometimes gives birth to unique local products. The "Sakurajima Daikon," which thrives in volcanic ash soil, is a prime example. The warm and humid climate is ideal for producing fermented foods; in Fukuyama, Kirishima city (outside of the national park), a landscape of rows of jars used for fermenting and aging black vinegar stretches out, creating the scene of a "tsubo-batake (jar field)." Additionally, the water filtered by the mountains supports the shochu culture of southern Kyushu and produces high-quality tea leaves.

One of the greatest gifts of the volcanoes is the hot springs that emerge throughout the region. In addition to the diverse hot springs with various types of mineral water in the Kirishima Onsen area and Ibusuki Onsen, where visitors can experience the geothermal "sand baths," there are also hot springs where historical figures such as Saigo Takamori and 〓Sakamoto Ryoma once enjoyed bathing during the Bakumatsu period. Additionally, Kirishima is the birthplace of the hot spring culture known as "family baths," where small groups can enjoy private hot spring facilities. Furthermore, there are villages where each household is equipped with a "natural steam stove (sume)," utilizing heat from the earth.

Living close to the volcano is one of the key factors shaping the unique food and hot spring cultures of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park.



Black Vinegar Jar Field



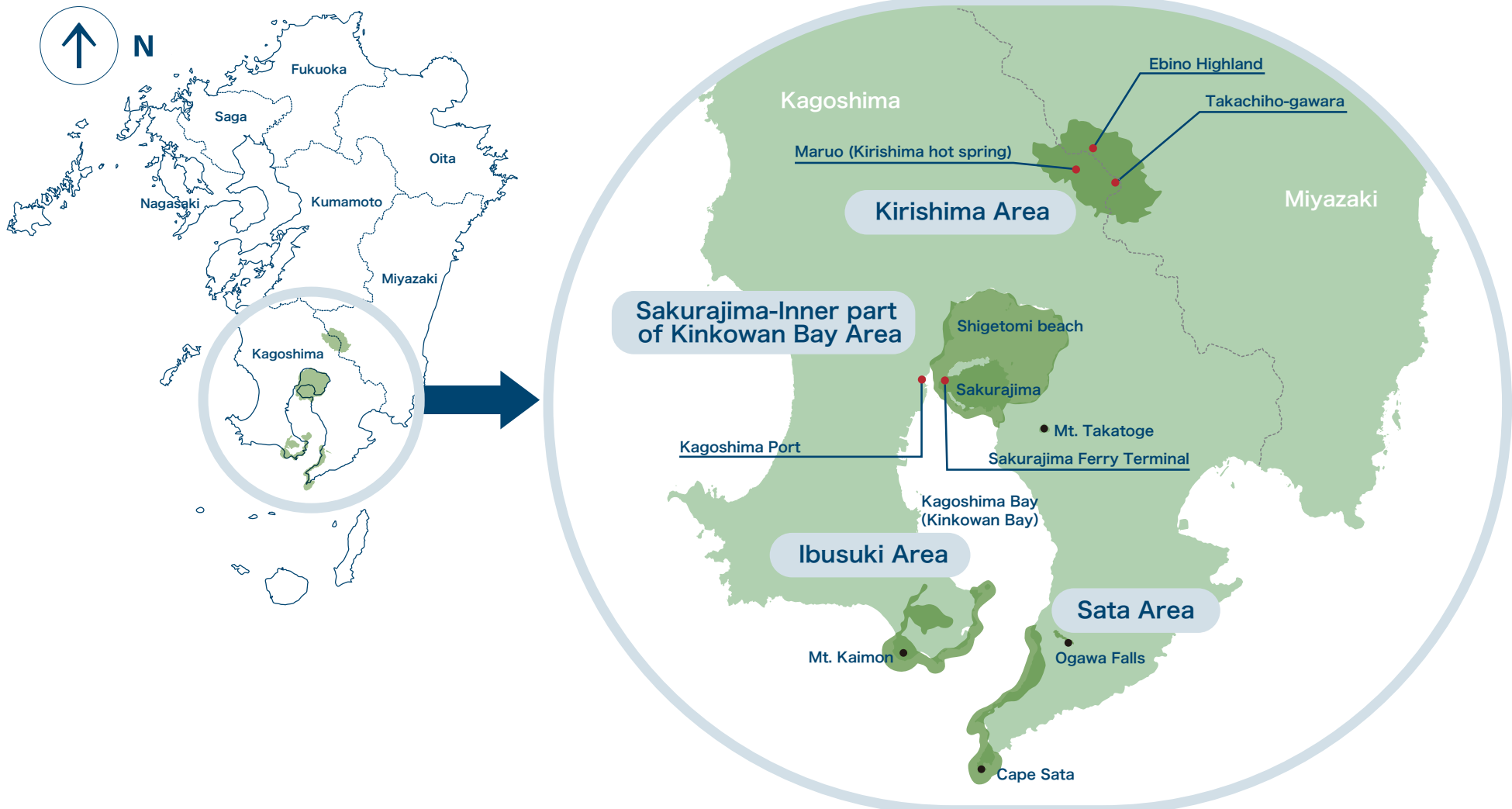
Ibusuki Steam Sand Bath

© K.P.V.B



Sakurajima from
Shiroyama Observatory

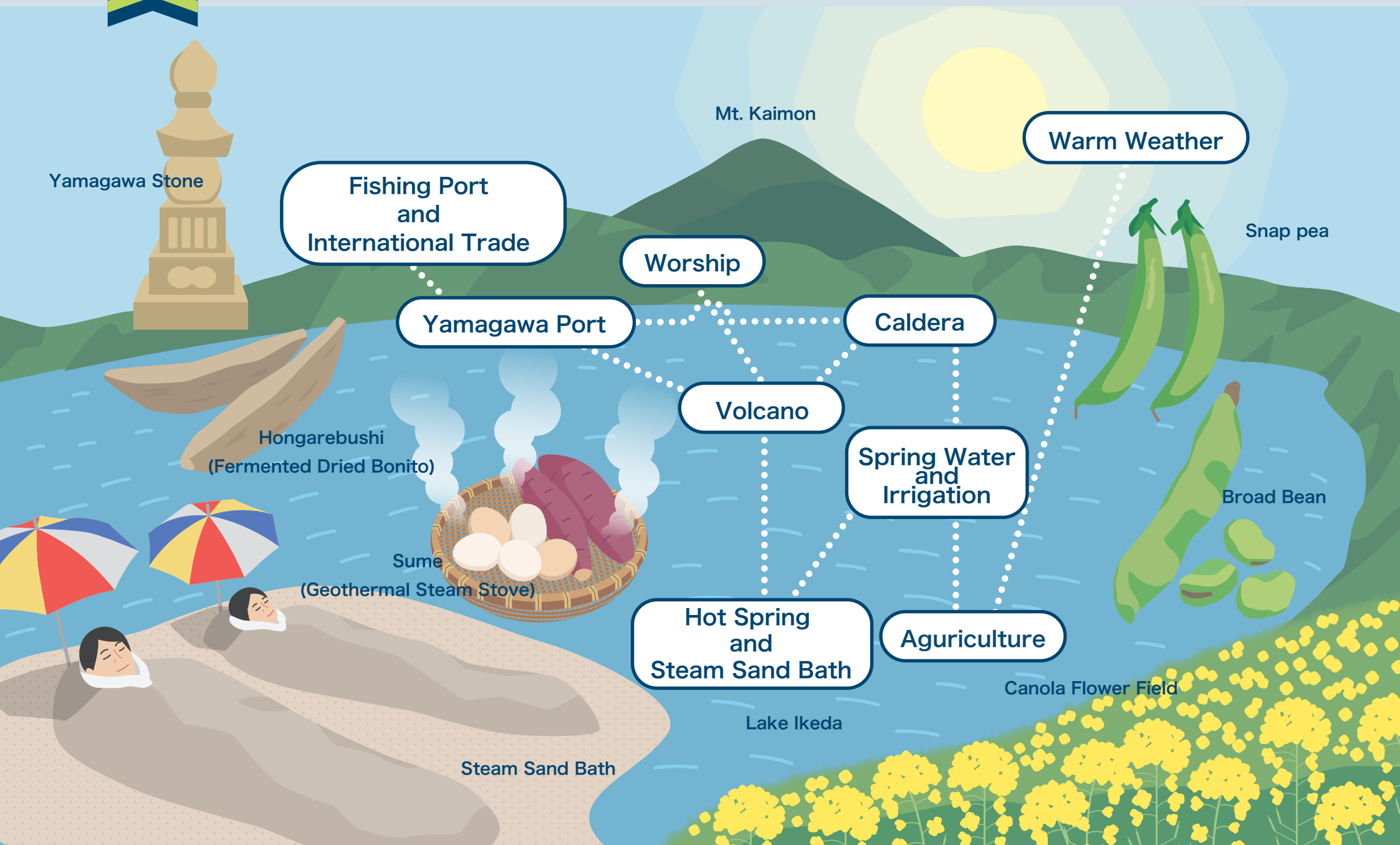
**The Rare Proximity of Volcanoes
and
Human Life in the World**



Map of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park

-Ibusuki Area Detailed Map-







A distinctive relationship that captures the region's essential character

Volcanic eruptions have fundamentally shaped both Ibusuki's landscape and its historical development.

Essential Resources of the Area

Caldera

Lake Ikeda

Yamagawa Bay

Mt. Kaimon

Hirakiki Shrine

Mountain Worship Practice

Hashimuregawa Archaeological Site

Left: Lake Ikeda and Mt. Kaimon

Middle: Chrin Island

Right: Yamagawa Port



Almost the entire landscape of Ibusuki City was formed by volcanic activity. It is believed to sit within a giant caldera formed by an ancient, massive eruption. Traces of the caldera wall are also said to be visible around Onkadobira, Mt. Uomidake, and Chiringashima Island.

Lake Ikeda, Kyushu's largest lake, was created by a massive volcanic eruption 5,700 years ago, forming a caldera that houses a submerged volcano. At 233 meters deep, it ranks as Japan's fourth-deepest lake. This vital water source has been instrumental in developing the region's thriving agricultural industry.

