The background is a vibrant, abstract illustration. It features stylized human figures in warm tones (yellow, orange, red) and cool tones (blue, purple). In the upper right, there's a depiction of a traditional Japanese building with a blue roof. Below it, a crowd of people is gathered under a red-roofed structure, possibly a festival float or a shrine entrance. The overall style is painterly and expressive, with soft edges and a rich color palette.

Cultural Properties for Future Generations

~Outline of the Cultural Administration of Japan~

Cultural Properties Department, Agency for Cultural Affairs, JAPAN

Cultural Properties in Japan

Types of Cultural Properties in Japan

Our cultural properties have been created, developed, and preserved throughout Japan's long history. They have been passed down from one generation to another, and they are now precious assets of the Japanese people.

Cultural properties include (i) structures such as shrines, temples and private houses, (ii) Buddhist statues, (iii) paintings, (iv) calligraphy, (v) other skills called *waza* such as performing arts and craft techniques, and (vi) traditional events and festivals. Natural landscapes that remain after many years of history, historic villages and townscapes are also regarded as our cultural properties.

Under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, these cultural properties are categorized as follows;

Tangible Cultural Properties

Tangible cultural properties consist of (a) those of high historical or artistic value such as structures, paintings, sculptures, crafts, calligraphic works, classical books and ancient documents, and (b) those of high scientific value such as archeological artifacts and other historical materials. Tangible cultural properties other than structures, are collectively called "fine and applied arts."

Intangible Cultural Properties

Intangible cultural properties are defined as those that have high historical or artistic value such as drama, music and craft techniques. They are embodied by individuals or groups who have mastered *waza*.

Folk Cultural Properties

Folk cultural properties are defined as items indispensable for understanding the transition in people's daily lives, such as (i) manners and customs relating (a) to food, clothing and housing, (b) to occupation, (c) to religious faith and (d) to annual events, (ii) folk performing arts, (iii) folk skills, and (iv) clothes, implements and houses used in connection with the foregoing.

Monuments

Monuments include shell mounds, tumuli, sites of fortified capitals, sites of forts or castles and monumental houses, which are of high historical or scientific value. They also include gardens, bridges, gorges, seashores, mountains, and other places of scenic beauty which are of high artistic or scenic value. Moreover they include animals, plants, and geological and mineral formations which are of high scientific value.

Cultural Landscapes

Cultural landscapes are defined as those that have evolved with the modes of life or livelihoods of people in Japan and with the geo-cultural features of the region. They are indispensable to the understanding of the lifestyles and/or livelihoods of the people of Japan.

Groups of Traditional Buildings

Groups of traditional buildings are defined as those that have high value and form historic scenery together with their surroundings.

Out of these cultural properties, the government designates, selects and registers important items in respective categories as Important Cultural Properties, Important Intangible Cultural Properties, Important Tangible / Intangible Folk Cultural Properties, Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments. It gives high priority to the protection of them.

Additionally, we designate particularly valuable important cultural properties as national treasures, and particularly important historic sites, places of scenic beauty, and natural monuments as special historic sites, special places of scenic beauty, and special natural monuments.

Also protected are (a) underground cultural properties (Buried Cultural Properties), and (b) traditional skills and techniques that are necessary for the restoration and preservation of cultural properties (Conservation Techniques for Cultural Properties).

Number of Designated Cultural Properties

(as of August 1, 2016)

Designation National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties		
	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties
Fine Arts and Crafts	Paintings	159 items
	Sculptures	130 items
	Applied Crafts	252 items
	Calligraphies, Books	224 items
	Documents	60 items
	Archeological artifacts	46 items
	Historical materials	3 items
	Subtotal	874 items
	Structures	(282 buildings) 223 items
	Total	1,097 items
		13,068 items

Note: The figures for Important Cultural Properties include National Treasures

Designation Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments			
Special Historic Sites	61 items	Historic Sites	1,760 items
Special Places of Scenic Beauty	36 items	Places of Scenic Beauty	398 items
Special Natural Monuments	75 items	Natural Monuments	1,021 items
Total	172 (162) items	Total	3,179 (3,067) items

Note: The figures for Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments include Special Historic Sites, Special Places of Scenic Beauty, and Special Natural Monuments. Historic sites, places of scenic beauty, and natural monuments may be repeatedly appointed, the contents within () are actually appointed.

Registration Registered Monuments	
	98 items
Selection Intangible Cultural Properties that needs measures such as documentation	
	91 items
Selection Intangible Folk Cultural Properties that needs measures such as documentation	
	623 items

Designation Important Intangible Cultural Properties				
	Individual Recognition		Group Recognition	
	No. of designations	No. of holders	No. of designations	No. of holding groups
Performing Arts	37 items	54 persons (54)	13 items	13 groups
Craft Techniques	40 items	58 persons (57)	14 items	14 groups
Total	77 items	112 persons (111)	27 items	27 groups

Note: Some holders receive multiple recognitions; the number in brackets indicates the actual number of individuals

Designation Important Tangible Folk Cultural Properties	Designation Important Intangible Folk Cultural Properties
217 items	296 items

Selection Important Cultural Landscapes
50 items

Selection Important Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings
112 items

