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BE KOBE

A SUSTAINABLE CITY

A global contributing city nurtured by the mountains and the sea.

Although Kobe is a large city, it is also a city where nature, such as the sea and mountains, is immediately accessible. This is our beloved nature that we inherited through the generations.

The city is filled with picturesque landscapes, from Mt. Rokko, a formerly bald mountain transformed through reforestation, to *satoyama*, rural mountain villages with traditional thatched roof houses.

With popular spots such as Nunobiki Falls, Maiko Beach, as well as the beaches at Suma and Tarumi, the people of Kobe love and adore the nature that surrounds them.

As a large metropolis that continues to co-exist with nature and people's values, Kobe would like to be a city that takes on the challenges of the future.

We would like to introduce the unique qualities and attractions of Kobe, which now enters into a new phase.

Kizo Hisamoto, Mayor of Kobe City



Area | 557.03 km²
(as of February 1, 2024)
Population | 1,496,425
(as of February 1, 2024)
Number of households | 745,005
(as of February 1, 2024)
Population density | 2,686 people/km²
(as of February 1, 2024)





Rokko Mountain Range

Looming over Kobe is the Rokko Mountain Range, spanning about 30km east to west. It has been long loved by all who live in Kobe. In recent years, the mountain range has been used increasingly for various creative projects.



Gastropolis Kobe

Closely located to both rural mountain villages and the Seto Inland Sea, Kobe is blessed with an abundance of nature, rich in delicious seafood and mountain vegetables. Its food culture is unique and diverse, making use of a variety of ingredients from both Japan and abroad.



Traditional *Monozukuri* Industry

Japan's traditional *monozukuri* (craftmanship) has driven manufacturing and economic growth not only in Kobe, but throughout Japan as well. In addition to large companies, there is also a concentration of small and medium-sized enterprises that pioneered outstanding technology over many years.



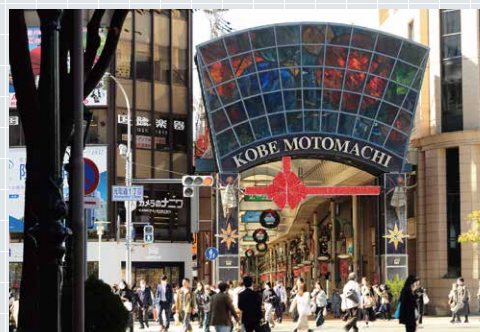
Suma Beach

In the summer, Suma Beach is crowded with beachgoers from Kobe and beyond. With residential areas, hospitals, and fishing ports nearby, it has a lively atmosphere for activities. In June 2024, a resort complex centered on an aquarium opened.



International Port

In 2010, the Hanshin Port, consisting of the Kobe and Osaka Ports, was selected as an "International Container Strategic Port". Efforts are being made based on three pillars: "collection of cargo", "creation of cargo", and "strengthening of competitiveness".



Shopping Arcades

There are over 200 shopping arcades and markets in Kobe. Whether it's the stylish boutiques and shops in Sannomiya and Motomachi, the "kitchen of Kobe" in Minatogawa, or the many shopping arcades in Suidosuji or Shin-Nagata, you can get a feel for the city's vibrant and unique personality.



Satoyama

Kobe retains beautiful rural scenery that is easily accessible from the city center. The nearby traditional mountain villages, called *satoyama*, combine a comfortable living environment with accessibility and convenience.