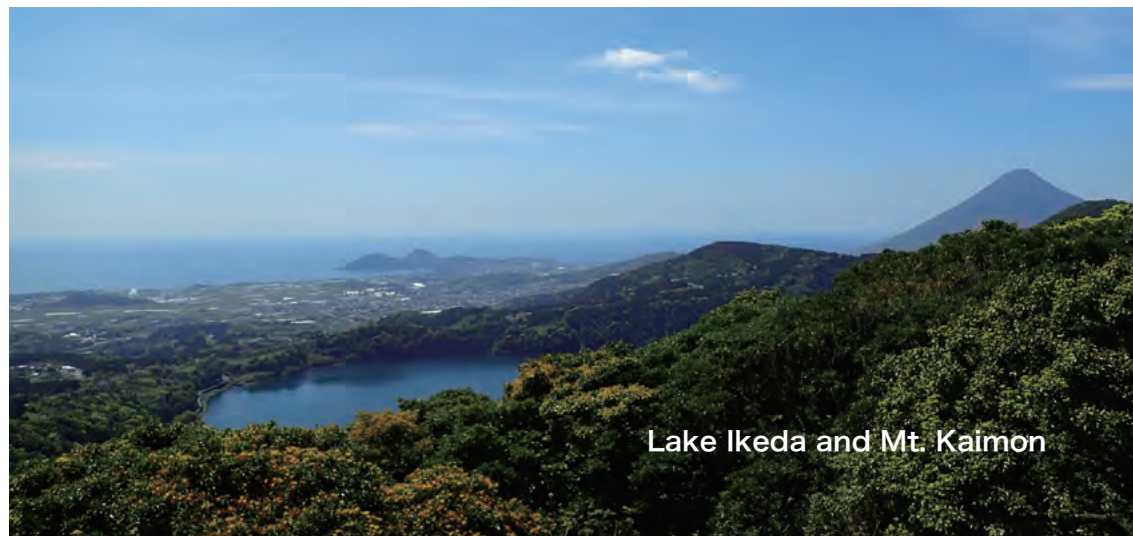
Yamagawa Bay, another product of the 5,700-year-old volcanic eruption, formed when its eastern crater collapsed and filled with seawater. Its deep, sheltered waters made it a significant medieval port, notably hosting Portuguese explorer Jorge Alvarez in 1546, whose six-month stay produced one of the first Western accounts of Japanese culture. The bay was also the likely entry point for sweet potatoes from Okinawa through Maeda Riemon—a crop that would later help combat famine across Japan.

Mt. Kaimon, formed by an eruption during the late Jomon period about 3,700 years ago and has erupted many times since, is known for the beauty of its conical shape and is often called “Satsuma Fuji.” It remains a symbolic presence in the region to this day. Among the volcanoes in Ibusuki, Mt. Kaimon stands out as a prominent peak and has been an object of mountain worship practice. With its prominent

peak extending into the sea, it has not only served as a navigational landmark but has also been revered as a god protecting the safety of the seas. Hirakiki Shrine, Satsuma's principal shrine, enshrines Mt. Kaimon volcano as its sacred object. Its inner sanctuary, Mitake Shrine, is revered as a guardian deity of transportation, maritime safety, and fisheries.

At the Ibusuki Hashimuregawa Archaeological Site, a nationally designated historical site, Jomon pottery was found beneath the volcanic ash from Mt. Kaimon, while Yayoi pottery was discovered above it. This provided the first evidence that the Jomon period predates the Yayoi period, making the Ibusuki Area a significant site in Japanese archaeology.

The varied terrain shaped by volcanic forces has influenced the region's human history.



Lake Ikeda and Mt. Kaimon

The Experience We Want Visitors to Have

Visitors are invited to discover and experience
through activities and encounters at the destination

- Encourage visitors to observe the terrain believed to have been formed by volcanoes and imagine the immense power of past volcanic activity. → 1 2
- Encourage visitors to view Yamagawa Bay and imagine the vibrant trade and travel activity that once thrived here. → 1
- Encourage visitors to take in the beauty of Mt. Kaimon and feel how it has long been revered as both a sacred site and a symbol of the region. → 1 2 3
- Encourage visitors to explore the Ibusuki Hashimuregawa Archaeological Site and reflect on the eruptions of Mt. Kaimon from the Jomon period and the daily lives of people. → 4

Showcase Places and Activities to Discover

1

Enjoy the view from Mt. Kaimon



Visitors can get a breathtaking view of Ibusuki City's volcanic landscape, which showcases Chiringashima Island, Lake Ikeda, Yamagawa Port, and Onkadobira.

2

Enjoy the view of Lake Ikeda from the observation deck



Visitors can also observe the steep shores and distinctive caldera lake landscapes with a view of Mt. Kaimon.

3

Visit Hirakiki Shrine



Hirakiki Shrine has been deeply revered as the god of transportation, maritime safety, and the protection of fisheries. On sunny days, the summit of Mt. Kaimon is visible beyond the shrine.

4

Visit the Ibusuki City Archeological Museum Jiyukan Cocco Hashimure



Visitors can gain insight into the historical moment when the connection between the Jomon and Yayoi periods was established.



©K. P. V. B

A distinctive relationship that captures the region's essential character

The volcanic gift of hot springs has shaped the region's unique culture and daily life

Essential Resources of the Area

Sume

Hot-Spring Therapy (Toji) Culture

Geothermal

Ibusuki Hot Spring

Ibusuki Steam Sand Bath

Left: Steam sand bath

Middle: Sume

Right: A river with rising steam



©K. P. V. B



Volcanic activity in Ibusuki has provided more than a thousand abundant hot spring sources in the region. The region has long been a popular hot spring destination, and a 16th-century inscription even calls it 'Yubusuki,' meaning a place of abundant hot springs. 1546 Portuguese traveler Jorge Álvarez wrote, "People dig holes along the coast and bathe in them" .

The 'Sangoku Meishō Zue' (a guide to scenic spots around Satsuma Domain, similar to a modern-day travel guide) created by the Satsuma Domain during the Edo period also mentions it "treats various illnesses." One of these spots, the 'Nigatsuden Onsen Tonosamayu,' was created by the 10th Satsuma lord, Shimazu Narioki, and continued to heal later lords of the domain.

Today, you can still see the stone flooring, stone baths, and tiles that were likely added in the mid-Meiji period. The natural sand bath, where the heat from underground hot springs warms the sand on the beach, is a rare phenomenon worldwide and is said to have a history of about 500 years.

The benefits of the volcano are also used in everyday life. In the village around Lake Unagi, formed by a volcanic eruption about 5700 years ago, there are places where hot steam from volcanic activity rises. This steam is used in natural stoves called 'Sume,' which are part of daily life in many local households. As a result, there was no need for firewood or charcoal as a fuel in this region. Unagi Hot Spring, which has been used

as a hot spring resort since the Edo period, also has records of Saigo Takamori staying for about a month.

The heat from the hot springs was also used for salt production until the 1950s, and now it's used for growing vegetables, fruits, and ornamental plants. Hot spring water flows through canals and rivers throughout the town, with steam rising everywhere. Many homes also receive hot spring water, making it essential to everyday life.

Volcanic activity has bestowed gifts of hot springs and geothermal energy, building a distinctive regional culture and way of life.



Volcanic steam vents can be seen around the Unagi village

The Experience We Want Visitors to Have

Visitors are invited to discover and experience
through activities and encounters at the destination

- Encourage visitors to experience the unique sensation of volcanic heat while relaxing in natural sand baths. → ❶
- Encourage visitors to taste 'Sume' dishes and discover how volcanic activity is part of daily life. → ❷
- Encourage visitors to visit the old salt production factory and feel the power of geothermal energy up close. → ❸
- Encourage visitors to see the steam rising from the river and waterway, and realize how close hot springs are to daily life. → ❹

Showcase Places and Activities to Discover

1

Experience the natural sand baths



© K. P. V. B

Visitors can feel the heat of the hot springs, hear the sound of the waves, and smell the sea by wrapping themselves in the warm sand.

2

Try steamed dishes “Sume”



© K. P. V. B

Visitors can bring vegetables, eggs, and other ingredients and enjoy the delicious sume.

3

Visit the ruins of the Yamagawa Salt Factory



Visitors can explore the old salt fields and hot spring sources and see the steam rising from geothermal heat up close.

4

Stroll through the town with steam rising from the streets



Throughout Ibusuki city, especially on chilly days, visitors can witness steam rising from rivers and gutters fed by natural hot springs.

A distinctive relationship capturing the region's essential character

The landscape and rich soil shaped by volcanic activity and the warm climate have fostered distinctive local products

Essential Resources of the Area

Yamagawa Bay

Bonito Flakes

Lake Ikeda

Warm Weather

Scoria

Ibusuki Kaolin

Shiro-Satsuma

Yamagawa Stone

Left: Mt.Kaimon and Canola Flower Field

Middle: Snap pea

Right: Yamagawa Stone



© K. P. V. B



Ibusuki Area Story ③

Yamagawa Bay's calm waters, shaped by ancient volcanic activity, made it an ideal deep-sea fishing port. Today, it remains an important bonito landing site with many seafood processing facilities. The area is Japan's leading producer of honkarebushi (as of 2023), a premium dried bonito that requires six months of careful preparation. The distinct aroma of this process permeates the neighborhood, while local specialties have emerged from the industry: haragawa (bonito belly skin) and chabushi (a traditional cuisine combining green tea with barley miso and bonito flakes).

The water from the Lake Ikeda, the largest lake in Kyushu formed by volcanic eruptions, becomes underground water known as Kyo-den Spring Water, which has been selected as one of the "100 Best Waters of the Heisei Era." It is also famous for being used in the Tosenkyo somen noodle flowing event. Since 1970, large-scale national irrigation and drainage projects utilizing Ikeda Lake have been carried out, the vast farmland has been nourished, and combined with the area's warm climate throughout the year, it has become the top producer of summer okra, winter broad beans, and snap peas in Japan. Also, it has established itself as one of the leading producers of ornamental plants in the country. Since the Edo period, rapeseed has been cultivated as a regional specialty and is now also grown for its decorative flowers. From late December to early February, it reaches its peak bloom and has become a symbolic flower of Ibusuki City.

Volcanic soil plays a key role in producing local products. The scoria, rocks with many holes formed by volcanic eruptions, provide excellent drainage, making the soil ideal for watermelon farming. This is how Tokkou watermelon, unique to this region, was made. The local climate enhances

its sweetness, and its deliciousness is even mentioned in the "Sangoku Meisyo Zue" (a guide to scenic spots) created by the Satsuma domain during the Edo period.

Additionally, volcanic activity, such as geothermal water and volcanic gases, led to the formation of kaolin, a key material, enabling the production of Shiro-Satsuma (Satsuma pottery). The "SATSUMA" brand of Shiro-Satsuma was presented at the 1867 Paris Exposition Universelle and earned international recognition for its excellence.

The volcanic tuff that erupted from the Ata Caldera and spread across the Yamagawa area is known as the Yamagawa Stone. With its distinct pale yellow color, lightweight nature, and resistance to weathering, it has been used as a durable building material. In addition to being used to shape the town's stone walls, Yamagawa Stone was also utilized for the tombstones of the Satsuma lords and traded as a commodity with places like Amami, making it a significant and unique resource for Kagoshima Prefecture.

Repeated volcanic activity has shaped distinctive landforms and geological features that, along with the temperate climate, enrich the region with natural gifts.



Bonito Flakes

The Experience We Want Visitors to Have

What visitors are invited to discover and experience
through activities and encounters at the destination

●Encourage visitors to enjoy the taste of katsuobushi (dried bonito) and its dishes, and let your imagination wander to the port's history, rooted in volcanic activity. → ①

●Encourage visitors to experience the flavors of flowing somen noodles, okra, and broad beans, and feel the richness of water brought by volcanic landscapes. → ②

●Encourage visitors to explore the town with its stone walls made of Yamagawa Stone, and enjoy the landscape shaped by volcanic activity. → ③

Ibusuki Area Recommended Places and Activities to Truly Feel the Story ③

Showcase Places and Activities to Discover

1

**Stroll through the town
filled with the scent of katsuobushi**



Visitors can purchase katsuobushi at the katsuobushi factories and shops around Yamagawa Port and enjoy dishes made with it at local restaurants

2

Taste fresh vegetables



© K. P. V. B

Visitors can purchase vegetables produced in the region at farmers' markets and roadside stations

Ibusuki Area Recommended Places and Activities to Truly Feel the Story ③

Showcase Places and Activities to Discover

3

Look for stone walls and stone monuments made from Yamagawa Stone



Visitors can observe pale yellow stone walls and monuments made from Yamagawa Stone in the Yamagawa district of Ibusuki City.

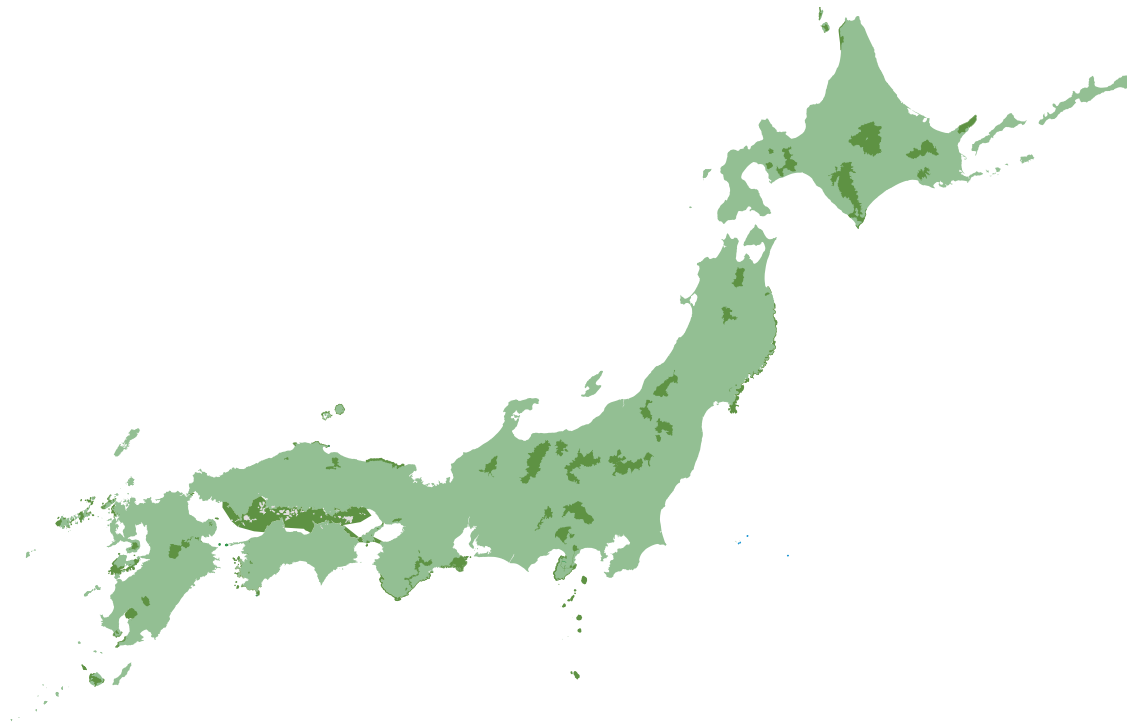
National Parks of Japan

(Regulations and Differences with Foreign National Parks)