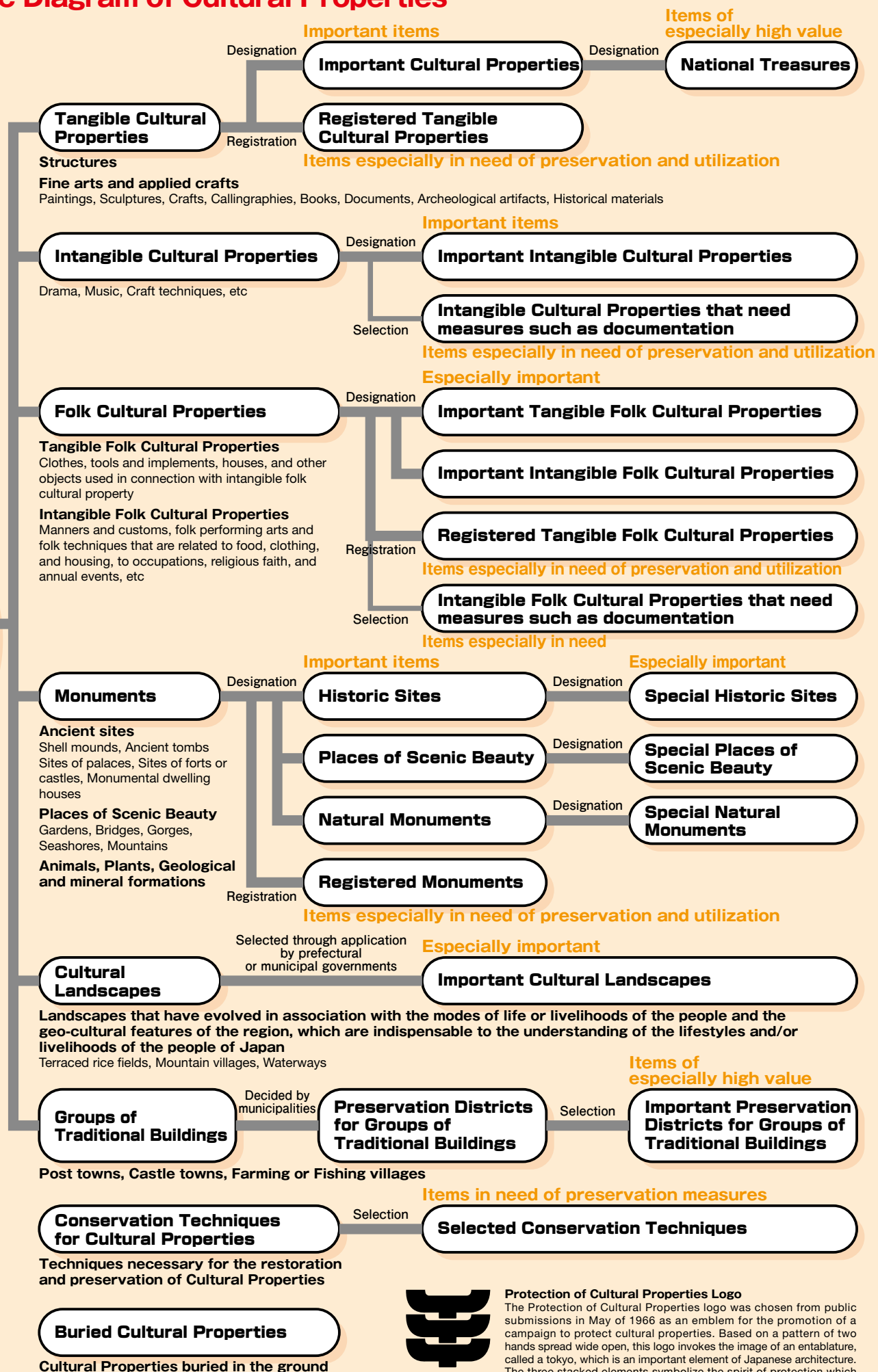
Selection Selected Conservation Techniques			
Holders		Preservation Groups	
48 items	56 holders	31 items	33 groups (31 groups)

Note: Some preservation groups receive multiple recognitions; the number in brackets indicates the actual number of groups

Registration Registered Tangible Cultural Properties (Structures)	
	10,516 items
Registration Registered Tangible Cultural Properties (Works of Fine Arts and Applied Crafts)	
	14 items
Registration Registered Tangible Folk Cultural Properties	
	42 items

Schematic Diagram of Cultural Properties

Cultural Properties



Protection of Cultural Properties Logo

The Protection of Cultural Properties logo was chosen from public submissions in May of 1966 as an emblem for the promotion of a campaign to protect cultural properties. Based on a pattern of two hands spread wide open, this logo invokes the image of an entablature, called a tokyo, which is an important element of Japanese architecture. The three stacked elements symbolize the spirit of protection which eternally preserves our heritage of cultural properties from the past, in the present, and for the future.

Note: A tokyo is a kind of a wooden joint which is usually placed on top of each pillar to support the long eaves of temples.

History of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties

The protection system has been revised wherever necessary.

The destruction by fire of the mural paintings in the main hall *Kondô* of the Temple *Hôryû-ji* in 1949 gave impetus to the enactment of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, which is Japan's first comprehensive legal framework for the protection of cultural properties. The new law combined "the

National Treasures Preservation Law," "the Law regarding the Preservation of Important Works of Fine Art," and "the Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments Preservation Law" of that time, expanding and reinforcing the existing system for protection. As the society developed, further amendments have been made since then. In the current social context, the Law is becoming more and more important year after year.

1871 Decree for the Preservation of Ancient Artifacts

1897 Ancient Temples and Shrines Preservation Law

1919 Historical Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments Preservation Law

1929 National Treasures Preservation Law

1933 Law Regarding the Preservation of Important Works of Fine Arts

1950

Enactment of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties

Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties established

Amendment of designation system (division into two-grade categories of National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties)

..... Important Cultural Properties that are especially important are designated as National Treasures; Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments that are especially important are designated as Special Historic Sites, Special Places of Scenic Beauty, and Special Natural Monuments.

Establishment of system for protection of Intangible Cultural Properties and Buried Cultural Properties

..... Addition of intangible cultural products and buried cultural properties as objects to be protected

1954 Amendments

Expansion of system for Intangible Cultural Properties

..... Establishment of system for designation of Important Intangible Cultural Properties, and for documentation of selected intangible cultural properties

Expansion of system for Buried Cultural Properties

..... Established as a separate category from Tangible Cultural Properties; a system of advance notice implemented for excavation in land known to contain cultural properties

Expansion of system for Folk Materials

..... Establishment of a designation system for Important Tangible Folk Materials separate from Tangible Cultural Properties; establishment of a system for documentation of selected intangible folk materials

1968 Amendments

Agency for Cultural Affairs established

Council for the Protection of Cultural Properties established

1975 Amendments

Development of system for Buried Cultural Properties

..... Establishment of a system of exemptions for excavation of ruins by the national government and development of protection for ruins discovered in the course of construction

Expansion of system for Folk Cultural Properties

..... Folk materials renamed Folk Cultural Properties; establishment of system for designation of Important Tangible Folk Cultural Properties and Important Intangible Folk Cultural Properties

Establishment of system of Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings

Establishment of system for protection of Conservation Techniques for Cultural Properties

1996 Amendments

Establishment of system of Registered Cultural Properties

..... Establishment of a registration system for the preservation of structures other than those designated by the national or local governments

1999 Amendments

Transfer of authority to prefectures and designated cities

Reform to Council for Cultural Affairs

2004 Amendments

Establishment of system for protection of Cultural Landscapes

..... Establishment of a selection system for Important Cultural Landscapes

Expansion of system of Folk Cultural Properties

..... Addition of folk techniques

Expansion of system of Registered Cultural Properties

..... Expansion of registration system to include Works of Fine Arts and Crafts, Tangible Cultural Properties, Tangible Folk Cultural Properties, and Monuments

System and measures for the protection of cultural properties in Japan

“Cultural Properties” are thus preserved and utilized.

