



Charter of Yakushima

In August of 1993 the Town Assemblies of both Kamiyaku and Yaku towns of Yakushima enacted the Charter of Yakushima. In December of the same year Yakushima was registered as a World Natural Heritage Site. The Charter was made with the consensus of citizens to preserve the precious nature of Yakushima whilst fully utilizing its resources. The charter's mandate provides the basis for environmental preservation on the island today.

Charter of Yakushima

Preamble to the Yakushima Charter

Yakushima - A Treasure for the Earth and All Humanity

Yakushima is the fifth largest island in Japan. It has a circumference of 132 km and an area of 503 square kilometers.

People have lived on this island for many years. The island is blessed with an awe-inspiring natural beauty that is symbolized by a cedar known as Yakusugi, by the people's respect for the gods, by the island streams in which they bathe, and by their enjoyment of the bounty of the great sea.

This island has been stirring the souls of the island people for many years. Recently, however, suffering and complications have arisen from the conflict between preservation and exploitation of the forest. Now, Yakushima has escaped from the need for a rough-and-tumble materialistic society, and its very existence is now a revelation of both human and global perspectives.

We who live on this island intend to carry on with due regard for the natural beauty and history of this island through our beliefs and our way of life, thereby nurturing a correct understanding of Yakushima's role and value. To this end, we intend to expand a range of comprehensive life activities by fully utilizing the nature and environment of this island. At the same time, we will enhance the value of its assets and make it a rule to continually increase them.

Not only the administrative bodies, but all those concerned in Yakushima should adhere to these principles.

Japan's efforts to register its natural heritage and Kagoshima Prefecture's Environmental and Cultural Village Plan should both be respected at the highest possible levels. Respect for these principles will prevent this farsighted program from straying toward idealism. With this as our momentum, we hereby establish the Charter of Yakushima by adopting the following articles.

Provisions

1. We will endeavor to conserve and nurture our marine environment as an index of island development so that residents can drink this pure water anytime and

anywhere, and enjoy its impressive purity. Toward this goal, we will continue to reflect on the value of Yakushima.

2. We will create a rich community in which children can develop a relationship with nature and embrace their hopes and dreams, with the result that children the world over will yearn to live on this island.

3. We will promote sustainable cultivation of the island by valuing our history and traditions, and by making the most of our natural resources and the blessings of our environment without destroying its value.

4. We will foster exchanges with people the world over by offering our diverse and unique views on how humanity can live harmony with nature.



Photos :

- P. 2
- JICA Training in Yakushima
- P. 4 (Inspection in Yakushima)
- Lecture at Yakushima High School
- Inspection of Yakusugi Cedar
- Yakushima Rhododendron

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JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) Training Project to accept trainees

This project was started in 1997 in collaboration with JICA. This report is about the inspections by participants from Thailand and Viet Nam during the period between November 14th and 22nd, 2001 in Yakushima.

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November 14th

An orientation program about the inspection program and courses was given by the Kagoshima Prefectural Government.

November 15th

Explanations of the prefectural policies on management of natural parks and protection management of wild life was given in the morning at Kagoshima Prefectural Government's office.

In the afternoon inspection took place in Sakurajima, a part of Kirishima Yaku National Park, which was designated as the first national park in Japan. Sakurajima is an active volcano with its volcanic activities even continuing today. Inspections included the relations between a volcano and the people living in the neighborhood, and their disaster prevention measures.

November 17th to 21st

Participants went to Yakushima, which is registered as Japan's first World Natural Heritage Area. After studying the history of coexistence between Yakushima people and Yakusugi cedars at the Yakusugi Museum, they were given guidance on the Kagoshima Prefectural Government's implementation of the "Yakushima Environmental and Cultural Village Concept" at the Yakushima Environmental and Cultural Village Center, environmental protection measures provided by local towns in local town offices; and the management system of the Environmental Ministry for the World Natural Heritage and National Parks at the Yakushima World Heritage Conservation Center.

A visit was made to Yakushima's Nagatahama beach, where Japan's largest number of turtles come ashore. Inspection was made on the ecology of turtles and the protection activities of the volunteers, and an eco-tour was conducted by instructors of Yakushima Island Environmental and Cultural Learning Center.

On the last day in Yakushima, they were able to visit the Seibu Rindoh Path along the coastal area. In this area the altitudinal distribution of plants varying from subtropical to cool temperate can be seen. It is the major reason why Yakushima was designated as a World Natural Heritage Area.

November 22nd

After returning to Kagoshima City, discussions on this inspection took place at Kagoshima Prefectural Government before they left for their home countries the following day.

Below are some comments by participants

- I could learn how exhibits and explanations are made at the facilities I visited during the inspection tours. I am sure I can utilize this back home.
- Management conducted on Yakushima can be applicable to that of the nature protection areas of my own country.
- It was interesting to learn about the waste oil treatment methods, and the measures to ease the population concentration in the areas of over utilization.
- I found many differences between our national park system and that of Japan's, such as the fact that people live within the national park.
- As some facilities lack English information, improvements are requested.

Three people participated in the inspections. They are Kmolthip Prompechara "Conservation Extension, Wildlife Conservation Division Royal Forest Department" and Klairoong Poonpon "Conservation Extension, Wildlife Conservation Division Royal Forest Department" from Thailand and Ngo Thi Mai Huong "Project Assistance, HaLong Bay Management Department" from Viet Nam.

Kagoshima Prefectural Government plans to continue to accept these inspections in cooperation with JICA and other organizations.



Kagoshima International Conference on World Natural Heritage - Participating Regions Heritage Corner

Ha Long Bay - The World Heritage

Ha Long Bay is one of the natural wonders of the world. Located in Quang Ninh Province in north-east Vietnam. It is a coastal area extending from longitude 106° 56' to 107° 37' east and latitude 20° 43' to 21° 09' north, it stretches 60 km and covers an area of 1,553 km² with 1,969 islands, 980 of which are named.

Ha Long Bay is an outstanding example of Karst landscape which is the result of a complex geological process which takes hundreds of millions of years. It is majestic, imposing, mysterious and romantic. Within the islands of the Bay there are hundreds of caves, including many famous names such as Thien

Cung, Dau Go, Sung Sot, Me Cung and Tien Ong.

Ha Long Bay's islands and coastal area provide a wide range of habitats and eco-systems. There are an estimated 400 species of fish, 500 species of benthos, 160 varieties of coral, 355 species of plankton, 140 varieties of seaweed, 4 types of sea-grass and 34 varieties of mangrove. It is also an area which has in prehistoric times been home to the ancient people of Vietnam with their famous Ha Long Culture.

Ha Long Bay has been recognized twice by UNESCO as a World Natural Heritage for its universal value of landscape and

geology, geomorphology, respectively in 1994 and 2000.

Current Issues Relevant to the Ha Long Bay World Natural Heritage Area:

a. Tourism development:

Ha Long is an important tourist centre and a key tourist area of Viet Nam. It is an area of diverse values with a superior natural landscape, bio-diversity potential and, in particular, an ancient and continuous cultural history. Many precious archaeological vestiges have been discovered. The communities of fishing people who are live and work in their villages on the Bay maintain their different customs and traditional culture. Within easy reach of Ha Long Bay are other excellent coastal tourism areas which have many precious historical and cultural remains and scenic beauty. These add to the potential for developing tourism in Ha Long.

b. Factors affecting management and conservation:

Ha long Bay is located next to Ha Long City - a young city with high and rapid speed of urban and industrial development. So the factors much impact to the management and conservation of Ha Long Bay including transport, ports and other industry activities in the Ha Long area; the coal mining exploitation activities; Urbanization; fishery activities and tourist development.

Management and conservation during the six years since Ha Long Bay was recognised as a World Natural Heritage Area:

* Establishing a Management Department of Ha Long Bay with sufficient capacity, equipment, staff and funding, as well as defining its functions and powers.

* Strengthening effective management:

+ Coordinating related agencies in drawing up and publishing legal regulations for the management, conservation and promotion of the heritage's value.

+ Developing a "Ha Long Bay 2020 Master Plan on the Management, Conservation and Promotion of Ha Long's Value."

+ Quang Ninh Province instructed other organizations and local authorities to rectify irregularities and overhaul the activities of the management and exploitation of the Bay.

+ Carrying out a research on the Ha Long Eco-museum project sponsored by UNDP and managed by UNESCO. The purpose is bringing people and their environment together. Ha Long Bay Eco-museum will contain a variety of exhibits and displays about the entire region of the world heritage area and its hinterland to provide a fuller understanding of the Bay and its natural and culture environment. It will assist visitors to understand the particular values of Ha Long Bay and be a center for study and research into the remarkable natural and cultural environment of Ha Long Bay. It will

enhance resources for job creation, community cultural development and environmental education as well as diversifying tourism products. The Eco-museum will be a significant scientific model for the conservation and interpretation of the special values of the world heritage area. It will also establish a systematic approach to capacity building for heritage management.

* Investment and activities to reinforce the value of the heritage: Designing the Five Year (1998 - 2003) Ha Long Bay Development Plan and implementing several direct investment projects for Ha Long Bay.

* Environmental protection programmes: Moving all activities concerned with coal transportation and processing out of the center of Ha Long; implementing studies on environmental management for Ha Long Bay to the year 2010 and carrying out measures to collect and treat solid waste on Ha Long Bay; Implementing the "Project on Water Supply and Waste Treatment System" to ensure that waste water has been treated in accordance with environmental standards; Planning the floating fishing villages on Ha Long Bay to effectively manage the environment and encourage fishing people to join the Heritage Protection Programme.

* Communication, education and scientific research: organizing workshop on communication and community-based education to participate in heritage protection and taking the introduction of world heritage education into schools; Publicity to introduce Ha Long Bay in national and local newspapers, magazines, radio and television as well as organizing competitions based on Ha Long Bay; Communicating with visitors and the local fishing community through the tourist guide staff; Cooperating with national and international universities, institutions, scientists to research about Ha Long Bay's values; Publishing books, maps and series of tapes, CD ROMs, CDs and documentary videos on Ha Long Bay.

* Developing relationships, exchanges and cooperation with national and international organizations, institutions ...

Problems in the natural environment management and conservation of Ha Long Bay - World heritage Site.

However, through the practical management, conservation and development of Ha Long Bay values, there are many more problems awaiting solutions. These include the low community awareness of heritage protection; Limited inter-departmental co-ordination, inadequate capacity in heritage management and conservation; Low environmental control as well as deficient and synchronous legal documents for heritage management and conservation. So we must always strengthen and apply the necessary measures to improve the management capacity of the World Heritage Area.

Ha Long Bay



The invitation of a World Natural Heritage specialist from Queensland, Australia

The second Conference on World Natural Heritage will be held in Queensland, Australia. Kagoshima Prefecture invited Mr. Peter Ogilvie from Queensland in October, 2001 and hosted a series of lectures and other events.

Mr. Ogilvie is presently Manager of the World Heritage Unit in the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS).

Mr. Ogilvie gave lectures at Yakushima High School on October 4th (the lecture was also attended by students of Miyaaura and Koseda Junior High Schools), and both at Gakunan and Anbo Junior High Schools on the 5th. He introduced the World Natural Heritage Areas of Queensland and talked about environmental education for young people.

In his lectures he talked about the activities of the students' counterparts in Queensland to protect natural environment and environmental education classes from the students' perspectives. The audience earnestly listened to his lectures.

On the 6th, he participated in the eco-tours of Shiratani Unsui Ravine and Anbo River. The discussion session was attended by

over 50 people from the eco-tourism field. Mr. Ogilvie made a presentation on the details of the current status of eco-tourism and the legal system in Australia.

Some of the activities in Queensland, which is internationally advanced in this field, were introduced; including

1. Guide Accreditation: An ecotourism guide accreditation system with some input from the public sector. A variety of programs have been developed.
2. Private operator fees: Based on the principle that a private operator earning a living from public land must contribute to the management of that land, commercial operators are required to pay guide accreditation fees and per capita fees for each client on the tour.
3. Guide responsibility: When tourists feed wild animals, both the guides and the tourists are held responsible.

Mr. Ogilvie's visit was very informative and helpful for Yakushima, an area of World Natural Heritage.



Yakushima NOW

Returning Yakushima Rhododendrons to the mountains

On November 24, 2001, the Yakushima Environmental and Cultural Foundation returned seedlings that were raised from seeds back to the mountains. About 100 children, volunteers and related people participated to plant 1000 pots of seedlings.

Yakushima Rhododendrons, a variety of endemic species, belong to the Azalea species and grow naturally on Yakushima. Unlike ordinary rhododendrons which have 7 petals, Yakushima Rhododendron feature 5 joined petals.

Blossoms are red during bud, and turn pink for several days after blooming, then change to white. The flowers usually have one big bloom every three years.

The blooming season is from May to June. The local Tourism Association holds an event "Mountain Climbing to see Rhododendron" to see the beautiful flowers at this time every year.

Because of the recent decrease in their natural habitat, it was decided to develop the rare Yakushima Rhododendrons from seeds so that they could be planted in more accessible areas, allowing people a deeper understanding of the natural habitat of Yakushima and the functions of Welfare and Resort facilities

of the forest. The seeds were collected from around Mt. Kuromi (1831 m high) in 1995 with the cooperation of the Yakushima Forest Environment Conservation Center of the Forestry Agency, and then were developed within the national forest for about 6 years.

Participants from all over Japan carefully planted each seedling at Kosugidani area located about 640 meters high, which is on the way towards Jomonsugi Cedar.



Editor's note

In this issue we featured the "Charter of Yakushima." This Charter was created with the comprehensive collaboration of the local citizens of Yakushima, particularly those involved in the Assembly, education and mass media. At the time of the enactment, 10-year calendars printed with the "Charter of Yakushima" were distributed to all households on Yakushima, evidence of the great importance given to this Charter by the people of Yakushima people.

We plan to release the next issue in October, 2002. Your opinions and suggestions are welcome. Please contact the address below.

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