

## Environmental Harmony

Living in harmony with nature is an important aspect of life in Ise-Shima. This is evident in the two types of settlements found throughout the region. *Satoyama* are mountainous areas where people utilize forest resources. *Satoumi* are coastal areas where the livelihood of nearby residents is derived from the ocean. In the case of both *satoyama* and *satoumi*, careful management has led to increased productivity and biodiversity. Significance is placed on sustainability and conservation, which are seen as essential for maintaining biodiversity and ensuring that community resources will be available for future generations.

Fishing and aquaculture have long been important to the region, and continue to play essential roles in the local economy and culture. There are many local laws and standards that prevent overfishing. Abalone, a delicacy of the region, can only be harvested after they have reached a certain size, and only during a designated season. Ise-Shima is the birthplace of pearl cultivation, and pearls produced in the region are considered a benchmark for the industry as a whole. Ise-Shima National Park is also engaged in the restoration of important marine environments, such as tidal flats and seaweed beds.

The sacred forest surrounding Ise Jingu, the country's foremost *jinja* (Shinto shrine), is called the Kyuikirin. Lumber harvested from this forest has long been used in the 1,300-year-old ritual of Shikinen Sengu, in which the major shrine buildings and other structures of Ise Jingu are completely rebuilt with traditional craftsmanship to the same specifications every 20 years. The forest was once under the threat of deforestation, but thanks to an ongoing 200-year-long restoration project, some of the lumber for the Shikinen Sengu ritual can again be harvested in the Kyuikirin.