

## JAPAN

### Shirakami-Sanchi



#### II.1 Introduction

**Year of Inscription** 1993

#### Organisation Responsible for the Report

- Ministry of the Environment  
1-2-2, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo, 100-8975  
Forestry Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
1-2-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo, 100-8952  
Japan

#### II.2 Statement of Significance

**Inscription Criteria** N ii

#### Statement of Significance

- Proposed as follows:  
The area is noted for the “high purity, preservation of old growth trees (...) representative of [remnant] beech forest that appeared in East Asia after the Ice Age”. The site shape is oval, unfragmented, with a low circumference to area ratio.

*“Visitors are counted automatically by infrared sensor at 11 entrance points. The number of entry permits to the core area is issued by the Forestry Agency.”*

#### Status of Site Boundaries

- Borders and buffer zone of the property are considered adequate.

#### II.3 Statement of Authenticity/Integrity

#### Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- The WH value is considered to have been maintained. No changes are foreseen.

#### II.4 Management

#### Administrative and Management Arrangements

- Different levels of government co-ordinate through the Shirakami-Sanchi World Heritage Area Liaison Committee established in July 1995.
- The Ministry of the Environment and the Forestry Agency designate the ‘Nature Conservation Area’ & ‘Forest Ecosystem Reserve’, and conduct patrols by volunteers and official staff.
- Prefectures implement the regulations of the Quasi-National Park. Municipalities maintain parking & public lavatories.

- Agency of Cultural Affairs protects a few species such as the Golden Eagle as ‘Natural Monuments’.
- The new management plan incorporates a core and buffer zone and has been implemented since November 1995. A part of the Buffer Zone is designated as a Prefectural Natural Park.

#### Present State of Conservation

- There has been an intensification of on site patrols.

#### Staffing and Training Needs

- There is an overall co-ordination of staff from different agencies. No figures are supplied.
- Staffing level is considered adequate.
- No new training needs are identified.

#### Financial Situation

- A new government budget line was created following inscription on the WH List. No figures supplied.
- Funding is considered adequate.
- \* International Assistance from WHF: none.

#### Access to IT

- Both PCs and Apple computers with internet access.
- The Fujisato Forest Centre and other organizations provide photos and nature information on its website.
- No GIS capacity.

#### Visitor Management

- A Shirakami-Sanchi World Heritage Conservation Centre has been constructed in two sites.
- Upgraded signboards, patrol paths and footpaths have been installed.
- Visitors are counted automatically by infrared sensor at 11 entrance points. The number of entry permits to the core area is issued by the Forestry Agency. No visitor statistics supplied.
- As a part of the Junior Park Ranger Programme, environmental education programmes are organised for children of the upper grades of elementary school.

## II.5 Factors Affecting the Property

### Threats and Risks

- “There is only walking access to the WH Area and there is no big tourism pressure. Also, there is no development plan in the region and no big threat is foreseen.”

### Counteractive Plans

- No emergency plan has been developed.
- A total number of 100 nature and guide patrols (including 72 volunteers) are dispatched. The Liaison Committee holds patrol meetings twice a year in both Aomori and Akita.

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*“\* In the periodic report, the state party referred to the following studies concerning the property: (a) ‘Shirakami-Sanchi World Heritage Area Conservation Status Report’ (1997) completed by the Shirakami-Sanchi WHA Liaison Committee; and (b) ‘Report of the study of the ecological structure of the Shirakami-sanchi Beech Forest’ (1998) by the Environment Agency.”*

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## II.6 Monitoring

### Monitoring Arrangements

- Studies for management harmonization with the utilization of surrounding forests have been carried out by the Ministry of the Environment & Forestry, and Forest Products Research Institute.
- A conservation monitoring manual for the Heritage Area will be drawn up by the Liaison Committee.
- The reports of ‘plural patrollers’ have been used as indicators for a number of years.
- The following include organizations involved as monitoring partners: Tohoku Ryokka Kankyohozen Company; Wild Bird Society of Japan; Shimpkita Wildlife Research Centre Corp; numerous natural history museums; and universities.

### Monitoring Indicators

- Ecological indicators include the following: (i) pollutants in the air, leaves of beech and roots of seedlings; (ii) forest dynamics in beech forest; (iii) status of birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals.
- Micro topographical changes are being considered.

## II.7 Conclusions and Recommended Actions

### Conclusions and Proposed Actions

- The number of tourists over the whole region has increased by 40% (with a 450% localised increase in the Amon waterfall area) following WH inscription owing to strong public interest. However, there is no large tourism pressure, and it does not pose a serious threat to the property.
- The Periodic Report exercise has helped in the co-ordination of different organisations, including local inhabitants. Formal methods for a monitoring system will be established in 2003.
- ‘National Wildlife Protection Areas’ are in the process of being established.

### \* State of Conservation Reports

1995 Bureau CONF.201/4 The Centre informed the Bureau that it had received several letters concerning the logging of beech forests outside the WH site and had transmitted them for review to IUCN. It recalled that the site was inscribed in 1993, and the Committee had recommended at the time to review the site after 3 years. The Bureau invited the Centre to organize a mission to review the progress made in the implementation of the management plan.

1997 Committee CONF.208/8Brev IUCN informed the Committee that it had undertaken a mission to review the state of conservation of the site and found that there were significant improvements with regard to the management since its inscription in 1993. The Bureau congratulated the Japanese authorities for strengthening the management, and encouraged them to consider implementing the suggestions presented in the IUCN report.