Our Treasure
Cultural Landscapes
to future generations

Cultural Landscape Protection
in Japan

Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan
People have fostered Cultural Landscapes in harmony with nature
Nurtured in the local climate and rooted in the soil of Japan, "Cultural Landscapes" are the combined work of nature and man, representing the modes of life of our people. Japan strives to preserve and utilize these cultural landscapes by designating them as Cultural Properties under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties.
Definition of Cultural Landscapes

Cultural Landscapes are "landscape areas that have developed in association with the modes of life or livelihoods of the people and the natural features of the region, which are indispensable for the understanding of our people's modes of life and livelihoods" (Article 2, Paragraph 1, Item 5 of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties).

Safeguarding of Cultural Landscapes in Japan
Effects of Cultural Landscape Protection

The protection of cultural landscapes has several positive impacts on the local community and economy by raising awareness of the values of cultural landscapes, enhancing the attractiveness of the community, and promoting community activities.

Protection by the National Government

The national government of Japan, at the request of local governments, selects and designates Cultural Landscapes of especially high value as Important Cultural Landscapes. The Agency for Cultural Affairs provides financial assistance to local governments to cover part of the costs for their implementation of cultural landscape preservation surveys (on component features or for area delineation, etc.), the preparation of a cultural landscape preservation plan, and other work for the repair, landscaping, restoration, or disaster prevention of cultural landscapes.

Criteria for the Selection of Important Cultural Landscapes

1. Important Cultural Landscapes consist of

   One of the following cultural landscapes which have developed in association with the modes of life or livelihoods of the people and the natural features of the region, and as such represent the typical or unique elements of the basic modes of life or livelihoods of our people:

   (1) Cultural landscapes associated with agriculture such as rice paddies, farmland, etc.
   (2) Cultural landscapes associated with manmade grassland or livestock ranching such as hayfields, pastureland, etc.
   (3) Cultural landscapes associated with forest uses such as timber forests, disaster prevention forests, etc.
   (4) Cultural landscapes associated with fisheries such as fish cultivation rafts, Nori seaweed cultivation fields, etc.
   (5) Cultural landscapes associated with water uses such as reservoirs, waterways, harbors, etc.
   (6) Cultural landscapes associated with mining or industrial manufacture such as mines, quarries, groups of workshops, etc.
   (7) Cultural landscapes associated with transportation and communication such as roads, plazas, etc.
   (8) Cultural landscapes associated with residences and settlements such as stonewalls, hedges, coppices attached to premises, etc.

2. A combination of two or more cultural landscapes listed in the above, representing the typical or unique elements of the basic modes of life or livelihoods of our people.
Procedure for Important Cultural Landscapes Protection

Prefectural or Municipal Governments

Landscape Law
- Identification of the Landscape Planning area, the Landscape district, etc.
- Preparation of the Landscape planning, the City planning concerning the Landscape district, etc.
- Establishment of an ordinance for the preservation of the Landscape area

Preparation of the Cultural Landscape Preservation Plan
- Location and Boundary of cultural landscapes
- Basic Policy for the preservation of cultural landscapes
- Matters concerning land-use considering the preservation of cultural landscapes
- Matters concerning preservation, management, utilization and promotion of cultural landscapes
- Matters concerning capacity-building for the preservation of cultural landscapes

Gaining Consent of Owners, etc. to be the application of the Cultural Landscape Protection Law

The Law for the Protection of Important Cultural Landscapes
- Filing the application of selection of Important Cultural Landscapes
- Amendment in Gazette
- Notification to owners, occupants, etc.

Important Cultural Landscapes

Agency for Cultural Affairs

Financial Assistance

Scheme for the Protection of Important Cultural Landscapes under the Cultural Properties Protection Law and the Landscape Law

Local Governments
- In the case of Landscape Planning Area or Landscape District designated under the Landscape Law
- Application for permit or notification prior to construction of buildings, alteration of the existing landform, etc.
- Recommendation, order, or permit for construction of buildings, alteration of the existing landform, etc.

Owners, etc. of Important Landscapes

Cultural
- Notification of alteration to the existing state, etc.
- Instructions, advice, or recommendation to protect cultural values of the landscapes

Commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs

Illustrated Overview of the Protection of Important Cultural Landscapes in Japan

Landscape Planning Area
- Teraced Farm Land (Agriculture)
- Mine and Quarry (Mining and Industrial Manufacture)
- Timber Forest (Forest Use)
- Cultivation of Trees (Gardening)
- Pasture (Rangeland)
- Windbreak Forest (Forest Use)
- River (Water Use)
- Reservoir (Water Use)
- Fish Cultivation Raft (Fisheries)
- Hunting and Gathering (Forest Use)

Semi Landscape District
- National Park (Conservation)
- National Garden (Gardening)
- National Forest (Forest Use)

Landscape District
Law For the Protection of Cultural Properties (Law No. 214 of 1969) (Excerpt)

CHAPTER I  General Provisions

(Purpose of the Law)

Article 1. The purpose of this Law is to preserve and utilize cultural properties, so that the culture of the Japanese people may be furthered and a contribution be made to the evolution of world culture.

