

## **Setonaikai National Park**

Setonaikai National Park in the Seto Inland Sea is one of the largest national parks in Japan, covering more than 9,000 square kilometers of land and water. It spans 11 prefectures, including Hiroshima, and is dotted with approximately 1,000 islands.

Within Hiroshima Prefecture, the park encompasses diverse natural landscapes, from Hiroshima Bay to Mt. Misen Primeval Forest on the island of Miyajima. Its coastal and intertidal habitats, such as seaweed beds and mudflats, support rare and endangered species including the narrow-ridged finless porpoise and horseshoe crab. Many of these ecologically significant areas are preserved as Protected Areas.

For centuries, the Seto Inland Sea has been a vital waterway for trade and travel. Its resources have supported industries such as fishing, shipbuilding, salt production, and stone quarrying. The region's cultural heritage is preserved in historic port towns such as Tomonoura, ancient pirate fortresses on Innoshima, and iconic sites of worship, notably

Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima.