

Regional Administration and Management Plan (The Miyako-Yaeyama Forest Planning Area): Excerpts

1. Basic Matters Related to the Administration and Management of National Forests

(1) Basic Policy on Administration of National Forests

This Plan has the Miyako-Yaeyama Forest Planning Area as its jurisdiction, covering 25,034 hectares of national forests, including 560 hectares of those retired from forestry business, lying mostly in Iriomote-jima, Taketomi Town, the largest island among the Yaeyama Islands, which has 88 percent of the land covered with national forests. The Area is also dotted with Yonaguni-jima (Yonaguni Town), Hateruma-jima (Taketomi Town), two of the Yaeyama Islands, among others.

Iriomote-jima, the core of the Plan, has at its central part Mt. Komi-dake (470 meters), Mt. Tedo-san (442 meters), Mt. Ogura-dake (421 meters), Mt. Hateruma-mori (447 meters), Mt. Haigishi-dake (425 meters), and other mountains lying more than 400 meters above sea level, forming a gentle ridge, many of which extend wide coastal terraces into the sea, while some in the southwestern part are rimmed with cliffs dropping more than 200 meters just along the coast.

From the mountainous area, several rivers, including Urauchi-gawa River, Nakama-gawa River, and Kuira-gawa River, flow out meandering, with deep-cleft valleys lying upstream, forming terrains with a large variety of surface features, while getting wider around the mouths, as plenty of water runs through flat land.

The Area is inhabited by precious wild animals, such as iriomote-yamaneko cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis iriomotensis*) and kanmuri-washi eagle (*Spilornis cheela*), both designated by the national government as Special Natural Monuments and Nationally Endangered Species of Wild Fauna or Flora, in and around the Hoshitate and Nakamagawa Nature Reserves, and plant communities in Ubundoru of yaeyama-kashi oak (*Satakentia liukiensis*) and those in Funaura of nippa-yashi palm (*Nypa fruticans Wurmb*), both designated by the national government as Natural Monuments. The greater part of the Area is covered with national forests; the central part of the island, together with some area surrounding it, is designated as Iriomote-jima Forest Ecosystem Reserve (20,471 hectares) as well as a Special Zone in Iriomote-Ishigaki National Park, expected to serve for preservation and formation of natural environments, especially for protection of rare wild animals and plants.

The basins of the Urauchi-gawa, Nakama-gawa River, and Hinai-gawa River, running along the largest mangrove forests in Japan, form an important part of the Iriomote-jima Forest Ecosystem Reserve, designated also as Iriomote Nature Recreation Forest, visited by an increasing number of users, which makes it critical to classify the area into several zones appropriate for maintaining their natural environments and helping them fulfill the functions for health and culture.

(Omitted)

(A) Iriomote-jima Eastern Area (Forest compartment No. 116 - No. 126 & No. 170 - No. 203)

As the basin of the Nakama-gawa River is designated as Iriomote Nature Recreation Forest (Nakama-gawa River Area) while the inland part and southern coast of the Area are designated as Iriomote-jima Forest Ecosystem Reserve, as well as Iriomote-Ishigaki National Park, both expected especially to perform the functions of preservation and formation of natural environments, with conservation and preservation of forest ecosystems and use of forests there for recreation taken into account, this Plan classifies them as "Nature Conservation Type" for their administration and management.

Districts lying from the coastline to settlements and around farmland, being expected to perform the functions of preventing forest disasters and conserving water sources, are classified as "Forest Disaster Prevention Type" and "Water Conservation Type" for their administration and management.

(B) Iriomote-jima Western Area (Forest compartment No. 101 - No. 115, No. 127 - No. 169, & No. 204 - No. 209)

As the basins of the Urauchi-gawa River and Hinai-gawa River are designated as Iriomote Nature Recreation Forest (Urauchi-gawa River and Hinai-gawa River Area) while the part around the mouth of the Urauchi-gawa River and the inland area are designated as Iriomote-jima Forest Ecosystem Reserve, and the basins of the Urauchi-gawa River and Kuira-gawa River are designated as Iriomote-Ishigaki National Park, all expected to serve for preservation and formation of natural environments, including conservation and preservation of forest ecosystems and use of forests for recreation, this Plan classifies them as "Nature Conservation Type" for their administration and management.

Districts lying from the coastline to settlements and around farmland, as well as a Long-Term Profit-Sharing Afforestation district located in the center of the Area, together with districts around it, being expected to perform the functions of preventing forest disasters and conserving water sources, are classified as "Forest Disaster Prevention Type" and "Water Conservation Type" for their administration and management.

(Omitted)

(2) Matters Related to the Administration and Management Corresponding to Functional Types

With a view to administering and managing national forests in a manner that the functions they should perform for public benefit will be maintained and facilitated, they must be classified into the function types listed below:

- Forest Disaster Prevention Type (Land Erosion and Collapse Control Area, and Weather Disaster Control Area);
- Nature Conservation Type

- Forest Space Usage Type
- Comfortable Environment Creation Type; and
- Water Conservation Type;

so that they will be administered and managed to be able to fully perform the type of function each is expected to.

(Omitted)

- (i) Policy for administration and management of the Forest Disaster Prevention Type, and other matters related to the Type

Forests are classified into the Forest Disaster Prevention Type when they are primarily expected to perform the functions of controlling erosion and collapse of land, fall of rock, and/or other forest disasters that may cause damage to human life and/or facilities, and other functions for developing national land infrastructure resilient to disasters; they must be administered and managed in an appropriate manner, with attention given to matters stated below, based on, among others, relationship in location between a forest and its conservation target, their site conditions, such as geological and geographical features, and the current state of the forest.

- (A) Land Erosion and Collapse Control Area, and Weather Disaster Control Area

In the Land Erosion and Collapse Control, and Weather Disaster Control Areas, forests must be grown to have deep and wide root systems, and maintain layers of fallen leaves, with moderate sunlight pouring in, understory vegetation growing well, and facilities constructed for forest conservation and other purposes when necessary to prevent erosion and/or collapse of land, as their target for development.

- (B) Weather Disaster Control Area

In the Weather Disaster Control Areas, forests must be grown to consist of types of trees with greater shielding capability, such as those having larger height, and/or higher density of lower branches, to be more resistant to various types of damage, as their target for development.

Area of Forest Disaster Prevention Type

(in hectares)

Type	Forest Disaster Prevention	Land Erosion and Collapse Control	Weather Disaster Control
Area	1906	1,755	151

- (ii) Policy for administration and management of the Nature Conservation Type, and other matters related to the Type

Forests are classified into the Nature Conservation Type when they are primarily expected to perform the functions of conserving natural environments, such as maintenance of natural environments composed of primeval forest ecosystems, protection of animals and plants, and preservation of genetic resources; in principle, they must be left going through natural transition while administered and managed with care paid to preservation of biodiversity, among others.

Area of Nature Conservation Type

(in hectares)

Type	Nature Conservation Type	Protected forest
Area	20,682	20,476

- (iii) Policy for administration and management of the Forest Space Usage Type, and other matters related to the Type

Forests are classified into the Forest Space Usage Type when they are primarily expected to perform the functions of providing places for sport or recreation, education and culture, relaxation, or other activities, and excellent landscape, and maintaining scenic beauty in or around urban areas; they must be administered and managed in a manner relevant to their form of use for health and cultural purposes.

Area of Forest Space Usage Type

(in hectares)

Type	Forest Space Usage Type	Recreation Forest
Area	1	–

- (iv) Comfortable Environment Creation Type

Forests are classified into the Comfortable Environment Creation Type when they are primarily expected to perform the functions of keeping living environments good for humans, such as reducing noise and purifying air, as well as mitigating severe weather conditions by, for instance, providing trees that give shade while administered and managed in manners relevant to the functions.

Area of Comfortable Environment Creation Type
(in hectares)

Type	Comfortable Environment Creation Type
Area	–

- (v) Policy for administration and management of the Water Conservation Type, and other matters related to the Type

Forests are classified into the Water Conservation Type when they are primarily expected to perform the functions of supplying plenty of quality water people need for their lives; for better performing the function of water conservation, which includes drought mitigation and water quality preservation, forests there must be grown to maintain forest soil with greater capabilities of water permeability and storage, and root systems and understory vegetation developed enough to resist various types of damage, as their target for development. Care must also be paid to effective use of forest resources to the extent that the conditions stated above can be satisfied.

Area of Water Conservation Type

(in hectares)

Type	Water Conservation Type
Area	1,885

2. Matters related to maintenance and preservation of national forests

(1) Matters related to patrol

- (i) Forest conservation patrol for forest fire prevention and other purposes

Parts of the area covered by this Plan are designated as National Parks or other similar districts, with many visitors coming to forests there for recreation. Closer cooperation must be established with local municipalities and other organizations concerned for taking all possible measures to prevent forest fires by, for instance, installing signs, carrying out public relations for forest fire prevention, raising awareness of users, and conducting fire drills, as well as enhancing patrol for forest conservation.

Effort to prevent illegal dumping of waste must also be exerted through enhanced cooperation between local municipalities and other relevant organizations, Forest Conservation Patrollers, and volunteer organizations.

(Omitted)

(3) Matters related to forests that require special protection

This Planning Area is covered with many natural forests offering precious natural environments, and given that they have important roles to play in efforts to preserve biodiversity, they must be designated as protected forests for appropriate protection and conservation, with patrol and monitoring conducted for them for facilitating appropriate preservation and administration.

1) Protected forest

Type	No. of sites	Area (hectares)
Forest Ecosystem Reserve	1	20,471
Forest for Preserving Genetic Resources of Forest Life	–	–
Forest for Preserving Genetic Resources of Forest Trees	–	–
Plant Communities Protection Forest	1	4
Total	2	20,475

(Omitted)

3. Matters related to the supply of forest products

(Omitted)

(2) Other necessary matters

Forest products must be supplied with great effort to achieve effectiveness and efficiency. Use of trees cut down for thinning must be promoted through efforts made to establish more efficient and lower-cost work systems that combine line thinning and road networks and high-performance forestry machinery, so that more of the thinning timber can be sold as material. Now that lower-quality wood, which formerly had little use, turns out to be marketable as woody biomass resource, effort must also be made to enhance the stability of its supply.

Initiatives for encouraging use of more wood must also be carried out; for instance, more timber from thinning should be used for construction of wooden buildings for government agencies or other purposes, engineering works for forests, and other public works.

4. Matters concerning utilization of national forests

(1) Policy for promoting utilization of national forests

Effective and efficient use of national forests must be actively promoted in full coordination with their administration and management, with social and economic conditions of local communities and opinions of people there taken into account, in a manner to help promote local industries and improve welfare of the people.

Iriomote-shima Island, the central part of this Planning Area, has 88 percent of its territory covered by national forests, and the district cannot be developed without making the best of the national forests. They must be used, therefore, in an effective manner to improve the structure of agriculture and forestry and develop farm and other public roads, among others, as part of efforts to promote local industries.

Recreation Forest

Type	No. of sites	Area (hectares)
Nature Recreation Forest	3	2,052
Nature Observation & Education Forest	—	—
Landscape Forest	—	—
Sports Forest	—	—
Outdoor Sports Area	—	—
Sight-seeing Forest	—	—
Total	3	2,052

(2) Detailed method of utilization of national forests

When any road or other land for public use or public work is offered for effective use of national forests, it must be leased or transferred. When any water forests are developed, the system of profit sharing forests must be actively applied.

(3) Other necessary matters

In this Planning Area, effective use of forests must be promoted with measures taken to achieve harmonization with public-benefit functions they perform, such as protection of rare wild animals and plants, and preservation of rich natural environments, as well as arrangements made for necessary coordination with other plans for land use, among others.

Recreation Forests must be developed to be attractive fields for promoting effective use.

5. Matters related to the construction of forest roads based on the Agreement for the Maintenance and Enhancement of Public Benefit Functions, and other matters related to the maintenance and preservation of private forests where it is considered to be appropriate to regard them as an integral part of national forests for maintenance and preservation

(1) Basic matters related to conclusion of an agreement for the Maintenance and Enhancement of Public Benefit Functions

Some of the private forests lying adjacent to, or between, national forests are left uncared-for by owners, as they are too small in size and isolated or scattered in unfavorable locations; in some cases, earth and sand flowing out of such private forests have harmful impact on functions national forests should perform for public benefit, such as national land conservation, or exotic trees that have grown too thick in private forests make operations less effective when carried out to wipe out the type of plants from national forests around them.

For such private forests, the system of Agreement for the Maintenance and Enhancement of Public Benefit Functions must be used in an effective manner, so that, as an effective and appropriate way to maintain and enhance functions national forests should perform for public benefits, construction of forest and forestry work roads designed to integrate forest operations, as well as effective use of the road networks, and work to wipe out exotic trees from national forests in a region, when needed to preserve biodiversity there, among others, can all be carried out together with that for private forests around them in an integrated manner to help the private forests also maintain and enhance functions they should perform for public benefit, as well.

(Omitted)

6. Matters related to the forest maintenance through public participation

(1) Matters related to national participation forests

"Fureai-no-Mori" (Forest for Contact) projects to be carried out in cooperation with volunteer and other organizations under an agreement concluded with them, and other initiatives must be implemented to promote voluntary participation of people in maintenance of forests and other activities.

(Omitted)

(3) Other necessary matters

"Yuyu-no-Mori" (Forest for Play) projects to be carried out to offer regular opportunities of experience under an agreement concluded for that purpose, and other initiatives must be effectively used to make available national forests, rich in natural environment, as a place for a variety of activities for experience, and promote forest environment education.

Active efforts must also be exert to provide teachers and volunteer leaders with learning and awareness-raising opportunities and technical guidance, and offer programs and teaching materials for forest environment education.

The District Forest Offices and other relevant organizations must strive to perform the functions as a base for providing people with information on participate in maintenance and preservation of forests, counseling them, and helping them with participation.

(Omitted)