Kobe Airport

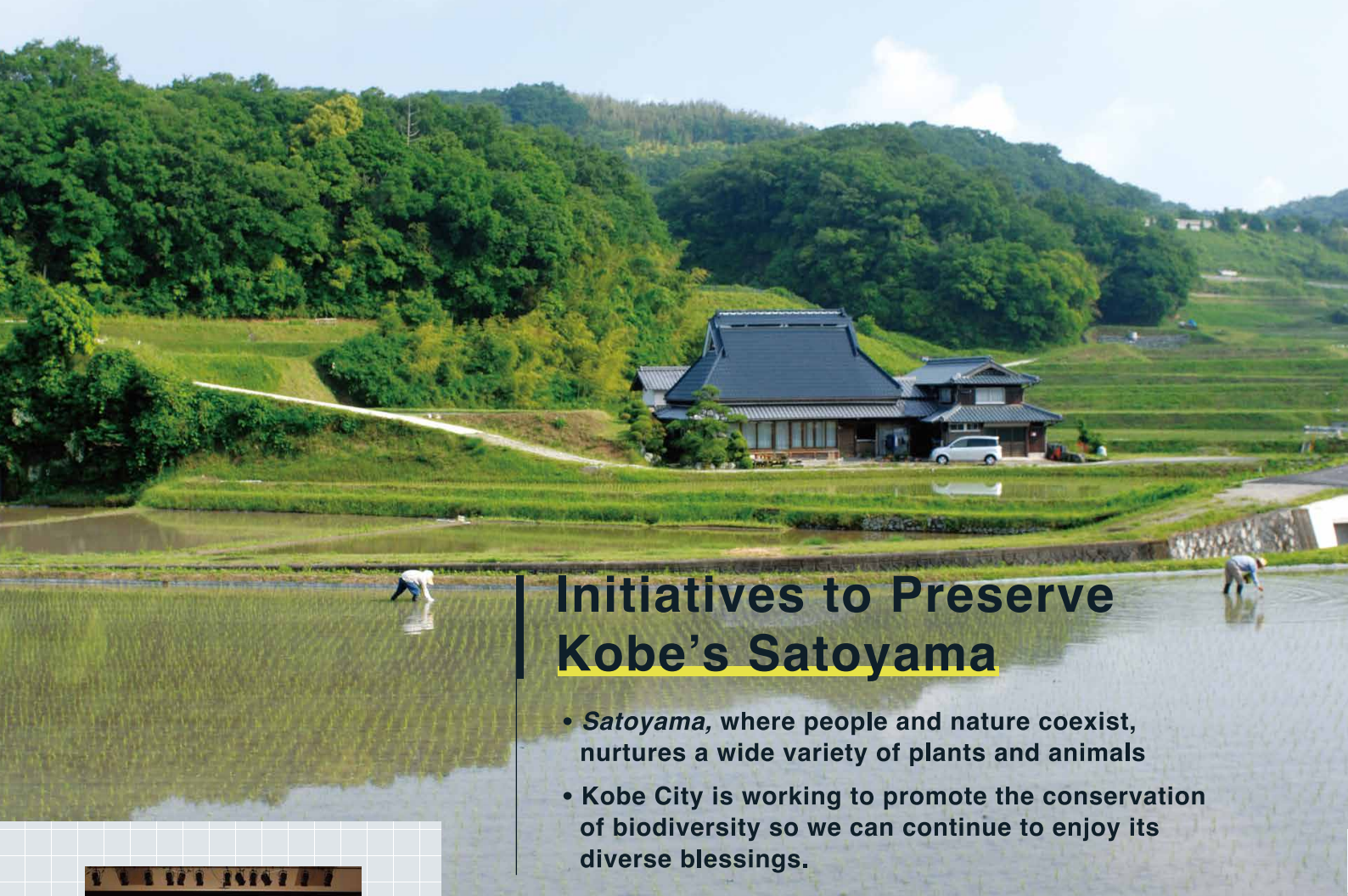
Kobe Airport, located just an 18-minute train ride from Sannomiya, is set to expand its domestic flight slots and begin operating international charter flights in 2025, with regularly scheduled international flights set to start around 2030.

A Compact Area with a Diverse Range of Attractions



KOBE Biomedical Innovation Cluster

On Port Island, an artificial island in Kobe Harbor, there are about 370 research institutes, highly specialized hospitals, healthcare-related companies, and organizations. They collaborate together to create innovation in the medical field.



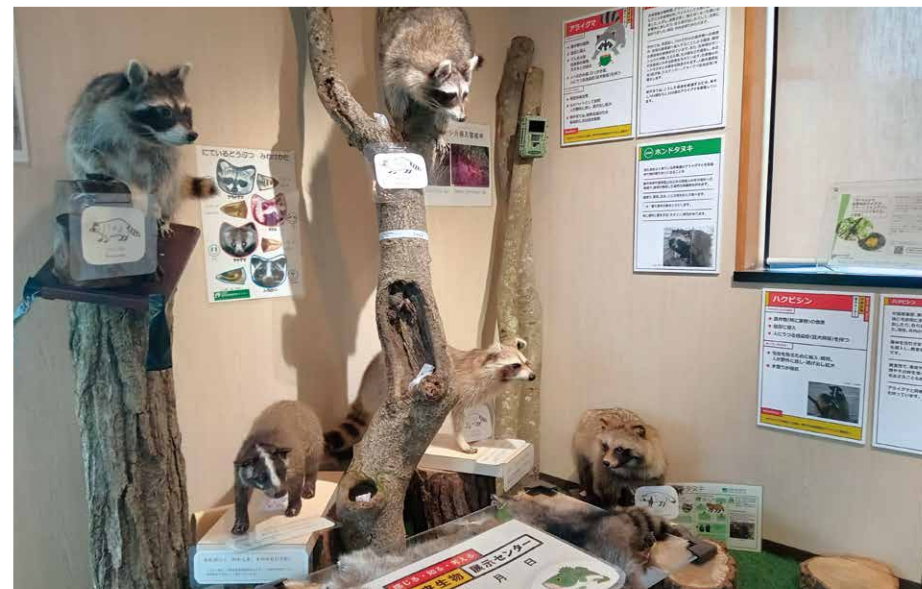
Initiatives to Preserve Kobe's Satoyama

- *Satoyama*, where people and nature coexist, nurtures a wide variety of plants and animals
- Kobe City is working to promote the conservation of biodiversity so we can continue to enjoy its diverse blessings.



Collaboration with Neighboring Cities

In recent years, it has become more difficult to maintain the natural environment and ecosystems in *satoyama*. For that reason, we are focusing on the conservation of biodiversity, such as cutting down overgrown woodlands, preserving terraced rice fields and reservoirs, and protecting rare endemic species. In particular, we are collaborating with our neighboring Akashi City to conserve biodiversity, as the two cities share several rivers.



A Measures to Control Invasive Species and Promote Awareness

Invasive species can disrupt ecosystems and have a negative impact on people, agriculture, and fisheries. To address this, efforts are being made to control invasive species, as well as to raise awareness about these issues through initiatives like the "Invasive Species Exhibition Center" and other educational activities.

Connecting the City Center and Woodland Areas

- A rural area rich in nature within 30 minutes of the city center
- Active utilization of existing facilities

B Agriculture in Kobe

Close to the city center, vibrant suburban farming takes advantage of its location, producing leafy greens, figs, and more. Efforts are underway to nurture agricultural talent and expand the base of individuals involved in farming. These activities not only support Kobe's agricultural sector but also help preserve and expand *satoyama* conservation efforts.



C Thatched Houses

Kobe is home to over 800 thatched-roof houses, the largest number of any municipality in Japan. These include the Hakogi House, believed to be one of the oldest houses in Japan, and the Uchida House, a Prefectural Designated Important Cultural Property. There's even a café, designated by Kobe as a tangible cultural property, where you can enjoy bagels.



D Kobe Recycled Phosphorus

Japan relies almost entirely on imports for the phosphorus used in fertilizer. At Kobe's wastewater treatment plants, phosphorus consumed in food is recovered from sewage sludge and recycled as fertilizer. Through this initiative, Kobe promotes sustainable agriculture and supports the stabilization of agricultural management.

01

Kobe, an SDGs-Contributing City

The rich natural environment of the ocean, mountains, and the cityscape that surrounds Kobe is a cherished asset and a source of pride. We will continue to carry on the spirit of our predecessors, take on new challenges, and contribute to the global community.



Japanese Only



Daily Mountain Treks

It is said that the modern mountaineering culture began with westerners in Kobe. Inspired by the Western residents, locals in Kobe also made early-morning hikes a daily routine, and this became a custom known as “everyday mountain climbing”. This tradition continues today, with many people incorporating daily hikes into their lives.



A Maintenance of Mountain Trails and Information Boards

Kobe will promote the maintenance of mountain trails, improve the information boards, and make the trails easier to walk on. Together with the help of citizens, companies, and everyone who loves Kobe, we will protect and nurture these mountains.

TREK KOBE project

- Birthplace of modern mountaineering
- For a safer and more secure mountaineering environment



B Opening of “Trail Station Kobe”

Trail Station Kobe, a mountaineering support base established in Shin-Kobe, one of the main trailheads, offers route guidance, mountaineering rental goods, guided tours, etc. Kobe is working to promote the many appeals of climbing the city's mountains, as well as increase the number of mountaineering enthusiasts.

Blue Carbon Project In the Sea and Mountains

- Goal to achieve net-zero CO2 emissions by 2050
- Expanding demonstration fields



C Kobe Plastic Next: Working Together to Recycle Refill Packs

Kobe City, retailers, daily goods manufacturers, and recyclers are collaborating across sectors. Together, we are pioneering a groundbreaking project to collect and recycle refill packs (plastic film packaging), undertaking a closed-loop recycling (“film-to-film”) approach.



A Planting Aquatic Plants in Freshwater Areas

Kobe City is working on the first nationwide assessment of freshwater blue carbon. In collaboration with universities and student volunteers, we are planting aquatic plants in reservoirs and other locations, and conducting demonstration experiments to analyze CO2 absorption and maintain biodiversity.

B Eelgrass Thriving in the Ocean

In Kobe's coastal areas, including the Hyogo Canal and Suma Beach, fishing cooperatives, local groups, NPOs, students, and others are working together to plant eelgrass, an important plant that acts as a hiding place and breeding ground for fish, as part of efforts to utilize blue carbon ecosystems.

Initiatives to Recycle Resources

- Promoting “Continuous Recycling”

D Plastic Resource Collection Station

Kobe City has set up Japan's first-ever collection station dedicated to plastic resources, to help make recycling more visible. We are promoting “continuous recycling” for plastics together with local residents.



State-of-the-art Facilities at Minatojima Clean Center

The Minatojima Clean Center (Garbage Incineration Plant) boasts one of Japan's highest power generation efficiencies, generating enough power for about 30,000 households. Even during a power outage caused by natural disasters, the plant is capable of continuing waste incineration and power generation activities, as well as supplying electricity to evacuation shelters and other locations via electric vehicles.



02

Rediscovering the Appeal of Mountain Climbing

Kobe, the birthplace of modern mountaineering in Japan, still embraces a strong hiking culture with traditions like daily mountain treks and the full traverse of the Rokko Mountains. The city has launched the “TREK KOBE Project” to help more people enjoy mountain climbing—one of Kobe's treasured assets—and to promote its appeal through various initiatives.



03

Working Toward a Carbon-Neutral Future (Decarbonization)

To protect the natural environment, including the rich greenery, the sea, and beautiful traditional mountain villages (*satoyama*), and to create a sustainable lifestyle and society, we are also promoting the use of blue carbon (CO2 absorbed by marine organisms in the sea, such as seaweed) and resource recycling.





Photo courtesy of HySTRA

Establishing a Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain

- Production, transportation, storage, and utilization of hydrogen
- Aiming for a hydrogen-based society



Photo courtesy of HySTRA

A Hydrogen Supply Chain Construction Demonstration Project

Kobe City is working on a project to produce, store, and transport liquified hydrogen by sea using brown coal, an unused energy source in Australia, and unloading it in Kobe. In February 2022, the City succeeded in the world's first maritime transport of liquified hydrogen.



Photo courtesy of Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd.

B Hydrogen Energy Utilization System Development Verification Project

The Hydrogen Energy Utilization System is a power generation system that uses a hydrogen-fueled gas turbine to supply environmentally friendly electricity and heat to nearby public facilities. This is the world's first demonstration and verification project of supplying 100% hydrogen thermoelectric power in urban areas.



Photo courtesy of HySTRA

C Forming a Carbon-Neutral Port (CNP)

Kobe Port is undergoing changes to create a carbon-neutral port through the use of next-generation energy, such as hydrogen.



D Hydrogen-Powered Buses

Kobe City is introducing hydrogen-powered buses on some routes in an effort to expand on the use of fuel cell vehicles that do not emit carbon dioxide or air pollutants.



E Hydrogen Refueling Stations

We have set up stations where fuel cell vehicles can be refueled with hydrogen. To address the challenge of securing large sites in urban areas, Kobe City constructed Japan's first two-story hydrogen station that is currently in operation.

Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster (KBIC)

- World-leading medical industry
- Advancement of approximately 370 companies, hospitals, and research institutions
- Economic impact on the city: 156.2 billion yen (As of 2020)

A A Research and Development Hub for Startups

Kobe City strongly supports the growth of entrepreneurs in the medical field through the Startup Creative Lab (SCL), an R&D base for startups with an activity base equipped with shared facilities.



Photo courtesy of RIKEN

B Supercomputer "Fugaku"

Fugaku is set up at the RIKEN Advanced Institute for Computational Science on Port Island. This supercomputer is rated as one of the world's top supercomputers in the latest rankings. It has been used in various research, and has also contributed to coronavirus countermeasures, such as simulations of droplet infection.



D Kobe Eye Center

This is Japan's first facility to have an ophthalmology hospital, basic research functions, and low vision care in one place. The world's first transplant surgery using iPS cells is just one example of the work being done to put cutting-edge ophthalmology treatments such as regenerative medicine into practical use.

C hinotori™, the Surgical Support Robot

Developed by Medicaoid, which was established through a joint investment by Kawasaki Heavy Industries, a manufacturer of industrial robots, and Sysmex, a manufacturer of medical equipment. Innovative initiatives are underway, such as the first successful remote control demonstration experiment between Kobe and Tokyo using a commercial 5G network in Japan.

Photo courtesy of Medicaoid



04

A New Kind of Energy

In Kobe, the "Hydrogen Smart City Kobe Concept" is being promoted to achieve the goal of a decarbonized city. As an energy-advanced city, we are taking on new challenges and contributing to the realization of a sustainable society.



05

Creation of a Biomedical Hub

The Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster offers a variety of business support services, from research and development to commercialization. This has resulted in an increasing concentration of healthcare companies. The synergies among industry, government, and academia have led to the creation of new technological innovations.





Cuisine Using Local Ingredients

Surrounded by mountains and the sea, and with an abundance of agricultural produce, Kobe developed a unique food culture, fused with the Western culture adopted after the port's opening in the Meiji era. From luxurious delicacies like Kobe beef to everyday favorites such as bread and sweets, Kobe offers an incredibly diverse and distinctive gourmet experience.



The Rich Bounty of the Seto Inland Sea

The rich fishing grounds are nurtured by the nutrient-rich water that flows down from Mt. Rokko and the surrounding hills. Enjoy fresh seafood such as sea bream, conger eel, octopus, sand lance, young sardines, and flatfish, mainly from the Seto Inland Sea and Osaka Bay.



A FARMERS MARKET

A farmers' market was opened under the concept of "creating continuous connections between consumers". In addition to buying seasonal vegetables and fruits grown in Kobe City, you can also enjoy breakfast and desserts made in collaboration between local farmers, retailers, and restaurants.