Cultural properties thus categorized under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties are protected in a way the most appropriate to them.

The process leading to designation, registration, or selection of cultural properties:



Designation and other

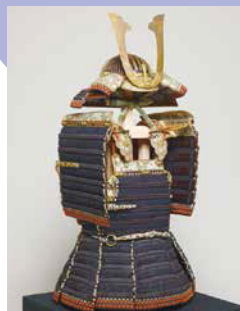
Cultural properties are designated, selected, or registered after the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has consulted the Council for Cultural Affairs and received its report.



National Treasure:
Iwashimizu Hachimangu two-storied gate and Corridor
(Yawata City, Kyoto Prefecture)

Preservation

- Guidance and subsidies concerning repair and maintenance to owners and municipalities
- Subsidies for municipalities to purchase land or structures which are cultural properties
- Regulations on alterations to current state, restrictions on export
- Establishment of tax exemptions
- Preparation required documents and their publicity
- Environmental preservation



National Treasure:
Domaru Armor with Black Leather Lacing
(Kasugataisha Shrine, Nara)

Utilization

- Subsidies, recommendations, orders, and directives to owners or municipalities regarding the public display of cultural properties
- Establishment and operation of museums, theatres, and other public facilities, and centres for cultural properties research



Historic Site: Enichijiato
(Bandai Town, Fukushima Prefecture)

Examples of Preservation and

Important Cultural Property (buildings)

Nogi Town Circular Brick Kiln

By introducing the registered cultural property system and promoting the designation of important cultural properties based on surveys of modern historical buildings, those modern buildings, managed as cultural properties, have become familiar to many people. Once becoming a cultural property, it is reconsidered as a regional asset, which leads to an increase of modern historical buildings being assertively utilized with cooperation from owners, city municipal groups, public regional groups, and other related parties.

The Nogi Town Circular Brick Kiln in Nogi, Tochigi Prefecture was designated as an important cultural property in 1979, since the kiln was the only totally preserved “Hoffman-ring” kiln in the country, and a precious industrial heritage that is an example of the kilns that were active during the Meiji period (1868~1911) of Japanese modern history.

After manufacturing using brick kilns stopped in 1971, the kiln was no longer of any particular use, but coinciding with restorative work starting in 2011, the facilities were improved to allow for public use. In May 2016, the site was newly refurbished and opened to the public. Directly entering the brick kiln, one can learn about and experience the history of kiln manufacturing. In addition, the facilities are utilized for various activities and ceremonies, and have a social center including a café and a research lab established next to them.

We hope not only that the site is used as an educational facility that utilizes the cultural property, but also that the facilities will be appealing to many people as a spot for regional tourism.



(Photo provided by Nogi Board of Education)

Historic Site

Kamabuta Ruins (Part of Yaita Ruins)

After securing its value as a cultural property, a historic site is maintained and utilized through various methods so that people can deepen the understanding of its history and culture on site.

The historical Kamabuta Ruins in Joetsu City, Niigata Prefecture, are designated as one of the Yaita Ruins (Yaita, Fukiage, Kamafuta Ruins). These ruins can be said to be extremely precious, with one able to understand the villages and societal trends from the middle of the Yayoi Era to the Kofun Era (1st century B.C.E~4th century C.E).

Improvements were implemented with the goal of allowing one to understand the ruins' value, communicate information and enjoy the space.

In order to understand the ruins, relics from excavations are displayed on site, allowing one to experience the scope of the site. Moreover, the guidance facility provides information and displays so as to better understand the ruins.

For enjoyment, we have hands-on social events utilizing the site through activities such as walks among the ruins, and making Japanese *magatama* stones, and we are expanding with social events for volunteers, area residents, and schools. In addition, with its convenient location to the Joetsu Myoko Hokuriku Shinkansen station, we hope to continue to develop even more moving forward, using the ruins as a tool for community building.



Kamabuta Ruins Guidance Facility



Hands-On Learning with Regional Primary Schools

(at the Kamabuta Ruins Guidance Facility)

Important Tangible Folk Cultural Property

Inukai Stage

While regular use of important tangible folk cultural properties is focused on displays in museums and opening to the public, in recent years even more proactive activities are taking place.

The Inukai no Butai puppet theater is in Hata, Tokushima. Tokushima is a region with many such types of rural theaters, where lively “Ningyo Joruri” puppet competitions were performed. Among these is the Inukai Stage, which abandons the typical structure, using a trick sliding screen that allows for a variety of stage backgrounds to unfold by manipulating the painted screen many times over. The site's specially installed stage setting led it to being designated as an important tangible folk cultural property in 1998. Also supplementing this, in 1999, steps recording the “custom sliding trick screen of Awa” were created and selected as an intangible folk cultural property.

While this was being done, students from Osaka University of the Arts attempted a new challenge. They used the theater to stage a new drama using a new version of the trick sliding door. The drama was about monsters, and the story was by university professor Kenkichi Hamahata. The collaborative collision between new and old cultures in this project was an opportunity to cultivate communication between the students and the locals, resulting in the creation of a close bond.

This is a great example of the successful communication of culture and human interaction, and more than anything, it is really meaningful that the region was revitalized.



(Photo provided by Tokushima Board of Education)

Utilization of Cultural Properties

Important Cultural Property (Fine Arts and Crafts)

Purchased Cultural Properties Exhibitions/ New Designation Exhibition

In order to provide substantial opportunities for the appreciation of Important Cultural Properties, the Agency for Cultural Affairs makes items available for a range of exhibitions.

Every year at museums in various areas, the Agency for Cultural Affairs holds an exhibition of “New Treasures of the Nation” to showcase recently purchased traditional art works. In 2017, this exhibition took place at the Ichinoseki City Museum.

