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.

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.
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  at 11 entrance points. The number of entry permits to the
  core area is issued by the Forestry Agency.
- 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.

“* 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.”

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.