35 Distinct and Diverse National Parks in Japan

※As of March 2025

Stretching approximately 3,000 kilometers from north to south, the Japanese archipelago offers a wide variety of natural landscapes, from snow-covered mountains to colorful coral reefs, highlighting the beauty of nature in every form. Japan's national parks are home to around 7,000 plant species, over 1,000 animal species, and between 70,000 and 100,000 insect species. Along with abundant water, active volcanoes, and untouched nature, Japan's national parks also feature areas where human intervention has helped maintain diverse ecosystems and natural environments, such as satoumi (coastal areas) and satoyama (rural forests), highlighting places where people and nature coexist.



National Parks of Japan

(Regulations and Differences with Foreign National Parks)

90-years of Preserving Nature: The Story of National Parks

National parks can be found in many countries around the world, with the first-ever designated national park being Yellowstone National Park in the United States, established in 1872. In Japan, a petition to make Nikko a national park was presented to Congress, and as public interest grew, the Natural Park Act was passed in 1931 (Showa 6). Following the enactment of this law, three areas—Seto Inland Sea, Unzen, and Kirishima—were officially designated as Japan's first national parks on March 16, 1934 (Showa 9).

The revision of the Natural Park Act in 1957 (Showa 32) created the modern framework for Japan's protected areas, establishing clear categories for national parks, national monuments, and nature parks at both state and prefecture levels. This system implemented comprehensive mechanisms for preserving Japan's scenic landscapes while ensuring their sustainable use. As of March 2025, Japan maintains 35 national parks stretching from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa and the Ogasawara Islands in the south, attracting millions of visitors annually through careful management and conservation practices.

National Parks of Japan

(Regulations and Differences with Foreign National Parks)

The National Park System of Japan

In many national parks worldwide, following the example set by the United States, the system is designed to preserve vast natural landscapes as government-owned land, protecting pristine and largely untouched environments. This is referred to as a "monument park" (Eizoubutsu Kouen). The boundaries of Japan's national parks are established regardless of land ownership, and many of these parks include areas where people live.

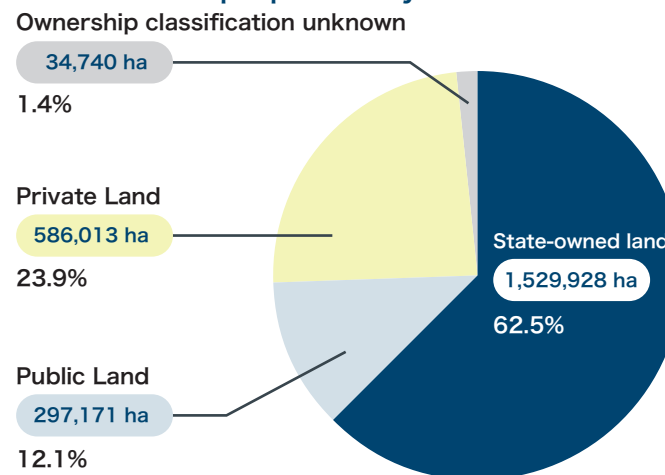
Development is restricted to protect outstanding landscapes. This type of system is called a "Japan's System of Natural Park (Zoning-System)" (Chiiki-sei Kouen). Many foreign visitors may be surprised to see people living within Japan's national parks. However, the lives of rural and fishing communities, which have developed in harmony with nature, are deeply connected to the natural environment.

Additionally, national parks are places where people can deepen their knowledge about nature and provide opportunities to engage with the natural environment for health and recreation.

There are 35 national parks across Japan

Japan's national parks instill the "regional nature park system," which designates areas regardless of land ownership and includes many privately owned lands.