In addition, every year an exhibition of “Newly Designated National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties” showcasing newly designated art works is held every year at the Tokyo National Museum.

The Agency for Cultural Affairs intends to actively continue to plan and promote exhibitions of National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties inside and outside Japan.



New Treasures of the Nation
Exhibit of Cultural Properties Purchased
by the Agency for Cultural Affairs

Important Intangible Cultural Property (Performing Arts)

Special Appreciation of Kumiodori

The Agency for Cultural Affairs subsidizes successor training projects which are conducted by performers' groups of traditional performing arts such as Nohgaku, Ningyô Jôruri Bunraku, and Kabuki, which are designated as Important Intangible Cultural Properties. Since it is the appreciation of the audience that can ensure the transmission of such performing arts to the future, the Agency for Cultural Affairs also supports a performance project which aims to provide the public with more opportunities to enjoy them and to feel the attractiveness of them.

Kumiodori, an Important Intangible Cultural Property, is a singing and dancing drama which has been transmitted in Okinawa Prefecture. Even though it is the compilation of sophisticated music, dances and arts and crafts techniques of the Ryukyu Kingdom Era and it is a traditional performing art that has value for its importance in art and in the history of performing arts, it had not been known outside Okinawa. Thus, since fiscal year 1995, the Traditional Kumiodori Preservation Society and the Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education have provided special opportunities to appreciate Kumiodori for 6 areas outside Okinawa every year. They are good opportunities for people to appreciate Kumiodori with elaborated commentaries.



(Picture provided by the Traditional Kumiodori
Preservation Society)

Important Intangible Cultural Property (Craft Techniques)

The Japanese Artistry and Beauty Exhibition

The Agency for Cultural Affairs holds an exhibition, which is entitled “The Japanese Artistry and Beauty Exhibition: Important Intangible Cultural Properties and the People who sustain them” every year with a view to showing the public *waza* of important intangible cultural properties and to introduce skills that sustain them.

The aim of this exhibition is to increase people's understanding of the protection of cultural properties through a broad-ranging display of ceramics, textiles, lacquer works and other traditional craft techniques that have been designated as Important Intangible Cultural Properties, along with tools and materials for production that are indispensable for the embodiment of these craft techniques, which have been specially selected as Conservation Techniques for Cultural Properties.

Representative works by holders of *waza* of Important Intangible Cultural Properties (known as Living National Treasures) and holding groups of such properties, along with related materials and other items, are displayed mainly from among the Agency's collection. Documentary films are also shown, planned and produced by the Agency, illustrating craft techniques.



(Venue: Shimane Museum of Ancient Izumo)

Communicating information about Cultural Properties

Cultural Heritage Online

“Cultural Heritage Online” is a portal site that enables people to search for and browse information on cultural heritages in Japan, regardless of their official designation. The site is operated in collaboration with a number of galleries, museums, municipal governments, and other groups. This site aims to create a whole list of cultural heritage in Japan, which contains various cultural properties, be it designated or undesignated, tangible or intangible, with the cooperation of museums and local governments for the collection of such information.

The site consists of a Gallery, which shows users photos of cultural heritages, and a Cultural Heritage Database, which enables users to search for information about all kinds of cultural heritages. Gallery users can browse cultural assets by age and field, as well as those related to specific cultural heritages using associative retrieval, as well as search and identify those using maps. The Cultural Heritage Database allows users perform full-text searches, including searches by the institution storing the cultural heritage or searches by description.

Furthermore, it has thematic contents, such as information of museums and galleries, notifications, and event information, in addition to “World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage” and “Intangible cultural properties seen on video.”



Cultural Heritage Online (image of home page)
<http://bunka.nii.ac.jp/>

Activities for Promoting and Raising Awareness for the Protection of Cultural Properties



文化財保護強調週間
Cultural Properties Protection Week

Cultural Properties Protection Week

(November 1 to 7 every year)

Every year, the week from November 1st to 7th is the Cultural Properties Protection Week. During this week, various events are held across the country with a view to giving the nation's people opportunities to become familiar with them, such as a special opening of historic structures and displaying of fine and applied arts, walking around historic sites, performance of traditional performing arts in the public, with the cooperation of owners, local governments and municipal boards of education.

In 2010, commemorating the 60th anniversary of enforcement of the Law, the Agency selected a logo out of the public proposals so that the people can become more familiar with the Cultural Properties Protection Week.

Logo for the Cultural Properties Protection Week



Let's use the old tools!
(Important Cultural Property: Nakasujii's Residence)
(Photo provided by Wakayama City Board of Education)

Fire Prevention Day for Cultural Properties

(Every January 26th)

Since January 26 is when the mural paintings at the main hall *Kondô* of the Temple *Hôryû-ji* were destroyed by fire (in 1949), the “Fire Prevention Day for Cultural Properties” was set on this date. The Agency for Cultural Affairs, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency, prefectural and municipal boards of education, fire departments, owners of cultural properties and local residents cooperate to organize an annual fire prevention campaign for cultural properties throughout the country centered on this date with a view to protecting them from fire, earthquakes and other kinds of disasters.

The 62nd Fire Prevention Day for Cultural Properties on January 26, 2016 at Negoro-ji Temple in Iwade, Wakayama, Prefecture was attended by the Commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs and the Vice-Commissioner of the Fire and Disaster Management Agency. A large-scale training event was carried out, with participation from the Nasu firefighting association, the Iwade City Fire Brigade, and the Negoro-ji Temple Self-Defense Fire Brigade.



62nd Fire Prevention Day for Cultural Properties, Fire Training
(Negoro-ji Temple)

Efforts for the Protection of Cultural Properties by Local Authorities

Enactment of ordinances for the protection of cultural properties

As with the national government, local governments also enact ordinances for the protection of cultural properties under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties and designate local cultural properties. Such local governments preserve and utilize their cultural properties, subsidizing expenses necessary for management, repair and exhibition of them.

In addition, prefectural boards of education have committees for the guidance of cultural properties protection, that inspect cultural properties and provide owners with instructions and advice on the protection of cultural properties.



