

# 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 unchanged beyond time, 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. Except structures, they are generically 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.

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, 2014)

### Designation National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties

	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	
Fine Arts and Crafts	Paintings	1,987 items	
	Sculptures	2,676 items	
	Applied Crafts	2,439 items	
	Calligraphies, Books	1,893 items	
	Documents	749 items	
	Archeological artifacts	603 items	
	Historical materials	177 items	
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>871 items</b>	<b>10,524 items</b>
	Structures	(266 buildings)	(4,629 buildings)
		218 items	2,412 items
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,089 items</b>	<b>12,936 items</b>	

Note: The figures for Important Cultural Properties include National Treasures

### Designation Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments

	Historic Sites	Places of Scenic Beauty	Natural Monuments
Special Historic Sites	61 items	1,724 items	
Special Places of Scenic Beauty	36 items	378 items	
Special Natural Monuments	75 items		1,012 items
<b>Total</b>	<b>172 (162) items</b>	<b>3,114 (3,005) items</b>	

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

82 items

### Selection Intangible Cultural Properties that needs measures such as documentation

90 items

### Selection Intangible Folk Cultural Properties that needs measures such as documentation

610 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	38 items	55 persons (55)	12 items	12 groups
Craft Techniques	39 items	55 persons (54)	14 items	14 groups
<b>Total</b>	<b>77 items</b>	<b>110 persons (109)</b>	<b>26 items</b>	<b>26 groups</b>

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

### Designation Important Tangible Folk Cultural Properties

214 items

### Designation Important Intangible Folk Cultural Properties

286 items

### Selection Important Cultural Landscapes

43 items

### Selection Important Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings

106 districts

### Selection Selected Conservation Techniques

Holders		Preservation Groups	
45 items	51 holders	29 items	31 groups (29 groups)

