

Human Activities in Chojabaru

People have been living and farming in the Kuju region for thousands of years. Importantly, they cultivated and preserved the characteristic grasslands of Chojabaru, the wetlands, and the ancient forests of the area.

The grasslands of the Kuju Plateau are actively managed through mowing, controlled burning, and grazing. This has effectively prevented the unwanted spread and growth of trees. These activities ensure that many rare plants and animals thrive in this important ecosystem. Chojabaru is an ideal place to research and survey the area's vegetation and natural environment. Foreign species are monitored and eliminated, and new growth of native species is promoted through spring burnings known as *noyaki*.

Local people have learned to live in the shadow of the volcano, using the characteristics of the landscape to their advantage, developing a culture unique to Chojabaru and Aso-Kuju. They have benefited from the area's pure spring water and geothermal energy for use in cooking, drinking, and bathing. Farmers use the fertile grasslands to raise their livestock and grow plentiful crops. This way of life has been nurtured over thousands of years. The local communities live in harmony with nature.