B Fish and the Sea

At the fisherman's market, you can buy various fresh seafood directly from the fishermen who caught them.



C FARMSTAND

FARMSTAND is a local produce shop in Kitano, a retro town with a unique feel. There is also an eat-in space where local residents and tourists can enjoy locally sourced food in a casual atmosphere.

Promotion of the Gastropolis Kobe Project

- A platform for producers and consumers
- Creating a rich and unique food culture



A ROKKONOMAD

A former corporate retreat was renovated and opened in March 2021 as a "co-creation lab", a base for people to interact together. In addition to rooms where you can concentrate on your work, there are also spaces where you can socialize and relax, as well as cottages where you can stay overnight.



Recreating hybrid spaces on Mt. Rokko

- Workplaces integrated with nature
- Connections that birth creativity

B Mt. Rokko Office in the Forest

A consultation service has been set up for those considering opening offices, cafes, restaurants, or accommodation facilities on the mountain. It provides integrated services, from property introductions to renovation proposals.

(See right) Office space being used for renovation



Business Strategies - Making the Most of Food

The port city of Kobe is surrounded by rich natural beauty, with urban and rural areas close together. This results in the production of fresh, delicious agricultural and marine products, fostering a diverse food culture. Embracing its unique culinary identity, Kobe has initiated "Gastropolis Kobe" to nurture its food-related businesses and culture, advancing efforts to create a vibrant city centered around food.

New Work Styles

In the past, Rokko was a destination for luxury resorts with many corporate holiday homes and villas. By encouraging the conversion of unused facilities into offices, cafes, accommodations, and more, spaces have been created to meet diverse needs, such as creative activities in a rich natural environment, tourism, and long-term stays.





Largest Bus Terminal in Western Japan

- Consolidating the approximately 1,700 medium- and long-distance buses that operate daily
- Separate boarding and alighting areas, with high-quality, comfortable waiting areas



A New Bus Terminal Building (Phase I)

Kobe City is working toward creating a space where you can enjoy walking around, complete with a bus terminal, shops, a library, a concert hall, a hotel and offices.

Urban Spaces That Prioritize Pedestrians

- A comfortable city where people play a major role
- A city of extraordinary experiences, new encounters, and discoveries
- A town where walking is enjoyable and incites you to explore

B Sankita Street

A beautiful cobblestone road with pedestrian priority. The terrace is full of people enjoying their meals in a lively atmosphere.



D ANCHOR KOBE

ANCHOR KOBE is a business space where knowledge is gathered and exchanged among startups, companies entering KBIC, local manufacturing companies, and universities, where new value is created. It provides a full range of practical programs based on industry-academia-government collaboration.



C Microsoft's First Base in Japan

Kobe is home to the world's sixth Microsoft AI Co-Innovation Lab. This facility aims to drive innovation and promote industrial development through AI and IoT, supporting various companies in leveraging AI to enhance their operations and achieve growth.

08

Urban Redevelopment of Sannomiya, the Center of the City

Having recovered from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, Kobe is now embarking on a new chapter. The city aims to make Sannomiya, the gateway to this beautiful port city, a place that warmly welcomes visitors to its natural beauty and urban charm.



A Lush, Green City Center

- A vibrant urban park where people can meet, connect, and enjoy the heart of the city

Convenient Access

Comfortable access with the Port Loop, a bus service that connects Shin-Kobe, Sannomiya Stations, and the waterfront area.



A Bustling Waterfront Area

- A state-of-the-art arena with a capacity of 10,000 people is scheduled to be built.



E GLION ARENA KOBE

A world-class arena is being built that can accommodate a wide range of events, including professional sports events, music events featuring top artists, and MICE.



Kobe Naval Training Center

The remains of the Edo Shogunate's "Naval Training Center", which became the cornerstone of Japan's modernization, have been discovered. Plans to develop the land while preserving these historical remains are currently in development.

Integrated Transportation Access by Land, Sea, and Air