(Definition of Cultural Properties)

Article 2. "Cultural Properties" in this Law shall be the following:

1. Buildings, pictures, sculptures, applied arts, calligraphic works, classical books, documents, and other tangible cultural products, which possess a high historical and/or artistic value and in this country including lands and other objects which are combined with them, together with immovable cultural properties and other immaterial objects of historical and cultural value (hereinafter referred to as "cultural properties").

2. Art and skill employed in drama, music, dance, and other arts and other intangible cultural products, which possess a high historical and/or artistic value in and for this country (hereinafter referred to as "intangible cultural properties").

3. Manners and customs related to food, clothing and housing, to occupations, religious faith, leisure, etc., to folk-entertainment and clothing, implements, houses and other objects used through which people can understand the changes in our people's life style (hereinafter referred to as "folk-cultural properties").

4. Natural landscape in coastal areas, islands, and other coastal areas, such as national parks, nature reserves, and other areas with natural features which possess a high scientific value and in and for this country (hereinafter referred to as "natural landscape areas").

5. Geographical features of high value which form a natural beauty in combination with their environments (hereinafter referred to as "natural landscapes").

Paragraphs 2 and 3 omitted.

(Ultimate Law for the Government and Local Public Bodies)

Article 3. The Government and the local public bodies shall, recognizing that the cultural properties of the country are indispensable to the correct understanding of its history, culture, etc., and that they form a foundation for its cultural development for the future, make efforts to ensure that the purpose of this Law is thoroughly understood by the public, so that such properties may be kept and handed down to the future.

With the People, Owners, etc.

Article 4. The people in general shall faithfully cooperate in the measures taken by the Government and the local public bodies for the attainment of the purpose of this Law.

2. The owners of cultural properties and other persons concerned shall preserve such properties with due care and utilize them for cultural purposes by opening them to the public or by making them from time to time the object of exhibitions, etc., in accordance with the provisions of Article 5 of the Law (June 13, 1951, Law No. 110, 1951), respectively, and, for which the cultural properties or the municipal government has taken necessary preservation measures in accordance with standards prescribed by the Ministerial Ordinance.

3. The execution of this Law, the Government and the local public bodies shall respect the ownership and other property rights of the persons concerned.

CHAPTER II  Important Cultural Landscapes

Selection of Important Cultural Landscapes

Article 134. The Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, upon request of a prefectural government or a municipal government, may select as important cultural properties those cultural landscapes which are especially important among those included in a landscape planning area or a landscape district which the prefectural government or the municipal government has determined under Article 7 of this Law and other laws, as well as cultural landscapes which the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has determined under Article 58 (1) of the Law of June 13, 1970 (Law No. 110, 1970), respectively, and, for which the prefectural government or the municipal government has taken necessary preservation measures in accordance with standards prescribed by the Ministerial Ordinance.

2. In the selection under the provision of paragraph 1, the provisions of paragraphs 3 to 5 inclusive of Article 109 shall apply mutatis mutandis. In this case, "preservation order" in paragraph 3 of the same article shall read "preservation order or title" or the prefectural or municipal government which has made the request prescribed in paragraph 1 of Article 134.

(Amount of the Selection of Important Cultural Landscapes)

Article 135. In case an important cultural landscape has lost its value or in case there is any other special reason, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology may amend the selection.

3. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

4. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

5. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

6. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

7. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

(Reimbursement in case of Conveyance of Important Cultural Landscapes for which a Salary was granted)

Article 139. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology grants a salary in connection with the implementation of the provisions of Article 31, the State shall be held liable for the conveyance of the important cultural landscapes, under Articles 31 and 32 of this Law, respectively.

3. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

4. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

5. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

6. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

7. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding paragraph shall apply mutatis mutandis.

(Reimbursement in case of Conveyance of Important Cultural Landscapes for which a Salary was granted)

Article 140. The provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding article, shall apply mutatis mutandis.

(Reimbursement in case of Conveyance of Important Cultural Landscapes for which a Salary was granted)

Article 141. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding article, shall apply mutatis mutandis.

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7. In case the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has amended the selection, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the preceding article, shall apply mutatis mutandis.

Landscape Law No. 110 of 2004 (Excerpt)

CHAPTER I  General Provisions

(Purpose of the Law)

Article 1. The purpose of this Law is to promote the second formation of landscapes in urban areas, countryside and other areas in our country by providing for comprehensive measures including the preparation of landscape plans with a view to forming a beautiful and splendid land, creating a agricultural and wealthy large environment and existing unique and active local communities, thereby making a contribution to the improvement of national living standards and the sound development of local society.

*Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology