

Green Reconstruction Project

Miyagi



Introduction

Along the coast of Miyagi Prefecture, many lives and properties were lost, and the natural environment was severely damaged by the Great East Japan Earthquake and massive tsunami in 2011. Two years have passed and progress has been made in debris removal and the implementation of restoration projects. However, full-fledged reconstruction work in the region is still far from being complete.

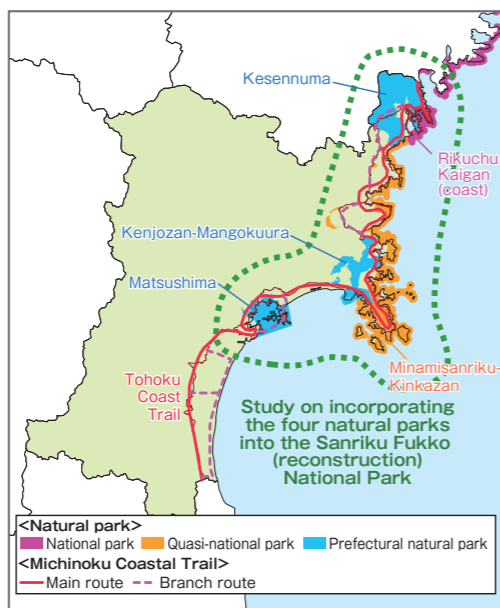
The Miyagi Prefectural Government hopes to accelerate the ongoing reconstruction work while increasing the number of domestic visitors and in particular, overseas visitors to the affected areas by utilizing the seven projects under the plan “Green Reconstruction Vision: Creating a new Sanriku Fukko (reconstruction) National Park,” which is being promoted by the Ministry of the Environment. To this end, as it develops the “Green Reconstruction Project Miyagi,” the prefectural government will hold interviews with related municipalities and discussions with expert committees, and examine the direction in which projects in the coastal areas should be carried out. The plan will be proposed to the national government and related municipalities.

This pamphlet outlines the vision of how “Green Reconstruction Project Miyagi” will be carried out, and also introduces the attractions and the state of recovery efforts along Miyagi’s coasts. We hope you will visit Miyagi Prefecture to learn about the present situation of the disaster-stricken areas and continue to support our recovery efforts.

Green Reconstruction Project Miyagi

Reorganization of natural parks and establishment of a new system

The landscape, consisting of the intricate rias coastline and large and small islands off these shores, is a trait common to the four natural parks situated on the coastal area of Miyagi Prefecture, which is also part of the southern region of the Rikuchu Kaigan (coast) National Park. Along the small inlets and bays in this area, villages are nestled with low hills in the backdrop. The lifestyles of the people blessed with the nearby fertile sea have been preserved alongside the natural parks. Although this area was seriously affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, the people have decided to continue living together with the sea while seeking new residential areas on higher ground.



