

Inoseto Wetlands

The Revival of the Spring Burning Activities

The grassland areas, characteristic of Inoseto, have been steadily decreasing in size since the 1950s. Rural depopulation and less agricultural activity in the area has led to an invasion of trees and the growth of forested areas. In 2005, however, a project was initiated to regenerate the Inoseto Wetlands and reverse the forestation process.

The project began with three years of research into the history of the wetlands, its vegetation, and the natural environment. Sections of the wetlands were used as test areas in which various grassland conservation methods were trialed: controlled burnings, mowing, and nature conservation. These tests showed that controlled burning offered the most effective way of maintaining and regenerating the grassland areas of Inoseto.

In 2012, after a 40-year break, controlled burnings were restarted with help from the Association for the Conservation of the Inoseto Wetlands and the owner of the land, Kijima Kogen Operations. Burnings have been done annually since then. In 2016, the Ministry of the Environment designated this area an Important Wetland Area, actively protecting and conserving the natural ecosystem and its diverse plant life.