Area proportion by landowner in national parks

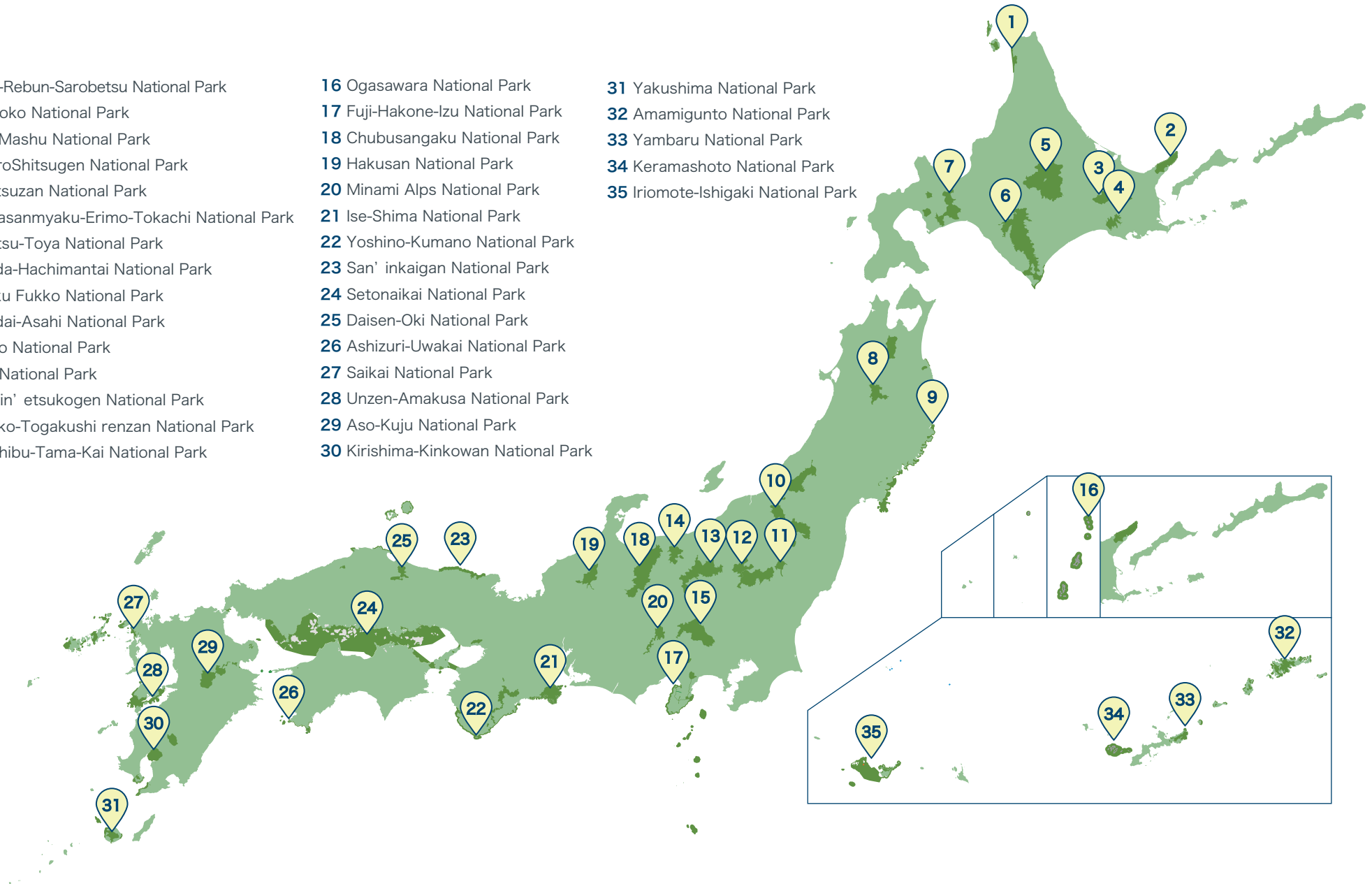


Area proportion by landowner in national parks
As of March 31, 2025
The majority of state-owned land is national forest under the jurisdiction of the Forestry Agency
Cited from the Ministry of the Environment website
<https://www.env.go.jp/nature/nationalparks/about/>

- 1 Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park
- 2 Shiretoko National Park
- 3 Akan-Mashu National Park
- 4 Kushiro-Shitsugen National Park
- 5 Daisetsuzan National Park
- 6 Hidakasanmyaku-Erimo-Tokachi National Park
- 7 Shikotsu-Toya National Park
- 8 Towada-Hachimantai National Park
- 9 Sanriku Fukko National Park
- 10 Bandai-Asahi National Park
- 11 Nikko National Park
- 12 Oze National Park
- 13 Joshin'etsukogen National Park
- 14 Myoko-Togakushi renzan National Park
- 15 Chichibu-Tama-Kai National Park

- 16 Ogasawara National Park
- 17 Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park
- 18 Chubusangaku National Park
- 19 Hakusan National Park
- 20 Minami Alps National Park
- 21 Ise-Shima National Park
- 22 Yoshino-Kumano National Park
- 23 San'in-kaigan National Park
- 24 Setonaikai National Park
- 25 Daisen-Oki National Park
- 26 Ashizuri-Uwakai National Park
- 27 Saikai National Park
- 28 Unzen-Amakusa National Park
- 29 Aso-Kuju National Park
- 30 Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park

- 31 Yakushima National Park
- 32 Amamiyunto National Park
- 33 Yamanbaru National Park
- 34 Keramashoto National Park
- 35 Iriomote-Ishigaki National Park



Defining the brand promise of national parks

Background and Purpose

National parks were positioned as one of the main pillars of the government's "Tourism Vision to Support Tomorrow's Japan" formulated in 2016, and the "National Park Enjoyment Project" has been advancing. It has been primarily implemented in the first eight parks, including the revised Natural Park Act (effective April 2022), and efforts are being made to expand this approach to all 35 parks.