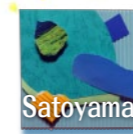
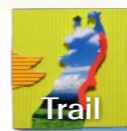
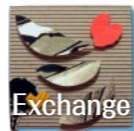
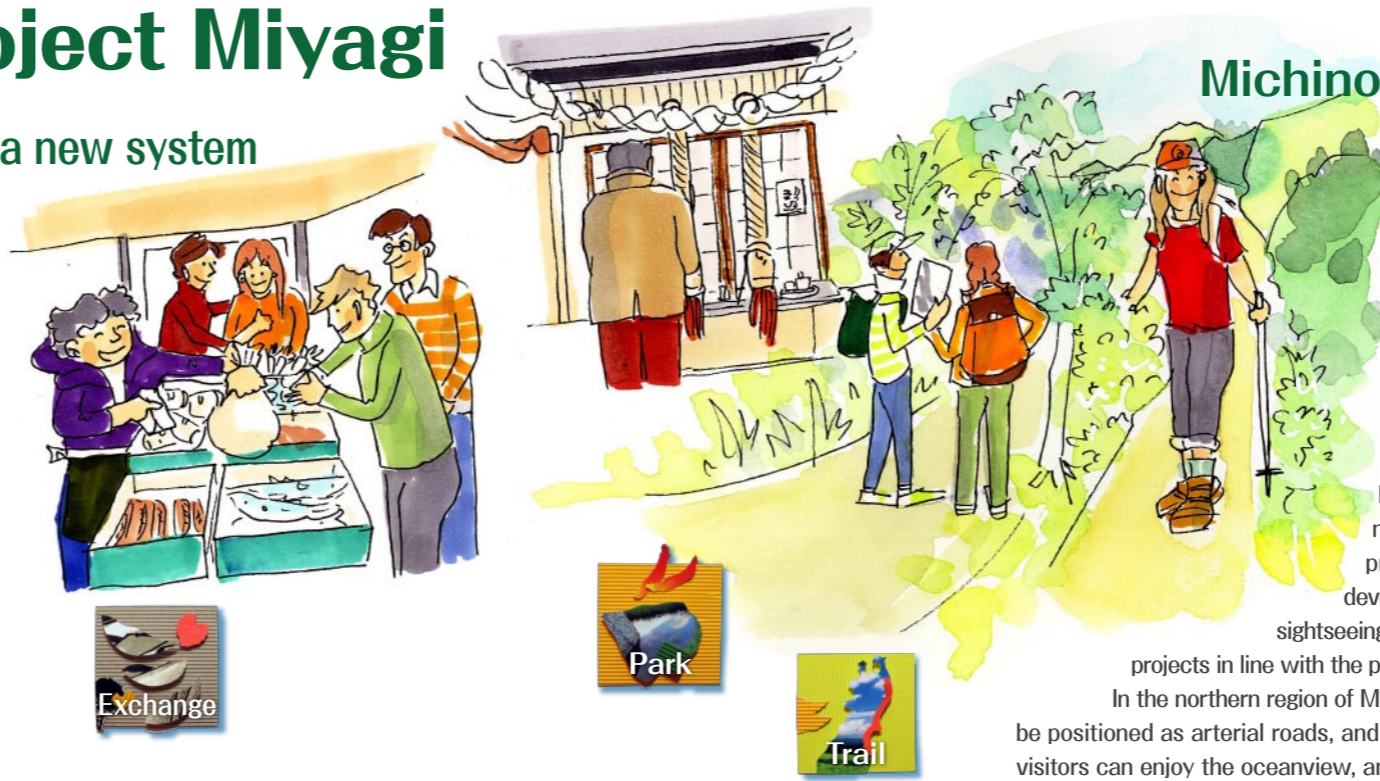
The goal of the Sanriku Fukko (reconstruction) National Park is to “develop the nature that cultivates the forests, satoyama, rivers and sea in conjunction with the recovery efforts.” The realization of this goal is even more pertinent in the affected areas. In order to do so, we should consider incorporating the four natural parks into the Sanriku Fukko (reconstruction) National Park and designating park zones so that areas stretching from the mountains in the background to the seashore and from the small basins to the sea can be managed in an integrated manner.

Furthermore, in areas where the population is aging and successors are in short supply, a system must be established to promote the use of the national park, where locals can exchange and cooperate with people from Japan and overseas, thus resulting in the creation of local employment and industries.

Creating field museums and promoting ecotourism

In the coastal areas of Miyagi Prefecture, the connection between forests, satoyama, rivers and the sea is formed by the bays that embrace the peninsulas and sea, the islands on the sea, and rivers flowing out from the inner part of bays. In areas where these elements are concentrated and no matter whether or not they are part of the natural park zones, it is necessary to take into consideration the position of field museums in order to actively utilize this area for ecotourism and environmental education.

Among candidate districts for the above areas are the following four: the Karakuwa Peninsula and Kesennuma Oshima area; the Tokura Peninsula, Okinakurayama (Mt. Okinakura) and the Kitakami estuary area; the Oshika Peninsula, Kinkasan Island, Ajishima (Aji Island) and Tashirojima (Tashiro Island) area; and the Urato Islands and Miyatojima (Miyato Island) area. In these districts, people can experience fishing, forest management, canoeing on rivers and sea, migratory bird watching, observation of salmon swimming up rivers, snorkeling and other activities.



Development and use of Michinoku Coastal Trail and its use

Historic roads run through the coastal area south of the Oshika peninsula of Miyagi Prefecture, including Kinkasando – a road leading visitors to a shrine on Kinkasan Island, Tosando – an ancient, nationally-managed road (arterial road), and Oku no Hosomichi (narrow road to the deep north) – a road used by haiku poet Matsuo Basho on his journey. Many of these roads were not affected by the recent or past tsunamis. Hence, there remain many historic resources along these roads. These historic roads are situated relatively inland, and safe and less affected by disasters. It would be effective to revitalize and use the roads as a long-distance trail, bolstering cooperation between nearby municipalities and attracting attention to the trail through promotional events. In the future, it will also be necessary to develop a coastal route that enables visitors to visit new bases and sightseeing spots, a sea route that enables people to visit islands and other projects in line with the progress of reconstruction.

In the northern region of Miyagi Prefecture, existing relatively-safe roads on the coast must be positioned as arterial roads, and branch roads must be established as mountain routes, where visitors can enjoy the oceanview, and satoyama routes, where people can experience the lifestyle and culture of the rural people. These routes should be designed so that visitors can take different ones for different seasons and repeat visitors can enjoy them every time.

Establishment of central facilities and networks

To attract many Japanese and foreign tourists to the coastal area of Miyagi Prefecture, it is necessary to provide appropriate information and establish a proper system to receive visitors. In the Matsushima area – the south entrance of the Sanriku Fukko (reconstruction) National Park, it is necessary to establish a general information center, providing comprehensible information not only on the national park, but also on field museums, the use of the Tohoku Coast Trail, and general sightseeing. It is also important for the center to cooperate with existing information centers in JR Sendai Station and Sendai Airport, Michi no Eki (rest areas along roads), and other similar facilities. In addition, the centers must have a system to provide information in multiple languages in order to serve foreign visitors.

It is important to establish central facilities in appropriate locations, which include trail centers that will serve as information centers and rest place for Tohoku Coast Trail users, and field museums that will be the center for activities including ecotourism and environment education. Furthermore, it is also vital to build a network among existing information centers for mutual cooperation purposes and to adequately provide services for users.

“Green Reconstruction Vision: Creating a new Sanriku Fukko (reconstruction) National Park”

To contribute to the Great East Japan Earthquake recovery efforts, the Ministry of the Environment formulated the plans for “Green Reconstruction Vision: Creating a new Sanriku Fukko (reconstruction) National Park” in May 2012.

The plan highlights efforts to hand down to future generations the national environment and regional lifestyle fostered through the connection between forests, satoyama, rivers and the sea, while progressing forward with the recovery efforts and studying nature’s blessings and threats. The ministry aims to contribute to the recovery efforts through various measures. Seven projects have been proposed as specific measures under the vision plan, including the establishment of the Sanriku Fukko (reconstruction) National Park.

For further details, please refer to the following website.
<http://www.env.go.jp/jishin/park-sanriku/>

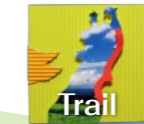


Miyagi's attractions

Various attractions of Miyagi Prefecture including foods and cultures that are rooted in this area's abundant nature are introduced here. The prefecture will implement the Green Reconstruction Project while utilizing these resources.

[Miyagi's Attractions]

[Miyagi's Foods]



Planned route of Michinoku Coastal Trail



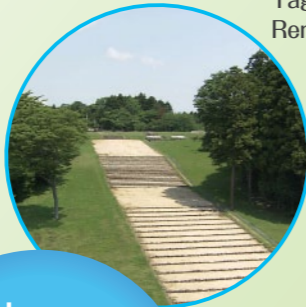
Shiogama City Fish Market



Shiogama Shrine

Shiogama and Taga Castle

This area is full of historic sites, including Shiogama Shrine and Taga Castle Ruins. There is also a bustling fish market where one can enjoy sushi made with fresh fish and shellfish.



Taga Castle Remains



Torinomi Fureai (interaction) Market

Sendai Bay Coast

In the estuary, tidelands are formed and water birds come flying. This area is full of historical resources connected to the Sendai clan. Together with the recovery of the agricultural lands and fishing ports, markets have reopened in various places.



Takekoma Shrine



Snipes gathering in the area



Beef tongue



Strawberry



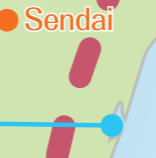
Hokki meshi (cooked rice with surf clam)



Apple



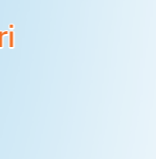
Sake



Ark shell (red clam)



Yuriage



Watari



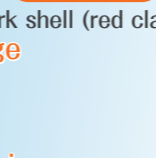
Yamamoto



Sushi (tuna)



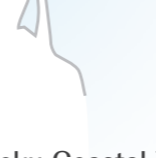
Oyster



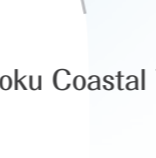
Oyster



Oyster



Oyster



Oyster

Kesennuma



Shark fin



Saury



Sea squirt



Uni-don (Sea urchin served over rice)



Scallop



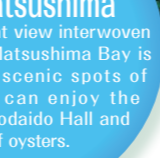
Kinka mackerel



Oyster



Oyster



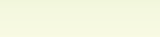
Oyster



Oyster



Oyster



Oyster

Matsushima and Oku-Matsushima

The magnificent view interwoven by islands in Matsushima Bay is one of three scenic spots of Japan. One can enjoy the history of Godaido Hall and the taste of oysters.



Islands in Matsushima Bay (from Otakamori)



Matsushima Godaido Hall



Oyster hut

Oogama and Hanzo "Oreishi"

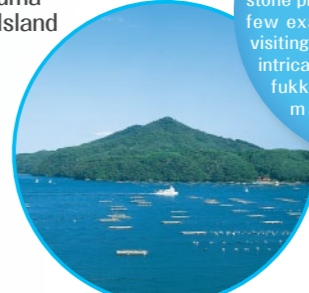


Kesennuma

Kesennuma Peninsula - famous for the Oreishi broken stone pillar and Oshima are just a few examples of places worth visiting around this exquisite and intricate northern coastline. The fukko (recovery) shopping markets are also enjoyable.



Landscape of satoyama



Kesennuma Oshima Island



Tokusenjosan (Mt. Tokusenjo)

Minamisanriku

Kamiwarizaki and other scenic spots stretch across this area. Hands-on activities, such as fishing and listening to kataribe (storyteller) guides, are also popular.



Kamiwarizaki



Shizugawa Bay



Fishing experience program

Ishinomaki and Onagawa

Kinkasan Island that continues to attract worshippers since ancient times and the gentle flowing Kitakami River are just a few attractions found in the Oshika Peninsula that boasts the beauty of the ria coast.



Mangokuura



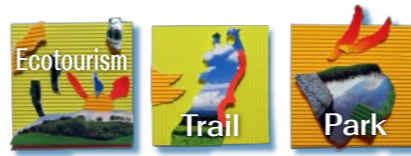
Tsukinoura



Reeds on Kitakami River

Miyagi Recovery Support Model Travel Courses

Visiting the coastal area of Miyagi Prefecture, eating seasonal foods, buying souvenirs and engaging with the locals will contribute to the recovery efforts. In various places, there are earthquake disaster storytellers who also guide visitors. We very much hope you will visit Miyagi Prefecture.

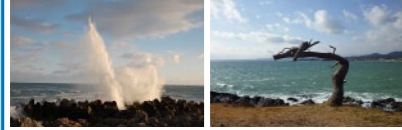


Model course ① “Minamisanriku Coast and Oshika Peninsula” (1 night - 2 days)

Sendai or Ichinoseki

▼ By car

- Shiofuki-iwa (spouting rock) (Iwaizaki)
- A dragon-shaped pine tree damaged by the disaster



Inquiries: Kesenuma Tourist & Convention Bureau
TEL 0226-22-4560
<http://www.k-macs.ne.jp/~k-kanko/index.html>

▼ By car or BRT (bus rapid transit)

- Learning programs by kataribe guides
- Pressed Marine-Plant Course



Inquiries: Minamisanriku Town Tourist Association
TEL 0226-47-2580
<http://www.m-kankou.jp/>

▼ By car

- Marine Pal Onagawa
- Experience of making handmade sasa kamaboko (steamed fish cake shaped like a bamboo leaf)



Inquiries: Onagawa Town Tourist Association
TEL 0225-54-4328
<http://www.onagawa.org>

▼ By car

Sendai

Model course ② “Matsushima Bay” (1 night - 2 days)

Sendai

▼ By car or train

- Shiogama sightseeing (Shiogama Shrine and Shiogama Municipal Fish Market)
- Sushi, etc.



Inquiries: Shiogama Sightseeing and Products Association
TEL 022-364-1165
<http://kankoubussan.shiogama.miyagi.jp/>

▼ By car, train or sightseeing boat

- Matsushima sightseeing (Godaido Hall and Zuiganji Temple)
- Stay at Matsushima Hot Spring



Inquiries: Matsushima Tourist Association
TEL 022-354-2618
<http://www.matsushima-kanko.com/>

▼ By car or Buses(replacing trains) and car

- Fishing experience in Oku-Matsushima



Inquiries: Higashi-Matsushima City Sightseeing and Products Association
TEL 0225-87-2322
<http://www.okumatsushima-kanko.jp/>

▼ By car and train

Sendai

Model course ③ “Southern Coast of Sendai Bay” (1 day)

Sendai

▼ By car and train

- Yuriage Saikai Ichiba (market)
- Guided by shinsai kataribe (storyteller of earthquake and tsunami)



Inquiries: Sendai Area Branch, Miyagi Prefecture Taxi Association
TEL 022-256-0356
<http://sentakyo.org/>

▼ By car and train

- Takekoma Shrine
- Kanahebisui Shrine



Inquiries: Commerce, Industry and Tourist Division, Citizens Economy Department, Iwanuma City Government
TEL 0223-22-1111
<http://www.city.iwanuma.miyagi.jp/>

▼ By car or train

- Strawberry picking
- Harako meshi (cooked rice with salmon and salmon roe) and Hokki meshi (cooked rice with surf clam)



Inquiries: Watari Town Tourist association
TEL 0223-34-0513
<http://www.datenawatari.jp/index.php>

▼ By car or train

Sendai

Disaster-hit Regions: Now and in the Future

Changes in the nature and its restoration

The natural environment of Miyagi Prefecture's coastline was seriously disturbed due to the tsunami and land subsidence following the latest earthquake, and the environment continues to change even today. In particular, tidelands, sandy beaches, sandbars, reeds on the estuary, and eelgrass beds in the shallow sea area were badly affected by the outflow of sand and mud due to the tsunami and land subsidence. As a result, their size has reduced significantly and creatures that used to live in these areas were carried out to sea together with sand and mud.

Meanwhile, tidelands and sandy beaches, which barely endured the tsunami, have become shelters for zoobenthos and seaside creatures. It is expected that such places will be the source of these living creatures when tidelands and sandy beaches are formed again.

Migratory birds such as geese, wild ducks, snipes, and plovers have been flying to the coastal area in groups even after the earthquake disaster, although their number has decreased slightly. Salmon can be seen swimming up many rivers again.

Earthquakes often occur in this area, which has been severely disturbed many times due to tsunamis and land subsidence. Given that its natural environment has been formed while undergoing such large disturbance, we expect that the environment in this area will fully restore itself. However, restoration of nature takes time, and thus, it is necessary to continue monitoring the progress of such restoration.



Gamo Tideland returning to as it was before the disaster
(Above: taken on March 14, 2011; below: taken on April 10, 2012)



Brent geese flying to the Kitakami estuary after the disaster
(Photo taken by Shigemi Sasaki)

Local efforts toward reconstruction

Traditional festivals in many places, which were cancelled immediately after the disaster, have been reviving gradually thanks to efforts by the local people. In addition, long-term and continuous activities are being carried out to restore coastal and shrine forests that were destroyed by the tsunami, including tree planting events. Furthermore, events on disaster prevention are also held to communicate with the people in Japan and overseas about the lessons learned from the latest disaster.



Kesenuma Port Festival



Ishinomaki Tairyo (large catch) Festival



Shichigahama Montauk-daisy planting volunteer activities

“Fukko*” shopping markets operating actively!

* “Fukko” means “recovery” in Japanese

In the stricken areas of Miyagi's coast, the recovery of local industries and the tourist industry has started. Temporary “fukko” shopping and restaurant districts have opened in various locations, bustling with local residents, and people engaged in reconstruction work, volunteers and tourists.



Fukko Yatai Mura
(reconstruction village of stalls)
Kesenuma Yokocho (alley)



Minamisanriku Town Isatomae
Fukko Shopping Street



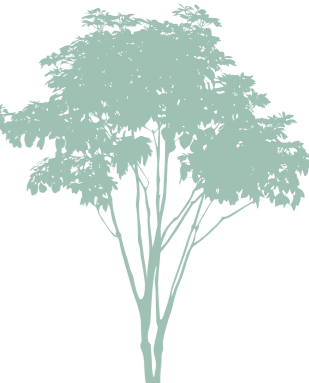
Yuriage Port Morning Market
that reopened two weeks
after the earthquake

Column: Shrines and historic roads that escaped the disaster

In the disaster-stricken areas, almost all the shrines near the coastline escaped damage from the tsunami, and their buildings and precincts were used as temporary shelters right after the disaster. In each area, people have settled for generations, and once in a while, they have experienced a huge tsunami. Hence, it is believed that people in the past built shrines at places deemed safe for refugees from tsunami, hoping descendants would not be affected.

In various areas of the Sendai Plain, there are historical legacies, such as ancient nationally-managed roads and historical sites that have been described in classical Japanese poetry. The latest tsunami did not reach these legacies. The Sendai Plain has been stricken by massive tsunamis every 400 to 500 years, and thus, it is highly likely that historic roads were established while avoiding flooded areas.

It is necessary to pass down such past lessons to future generations.



Conclusion

As of December 31, 2012, the total number of volunteers who registered at disaster volunteer centers in Miyagi Prefecture since the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011 exceeded 560,000. In the affected areas of the prefecture, people in Japan and abroad have provided enormous support in debris removal, clearing mud out of homes and buildings, delivering relief supplies, clearing up items washed ashore, providing mental health care to affected residents and other services.

We also received many encouraging messages, donations and relief supplies from various countries and regions around the world. Overseas expert teams were also dispatched directly to the affected areas. According to documents dated September 30, 2011 and disclosed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, support teams from 16 countries and regions were dispatched to the affected areas in Miyagi Prefecture. A large-scale rescue team from South Korea was dispatched the day after the disaster, and conducted strenuous rescue and search operations in Sendai City and other locations. Taiwanese and Mongolian teams engaged in various activities in Natori and Iwanuma cities. The Russian rescue team performed operations in Ishinomaki City. Teams from Australia, South Africa and Turkey were engaged in various activities in Minamisanriku Town, Ishinomaki City and Tagajo City. The Israeli medical team opened a clinic in Minamisanriku Town, and donated its medical equipment and supplies to help with the restoration of medical treatment in Minamisanriku Town.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to many people for their support. We expect the reconstruction will still take many years, and we ask that you continue supporting our efforts. Please revisit our region and see in person the progress of the recovery efforts.