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

### Registration Registered Tangible Cultural Properties (Structures)

9,643 items

### Registration Registered Tangible Cultural Properties (Works of Fine Arts and Applied Crafts)

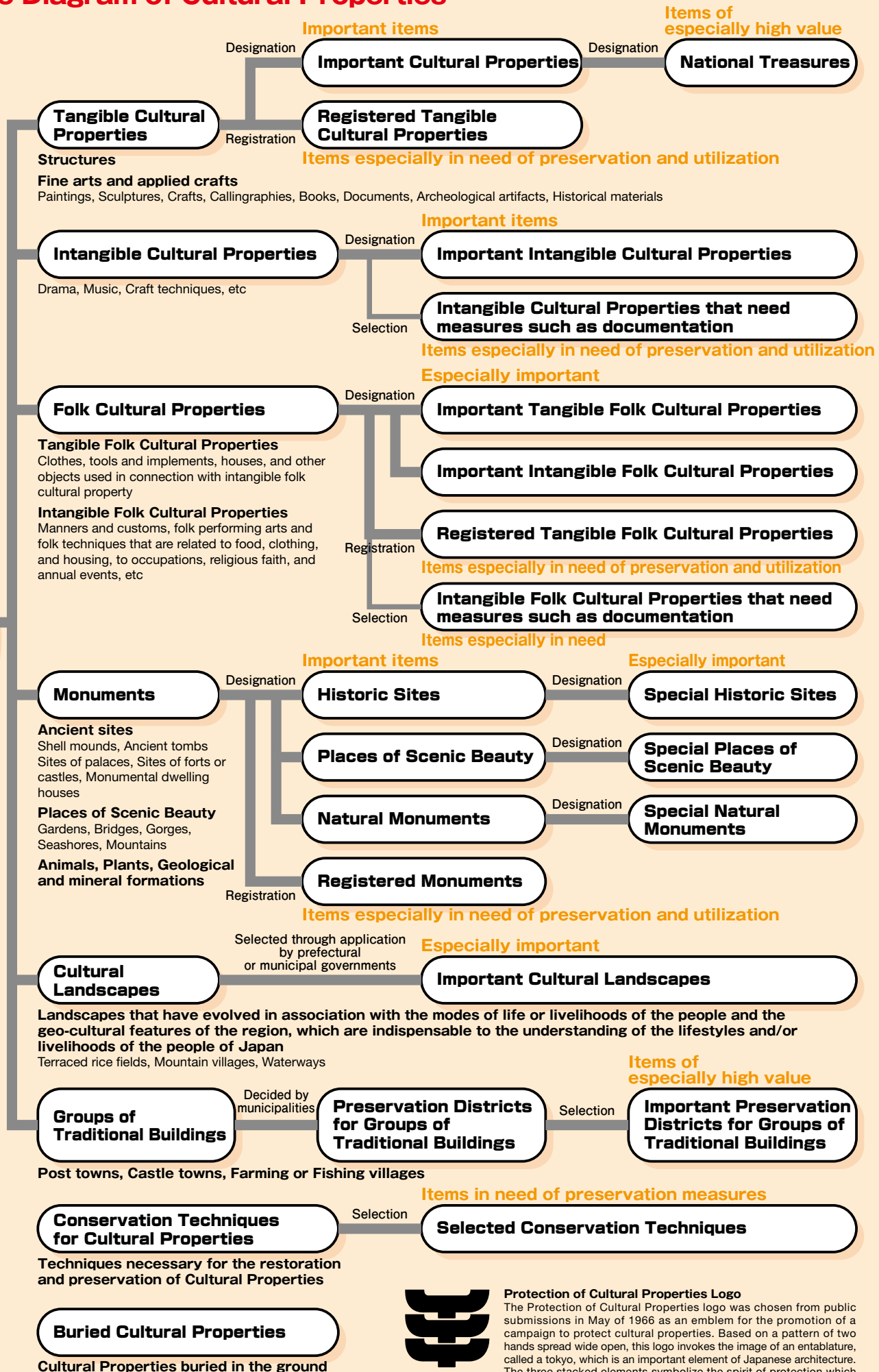
14 items

### Registration Registered Tangible Folk Cultural Properties

33 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

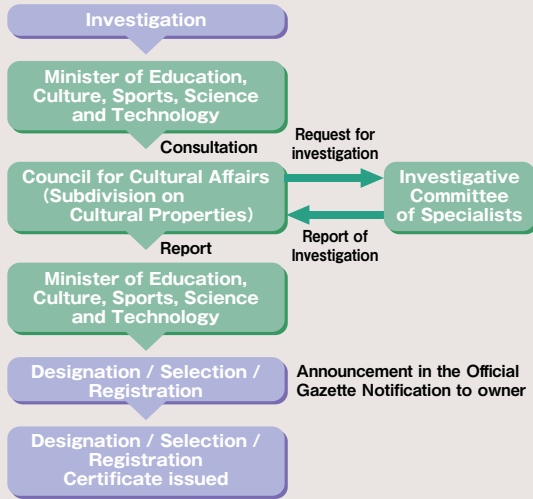
..... Expansion of registration system to include Works of Fine Arts and Crafts, Tangible Cultural Properties, Tangible Folk Cultural Properties, and Monuments

# 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: Main Hall of Banna-ji Temple**  
(Ashikaga City, Tochigi Pref.)

## 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: Clay Figures unearthed from Nakappara Site, Nagano Pref.**

## 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



**Special Natural Monument : Oriental White Stork**  
(Photo: Courtesy of Hyogo Prefectural Homeland for the Oriental White Stork)

# Examples of Preservation and

## Important Cultural Property (buildings)

### Former Maizuru Navy Weapon Warehouses

Recently there are many utilizing activities, which can foster the preservation of buildings as cultural properties in a way familiar to people. Owners and local governments gradually cooperate with a community and hold events inside those cultural property buildings.

The utilization of cultural properties contributes to build a spiritually affluent society by urging visitors to rediscover their values and increasing people's friendliness to them.

Within the premises of the Former Maizuru Navy Weapon Warehouse, designated as Important Cultural Property in Maizuru city, Kyoto prefecture, the five red brick warehouses out of eight buildings (including attached buildings) are utilized as the Maizuru World Brick Museum, the Maizuru City Commemoration Hall, the Maizuru Wisdom Warehouse, Brick Studio Hall, and Brick Event Hall. The area is known as Maizuru Akarenga Park, and is actively used for a variety of events throughout the year—not only for resident activities and artistic performances, but also as a venue for wedding ceremonies and coming-of-age ceremonies.

Furthermore, the park is crowded with visitors on weekends when the vessels in the Maritime Self Defense Forces are opened to the public. To promote community development using ocean, port, and red bricks as symbols, Maizuru City has positioned the Maizuru Akarenga Park as a strategic tourism center.



Both photos: Courtesy of the Maizuru City Board of Education

## Historic Site

### Ônaka Site

With its own values secured as cultural property, a historic site has been maintained and utilized through various methods so that people can deepen the understanding of its history and culture on site.

Ônaka historic site in Harima town, Hyogo prefecture, has been kept up and opened to the public as the Ônaka Ancient Village Remains. Built on its adjacent land, the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Archaeology is the center of activities mentioned later. In addition to exhibitions of archaeological materials, the museum offers local residents a range of opportunities to experience ancient times, to restore pit houses, to make *magatama* (beads in the shape of a comma), to start fire by hands and to spend night in restored houses. The museum also collaborates with kindergartens, nursery schools, elementary schools, junior and senior high schools, special-needs schools and universities to conduct various events and learning-support activities in the historic site, such as ancient rice-planting and other activities to experience life in ancient times. The circles of exchange between the museum and schools, volunteers and local residents are getting wider.



Both photos: Courtesy of Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Archaeology

## Important Tangible Folk Cultural Properties

### Kawahigashi Rice-planting Musical Instruments

To date, the utilization of Important tangible folk cultural properties meant the exhibition and presentation of them in museums, but more active utilization of these properties has been considered and implemented recently.

The town of Kita-Hiroshima in Hiroshima Prefecture primarily engages in farming, such as rice cultivation. Kita-Hiroshima has been actively collecting farming tools and the like from early on. The collected items are designated as important tangible folk cultural properties with the title Kawahigashi Rice-planting Musical Instruments. The town's other rice-planting event, the Flowery Rice-planting of Mibu, is also designated as an important intangible folk culture asset. The town is now known for preserving and passing down its folk-cultural properties.

However, the advancing mechanization of agriculture in recent years has made manual rice cultivation a thing of the past. In response, the town endeavored to better understand these cultural assets by practicing all stages of farming from plowing to irrigating, planting, threshing, and sorting grains of rice. In this way, the town was able to preserve its image while learning anew how to use the agricultural tools and farming techniques in each season—and also recognizing the significance of its festivals.

The activities in the town of Kawahigashi (located in the northern part of Hiroshima) are a good example of using cultural assets to build harmonious relationships that unite the understanding of the local community with the next generation through a coordinated joint effort.



Upper photo: Wakumakuri in front of rice-planting  
Lower photo: Children helping out rice-planting  
Both photos: Courtesy of Kita-Hiroshima Town Board of Education

# Utilization of Cultural Properties

## Important Cultural Properties (Fine Arts and Crafts)

### Purchased Cultural Properties Exhibitions/ Newly Designated Cultural Properties Exhibitions/ Overseas Exhibitions

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. In each year, the Agency organizes the Treasures of a New Nation exhibition, showing recent purchased fine arts and crafts at each museum, and this exhibition was held in Shiga Prefectural Azuchi Castle Archaeological Museum in 2013.

In addition, the exhibition that exhibits newly designated as National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties, which is entitled “Newly Designated National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties” has been held at the Tokyo National Museum in each year.

Furthermore, the Agency for Cultural Affairs organizes an overseas exhibition of Japanese classical art, which introduces outstanding cultural properties in Japan to people in overseas, in order to promote and increase the understanding the Japanese history and culture, and to further international goodwill.

In 2013, the exhibition, "Japanese Culture" was held at the Vietnam National Museum of History in Hanoi, Vietnam.

In the future, the Agency for Cultural Affairs will actively continue to plan and promote exhibitions of National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties inside and outside Japan.



the exhibition, "Japanese Culture"

## Important Intangible Cultural Properties (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, Ningyō Jōruri 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, Important Intangible Cultural Property, is a singing and dancing drama which has been come down in Okinawa prefecture. Even though it is the compilation of sophisticated music, dances and arts and crafts techniques of Ryukyu and it is artistically valuable, it had not been known outside Okinawa. So since the 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 other local people to appreciate it with elaborated commentaries.



(Photo: Courtesy of Traditional Kumiodori Preservation Society)



Workshop of Kumiodori ongaku (traditional Okinawan music) (At Okamoto Park Old Farmhouse Garden In Setagaya-ku)

## Important Intangible Cultural Properties (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 Property and the People who support 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 which 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: Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art)

# 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 attached to 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, a 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 national people opportunities to get 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 the logo of this week out of the public proposals so that the national people get more familiar with it.

## Logo for the Cultural Properties Protection Week



The 44th Kanami Festival, Nabari Noh Festival

Photo: Nabari City Board of Education

## Fire Prevention Day for Cultural Properties

(Every January 26th)

To reflect on the date of January 26 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 established. Around 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 together cooperate to organize an annual fire prevention campaign for cultural properties throughout the country with a view to protecting them from fire, earthquakes and other kinds of disasters.

The 60th annual Fire Prevention Day is January 26th in 2014 when the Commissioner for Cultural Affairs and the Deputy Commissioner of the Fire and Disaster Management Agency inspected the large-scale firefighting training at the Izumo Taisha shrine in Izumo City, Shimane Prefecture, in which the staff of Shimane Izumo Fire Dept., Izumo City Fire Dept., and Izumo Taisha shrine participated.



Fire drill on the 60th annual Fire Prevention Day (Izumo Taisha shrine)



# 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, who 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 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 develop preservation plans and designate Preservation Districts.

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 local government give financial assistance and technical instruction to preservation projects executed by municipalities.



**Important Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings: Sekijuku, Kameyama City**  
Photo: Courtesy of Kameyama City

## 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.



**Important Cultural Landscape: Cultural landscape of Shimanto River basin**  
Photo: Courtesy of Nakatosa Town

## Preservation and Utilization of Buried Cultural Properties

The abundant buried cultural properties remain in every region of Japan, which can tell us irreplaceable local history. 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 of a community and training of human resources through the utilization of buried cultural properties, such as improvement of preserved sites, display of earthenware vessels discovered during excavation and diffusion of findings of its history and culture.



**Scene from a project to familiarize children with Buried Cultural Properties**  
Photo: Courtesy of Saitama Cultural Deposits Research Corporation

## 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 assets, including their surrounding environment. As of May 1, 2014, three regions (38 municipalities) 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 a local training session on a basic plan for historical culture**

## 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.



**Public presentation after repairing the float "Nakayamada" for the Tsunemochi Festival**  
Photo: Courtesy of Chichibu City Board of Education

# From Japan's Properties to



**Hiraizumi-Temples, Gardens and Archaeological Sites Representing the Buddhist Pure land**

Photo: Courtesy of Kawashima Printing Co. Ltd



**Shrines and Temples of Nikko**

Photo: Courtesy of Nikko Toshogu



**The Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine and its Cultural Landscape**

Photo: Courtesy of Shimane Prefectural Board of Education



**Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome)**

Photo: Courtesy of Hiroshima Prefectural Board of Education



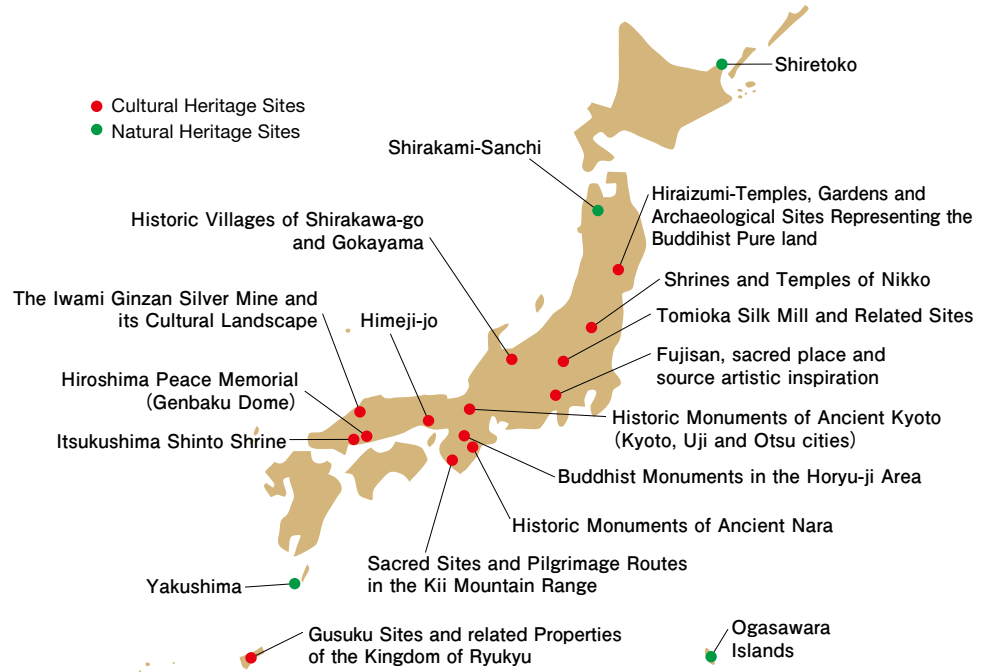
**Itsukushima Shinto Shrine**

Photo: Courtesy of Hiroshima Prefectural Board of Education



**Gusuku Sites and related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu**

Photo: Courtesy of Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education



**Himeji-jo**

Photo: Courtesy of Himeji City Board of Education



**Tomioka Silk Mill and Related Sites**

Photo: Courtesy of Gunma Prefecture



**Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area**

Photo: Courtesy of Horyu-ji Temple



**Historic Villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama**

Photo: Courtesy of Shirakawa Village Board of Education



**Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara**

Photo: Courtesy of Nara Prefectural Board of Education



**Fujisan, sacred place and source artistic inspiration**

Photo: Courtesy of Fuji City



**Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range**

Photo: Courtesy of Wakayama Prefectural Board of Education



**Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Kyoto, Uji and Otsu cities)**

Photo: Courtesy of Motorikyu-Nijojo Office, Kyoto City Hall

# World Cultural Heritage

## 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 1,007 properties are inscribed on the World Heritage List in total, including 14 cultural and 4 natural properties of Japan (as of August, 2014).

## 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 161 countries as of August, 2014.

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 281 elements are inscribed on the Representative List in total, including 22 elements of Japan (as of August 2014).

### List of Intangible Cultural Properties inscribed on the Representative List (22 items) in Japan

Name	Year Inscribed
Nohgaku theatre	2008
Ningyo Johruri Bunraku puppet theatre	2008
Kabuki theatre	2008
Gagaku	2009
Ojiya-chijimi, Echigo-jofu	2009
Sekishu-Banshi	2009
Hitachi Fuyumono (Ibaraki Pref.)	2009
Yamahoko, the float ceremony of the Kyoto Gion festival (Kyoto Pref.)	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



**Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese**

Photo: Courtesy of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

## System for International Cooperation

With a view to protecting cultural heritage, which 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 Consortium on Cultural Heritage

For the purpose of more effective and more efficient international cooperation on cultural heritage, a consortium was set up in June 2006, with the participation of government agencies, research institutions, NGOs, and other domestic groups. This consortium builds a network of research institutions and other bodies in Japan, collect and disseminate information, and carry out surveys and research.



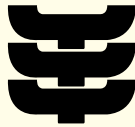
**Technical survey (expert exchange) concerning the protection of the cultural heritage in Tuvalu, Kiribati, and Fiji**

Photo: Courtesy of Independent Administrative Institution, the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo



**A workshop in Sri Lanka**

Photo: Courtesy of the Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office, Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)



Protection of Cultural Properties Logo

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