As part of this, the "National Park Brand Promise" was established in 2023 to strengthen national parks' branding and outline their commitments to visitors and local communities.

This was defined as the "Common Management and Operation Guidelines for All National Parks" and aims to ensure that all stakeholders involved in the management and operation of national parks share a common understanding.

This initiative has been set up to collaborate with all stakeholders in managing and operating national parks.

Message

"The Nature holds a story"

Value Proposition

Through exploring the diverse natural landscapes and the rich stories embedded in the local life, culture, and history, you can immerse yourself in unforgettable, exceptional experiences.

Brand Promise

What National Parks promise to visitors and local communities



1

Inspiring natural landscapes and beautiful scenery



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4

Facilities and services that support memorable experience

2

A shared commitment to sustainability

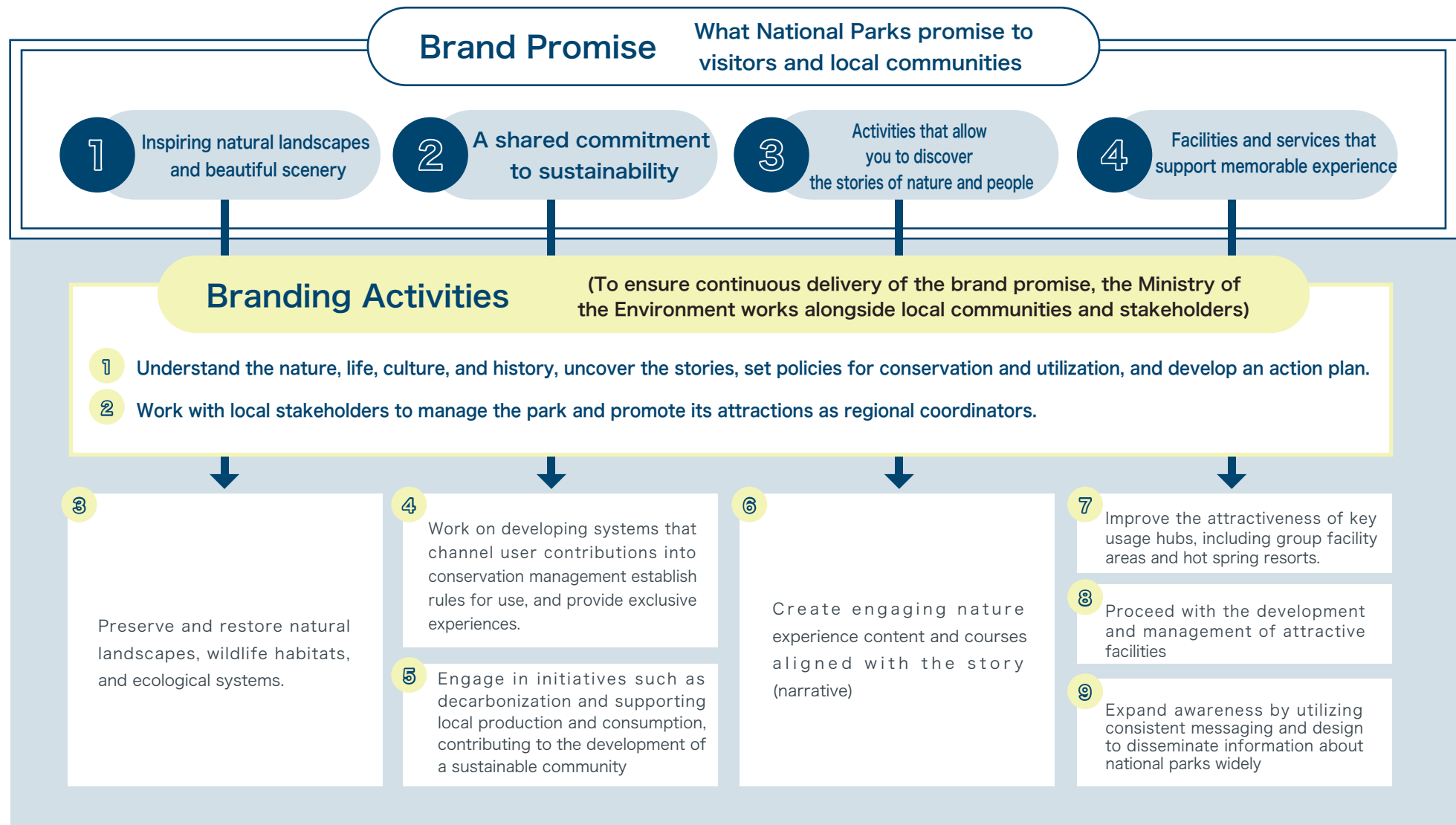


3

Activities that allow you to discover the stories of nature and people



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Kagoshima Prefecture Visitors Bureau (K.P.V.B)

【Date of Production】

08.2025

【Contractor】

Center for Environmental Studies
Shibundo Corporation

【Publisher】

Ministry of Environment Regional Environment Office in Kyushu
Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park Office