Stationing place No.1 of Gonohe Town Fire Company Important Cultural Property by Aomori Prefecture

Photo: Courtesy of Aomori Prefectural Board of Education

Preservation and Utilization of Buried Cultural Properties

Many buried cultural properties that can tell us the irreplaceable local history remain in every region of Japan. Approximately 6,000 experts are employed by local governments and municipalities for the preservation arrangement, the implementation of excavation surveys and the preservation and utilization of sites in connection with development projects.

Each local government is engaged in building a community and training human resources through the utilization of buried cultural properties, such as improvement of preserved sites, display of earthenware vessels discovered during excavation and dissemination of findings of its history and culture.



Hands-on learning partnering with the local area

(Photo provided by Mito City Board of Education)

Preservation and Utilization of Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings

The system of Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings was established in 1975 in order to maintain the historic and cultural character of local towns and villages. In this system, municipalities designate Preservation Districts and develop preservation plans.

The national government classifies Important Preservation Districts from among those Preservation Districts. Within the Important Preservation Districts, municipalities promote their own plans to maintain historic towns and villages, while the national and prefectural government give financial assistance and technical instruction to preservation projects executed by municipalities.



Kameyama-shi Seki-juku Preservation District

(Photo provided by Kameyama City)

Comprehensive Preservation and Utilization of Cultural Properties and Town Planning

"The Basic Scheme for Historic and Cultural Properties" is a master plan designed for municipalities to preserve cultural properties, including their surrounding environment. As of May 1, 2016, 45 regions (48 municipalities) have formulated this scheme. There is an authorization system based on the Act on Maintenance and Improvement of Traditional Scenery in Certain Districts, allowing authorized villages, towns, and cities to receive intensive support.



Scene from "Basic Scheme for Historic and Cultural Properties" workshop

Preservation and Utilization of Cultural Landscape

A local government or municipality investigates the area and formulates a preservation plan with a view to preserving its cultural landscape, which has been formed by the livelihoods of people in a local community and the local geo-cultural features.

When selected as an Important Cultural Landscape by the national government, the national government offers technical and financial supports for an improvement project conducted by the local government while the local government is engaged in projects to preserve the landscape in which people live and work and to transmit it to the next generation.



Misumiura Cultural Landscapes

(Photo provided by Uki City)

Local Revitalization by Utilizing the Advantage of Cultural Heritage

Japan has rich and diverse cultural heritage in each local region, which collectively constitutes its nationwide *Takara* treasure. In recent years, people have begun to recognize the role of cultural heritage in contributing to the revitalization of communities, as well as appropriately preserving heritage and passing them along to the next generation. Based on plans formulated by local governments, the Local Revitalization Project Utilizing Cultural Heritage Advantages aims to support comprehensive efforts utilizing local cultural heritage, such as (i) holding of traditional events and performing arts for the public, (ii) training of successors, and (iii) activities to familiarize people with classical arts and performances. These projects foster cultural promotion and revitalize local communities.



Performance by Karasuzaki children

(Photo provided by Minamisoma City)

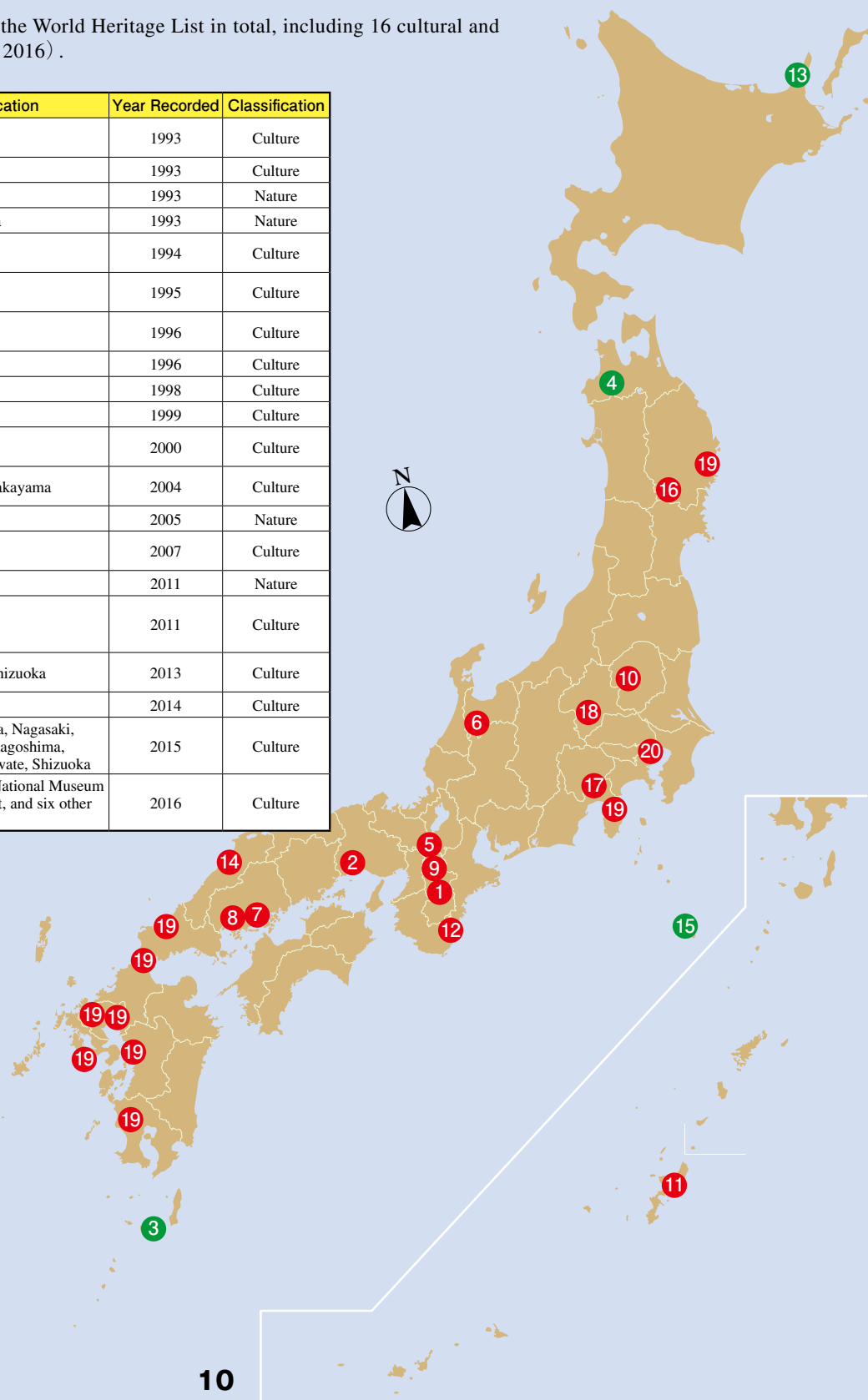
From Japan's Properties to World Heritage

Protection of the precious heritage of humanity for future generations

In 1972 UNESCO adopted the World Heritage Convention at its General Conference in Paris. The purpose of the convention is to encourage international cooperation and support with a view to protecting for all humanity cultural and natural heritage, which has outstanding universal value, from damage, destruction and other threats.

Today, 1052 properties are inscribed on the World Heritage List in total, including 16 cultural and 4 natural properties of Japan (as of August 2016).

	Name Recorded	Location	Year Recorded	Classification
1	Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area	Nara	1993	Culture
2	Himeji-jo	Hyogo	1993	Culture
3	Yakushima	Kagoshima	1993	Nature
4	Shirakami-Sanchi	Aomori, Akita	1993	Nature
5	Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Kyoto, Uji and Otsu cities)	Kyoto, Shiga	1994	Culture
6	Historic Villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama	Gifu, Toyama	1995	Culture
7	Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome)	Hiroshima	1996	Culture
8	Itsukushima Shinto Shrine	Hiroshima	1996	Culture
9	Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara	Nara	1998	Culture
10	Shrines and Temples of Nikko	Tochigi	1999	Culture
11	Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu	Okinawa	2000	Culture
12	Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range	Mie, Nara, Wakayama	2004	Culture
13	Shiretoko	Hokkaido	2005	Nature
14	The Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine and its Cultural Landscape	Shimane	2007	Culture
15	Ogasawara Islands	Tokyo	2011	Nature
16	Hiraizumi – Temples, Gardens and Archaeological Sites Representing the Buddhist Pure Land	Iwate	2011	Culture
17	Fujisan, sacred place and source artistic inspiration	Yamanashi, Shizuoka	2013	Culture
18	Tomioka Silk Mill and Related Sites	Gunma	2014	Culture
19	Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining	Fukuoka, Saga, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Kagoshima, Yamaguchi, Iwate, Shizuoka	2015	Culture
20	The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement	Tokyo (The National Museum of Western Art, and six other countries)	2016	Culture



World Cultural Heritage



Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area
Photo: Courtesy of Horyu-ji Temple



Himeji-jo
Photo: Courtesy of Himeji City Board of Education



Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto
(Kyoto, Uji and Otsu cities)
Photo: Courtesy of Motorikyu-Nijojo Office, Kyoto City Hall



Historic Villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama
Photo: Courtesy of Shirakawa Village Board of Education



Hiroshima Peace Memorial
(Genbaku Dome)



Itsukushima Shinto Shrine
Photo: Courtesy of Hiroshima Prefectural Board of Education



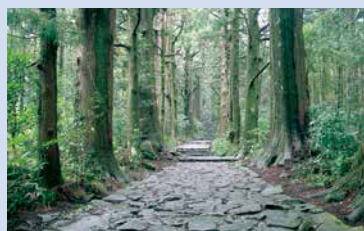
Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara
Photo: Courtesy of Nara Prefectural Board of Education



Shrines and Temples of Nikko
Photo: Courtesy of Nikko Toshogu



Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu
Photo: Courtesy of Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education



Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range
Photo: Courtesy of Wakayama Prefectural Board of Education



The Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine and its Cultural Landscape
Photo: Courtesy of Shimane Prefectural Board of Education



Hiraizumi - Temples, Gardens and Archaeological Sites Representing the Buddhist Pure Land
Photo: Courtesy of Kawashima Printing Co. Ltd



Fujisan, sacred place and source artistic inspiration
Photo: Courtesy of Fuji City



Tomioka Silk Mill and Related Sites
Photo: Courtesy of Gunma Prefecture



Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining
Photo: Courtesy of The World Heritage Council for the sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution



The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement
Photo: Courtesy of The National Museum of Western Art

Protecting Intangible Cultural Heritage

Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted at the UNESCO General Conference in October 2003, and came into force in April 2006. Japan became the third state party to the Convention in June 2004. The total contracting parties are 171 countries as of March 2017.

This Convention stipulates that the state parties identify elements of intangible cultural heritage within their territory and make inventories of them. It also stipulates that the Intergovernmental Committee establish the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Representative List) and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Urgent Safeguarding List). Today 366 elements are inscribed on the Representative List in total, including 21 elements of Japan (as of March 2017).

In 2016, at the 11th Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held at the UNESCO headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, our country's nomination of "Yama, Hoko, Yatai, float festivals in Japan" was inscribed on the Representative List. This was an extended nomination, combining 31 float festivals found throughout Japan that are nationally designated as important intangible folk cultural properties with "Yamahoko, the float ceremony of the Kyoto Gion festival" and "Hitachi Furyumono", which were inscribed in 2009.

Japan's Intangible Cultural Heritages
Inscribed on the Representative List (21 items)

Name	Year Inscribed
Nohgaku theatre	2008
Ningyo Johruri Bunraku puppet theatre	2008
Kabuki theatre	2008
Gagaku	2009
Ojiya-chijimi, Echigo-jofu	2009
Koshikijima no Toshidon (Kagoshima Pref.)	2009
Oku-noto no Aenokoto (Ishikawa Pref.)	2009
Hayachine Kagura (Iwate Pref.)	2009
Akiu no Taue Odori (Miyagi Pref.)	2009
Chakkirako (Kanagawa Pref.)	2009
Dainichido Bugaku (Akita Pref.)	2009
Daimokutate (Nara Pref.)	2009
Traditional Ainu dance (Hokkaido Pref.)	2009
Kumiodori	2010
Yuki-Tsumugi	2010
Mibu no Hana Taue (Hiroshima Pref.)	2011
Sada Shin Noh (Shimane Pref.)	2011
Nachi no Dengaku (Wakayama Pref.)	2012
Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese	2013
Washi: craftsmanship of traditional Japanese hand-made paper	2014
Yama, Hoko, Yatai, Float Festivals in Japan	2016

Yama, Hoko, Yatai, Float Festivals in Japan

Thirty-three float festivals are included in the nomination.



Yamahoko, the float ceremony of the Kyoto Gion festival
(Kyoto Prefecture)



Hitachi Furyumono
(Ibaraki Prefecture)



The Takayama Festival
(Gifu Prefecture)



The Chichibu Festival
(Saitama Prefecture)

Promoting International Exchange and Cooperation

System for International Cooperation

With a view to protecting cultural heritage that is the common heritage of humanity in a framework of international cooperation, Japan works together with other countries, international organizations and research institutions, and collaborates on (i) research exchanges, (ii) conservation and restoration projects, and (iii) training of specialists.

Law on the Promotion of International Cooperation for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Abroad

“The Law on the Promotion of International Cooperation for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Abroad” was enacted in June 2006. This law stipulates, for Japan’s international cooperation on cultural heritage, (i) the duties of the government and research institutions, (ii) the reinforcement of ties among related bodies, and (iii) the formulation of basic guidelines. The law justifies activities for international cooperation on cultural heritage, establishes in Japan a system for cooperation, and facilitates effective implementation of international cooperation on cultural heritage through reinforced ties among related organizations.

International Assistance for Protecting Cultural Heritage

In order to provide emergency support for cultural heritage damaged by natural disasters and war, the program provides protection and restoration by partnering with cultural heritage preservation groups overseas. In addition, we promote international cooperation by cultivating talent in young researchers and those specializing in the protection of cultural heritage by implementing training focusing on those in charge of protecting cultural heritage in the Asia Pacific region. Furthermore, in 2006 the “Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage” was launched, with domestic government bodies, research groups, NGOs and others taking part. The consortium carries out research, collects and provides information, and constructs a network between each domestic research group.



Damaged Cultural Heritage Survey Project in Nepal
(Photo provided by the Independent Administrative Institution National Institutes for Cultural Heritage Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)



Cultural Heritage Workshop in Bhutan
(Photo provided by Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU))

International communication

Ancient Japanese Art Overseas Exhibition

International communication through cultural properties contributes to advances in mutual understanding and communication between each of our cultures. The Agency for Cultural Affairs introduces the excellent cultural properties of Japan. In order to deepen the understanding of Japanese history and culture, and to promote international cultural communication, the Ancient Japanese Art Overseas Exhibition has been held continually since 1951, and features important cultural properties and national treasures.

In addition, since 1996, in addition to an exhibit in Europe, the Asian Friendship Ancient Japanese Art Exhibition is also held in Asia to mark 50 years since the end of World War II.

In 2016, an exhibit of Japanese Buddhist sculpture was held in the Scuderie del Quirinale in Rome.



“Japanese Buddhist Sculpture” Exhibit in 2016
(Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome)

Stories of the land born from the voices of history.

Historical properties preserved, then revitalized! The beginning of Japan Heritage.

Japan Heritage

“Japan Heritage” refers to places or objects certified by the Agency for Cultural Affairs that tell a traditional story of the country’s culture through regional historical charms or special properties.

The region becomes the main actor in maintaining and utilizing in a comprehensive manner the tangible and intangible cultural properties overflowing with charms that are vital to telling the story and in promoting the stories strategically both domestically and abroad. By doing so, we aim to revitalize the regions where these sites and objects are located. There are currently 37 items certified as “Japan Heritage” stories (as of August 2016).

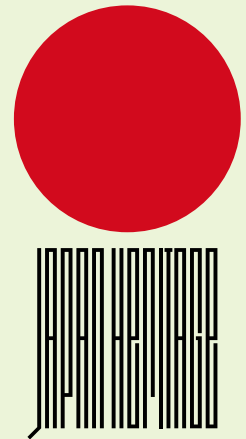
Stories Certified as Japan Heritage

Stories certified as “Japan Heritage” must take into account the following three points.

- (1) The stories have been passed down through generations, rooted in the region.
- (2) They have clear themes for promoting historical charms.
- (3) They are not a simply an explanation of cultural properties or history.

Certified Japan Heritage in 2015 (18 heritages)

1	Educational Heritage from Early-Modern Japan (1568-1868) : The Origins of Academics and Decorum
2	Kakaa Denka: The Silk Story of Gunma
3	Flourishing Folk Culture Under the Rule of the Maeda Family of Kaga
4	The Noto Peninsula: Where the Light Dances
5	Wakasa Province: A Cultural Heritage Linking the Sea to the Ancient Capital
6	An Ancient Castle Town with the Spirit of Nobunaga's Hospitality
7	Saiku: The Palace of the Imperial Princess and the Spirit of Ise
8	Lake Biwa and Its Surroundings: A Water Heritage Site of Life and Prayer
9	A Historical Walk through 800 Years of Japanese Tea
10	Dekansho-Bushi: Hometown Memories Passed Down in Folk Songs
11	The Dawn of Japan: Women in the Asuka Period
12	A Site for Purifying the Six Roots of Perception and Healing the Six Senses~Japan's Most Dangerous National Treasure and Temple and a World-Famous Radon Hot Spring
13	Tsuwano Then and Now: Exploring the Town of Tsuwano Through the <i>One Hundred Landscapes of Tsuwano</i>
14	A Miniature Garden City from the Middle Ages Built Around the Onomichi Channel
15	Henro: The Pilgrimage Route and 88 Temples of Shikoku
16	The Ancient Capital of Western Japan: A Political Center of Cultural Exchange with East Asia
17	The Frontier Islands of Iki and Tsushima, Goto: The Ancient Bridge to the Continent
18	The Culture of the Sagara Family: 700 Years of a Conservative Yet Innovative Spirit in one of Japan's Richest Remote Regions



JAPAN HERITAGE

日本遺産



24 The Faith of Edo Commoners and a Holiday Destination: “Oyama Mairi,” Holding Giant Wooden Swords
(photo by Isehara)



25 Iza Kamakura: A Mosaic of History and Culture
(photo by Kamakura)



26 “What's This?” Snow Country Culture and Fired Earthenware of the Shinano River Basin
(photo by Tokamachi)



27 Komatsu, “The Story of Walking with a Gem” The Culture of a Stone Polished by the Flow of Time
(photo by Komatsu)



28 Kisoji, Inside the Mountain: Hunt in the Mountain, Survive in the Mountain
(photo by Minami Kismachi)



29 Woodworkers Techniques: Heart and Mind Together, Passed Down Over 1300 Years to the Present
(photo by Takayama)



19 "Date Culture" Cultivated by Masamune
(photo by Sendai)



20 "Journey of Rebirth," Living Faith and Nature: rows of cedars over 300 years old surround 2,446 stone steps, ascending to Dewa Sanzan
(photo by Yamagata prefecture)



21 Aizu 33 Kannon Tour: Aizu's Past Culture Seen Through Pilgrims
(photo by Bandai)



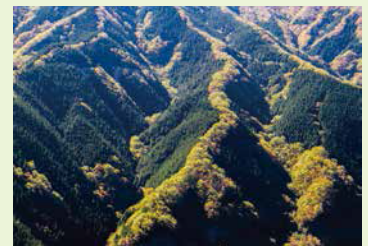
22 "The One Waterway" That Paved the Way for the Future—Toshimichi Okubo, "The Last Dream" and the Traces of Pioneers Koriyama / Inawashiro
(photo by Inawashiro)



23 Four Northern Townscapes with an Edo Feel: Sakura, Narita, Katori, and Choshi; Four Representative Towns in the Edo Area that Supported the Million Cities of the Era
(Photo by Sakura, Narita, Sawara and Choshi)

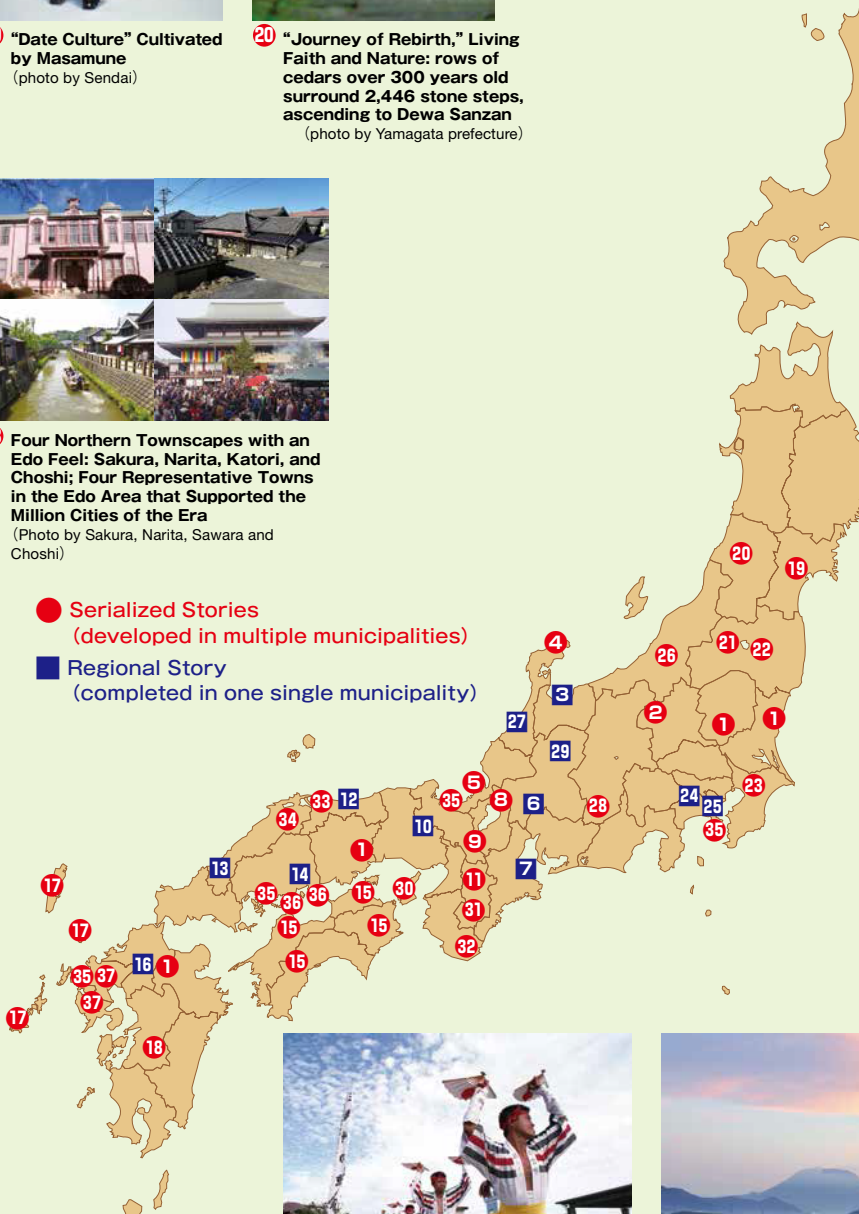


30 The Activities of the Fisherman to Support the Ancient State: Commemorating the Beginnings of "Kojiki" (Records of Ancient Matters) in Awaji, the Island that Birthed the Nation.
(photo by Awaji)



31 The Spirit and Way of Life of Those Nurtured by the Forest and Cultivating It: "Yoshino," the Birthplace of a Beautiful Forest Plantation
(photo by Yoshino)

- Serialized Stories
(developed in multiple municipalities)
- Regional Story
(completed in one single municipality)



32 Living Alongside Whales
(photo by Shinmiya)



33 Creating Regional Spirituality, Japan's Three Largest Cattle Cities
(photo by Daisen)



34 Izumi Tatara Fudoki: The Story of the Birth of the Iron Mill
(photo by Unnan)



35 Yokosuka Naval District, Kure, Sasebo and Maizuru: Places to Experience the Energy of Japanese Modernization
(photo by Yokosuka, Kure, Sasebo and Maizuru)



36 The Geiyo Islands: Home of the "Largest Pirate Base" in Japan Memories of the Murakami Pirates
(photo by Imabari)



37 Hizen, the Home of Japanese Porcelain: Strolling Through an Abundance of Pottery
(photo by Saga prefecture)



Protection of Cultural Properties Logo

In order to spread the basic regional protection activities of cultural properties to the nation, the “Cultural Property Protection Symbol” was selected through public invitation for designs made on the proclamation day of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties on May 30, 1966. It will be approaching its 50th year in use in 2016.

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