Fukuura Bridge (Matsushima) repaired with donations from Taiwan



Shop opened by Australian Embassy in Minamisanriku-cho Isatomae Fukko Shopping Street

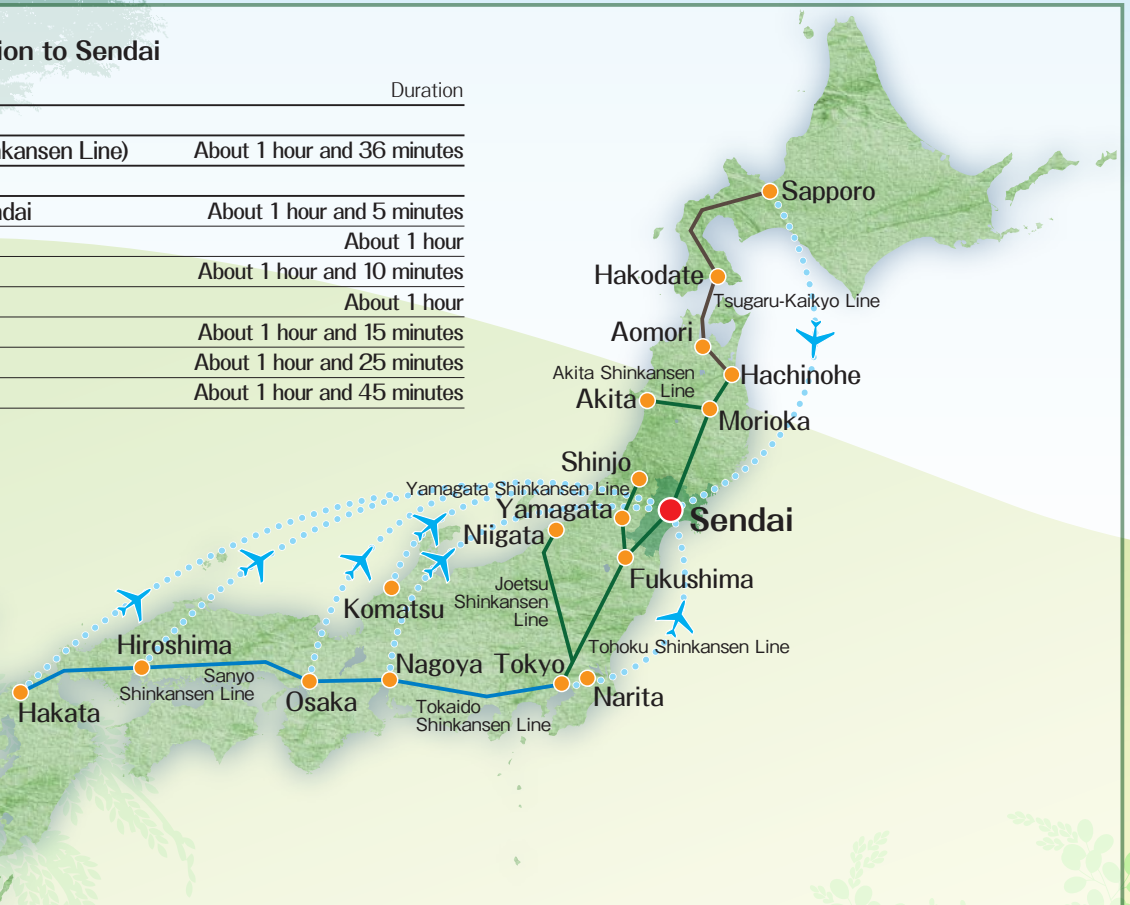


Medical examination and treatment by Israeli medical support team

Access

■ Duration to Sendai

Sections	Duration
JR	
Tokyo - Sendai (Tohoku Shinkansen Line)	About 1 hour and 36 minutes
Airplane	
Sapporo (Shin-Chitose) - Sendai	About 1 hour and 5 minutes
Narita - Sendai	About 1 hour
Nagoya (Chubu) - Sendai	About 1 hour and 10 minutes
Komatsu - Sendai	About 1 hour
Osaka (Itami) - Sendai	About 1 hour and 15 minutes
Hiroshima - Sendai	About 1 hour and 25 minutes
Fukuoka - Sendai	About 1 hour and 45 minutes



**Nature Preservation Division, Environment and Lifestyle Department,
Miyagi Prefectural Government**

3-8-1 Honcho, Aoba-ku, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture 980-8570
Tel: 022-211-2672

<http://www.pref.miyagi.jp/soshiki/sizenhogo/>

Photos provided by: Shigemi Sasaki, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Miyagi Prefectural Government

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