

Increasing Japan's Ramsar Sites from 50 to 100

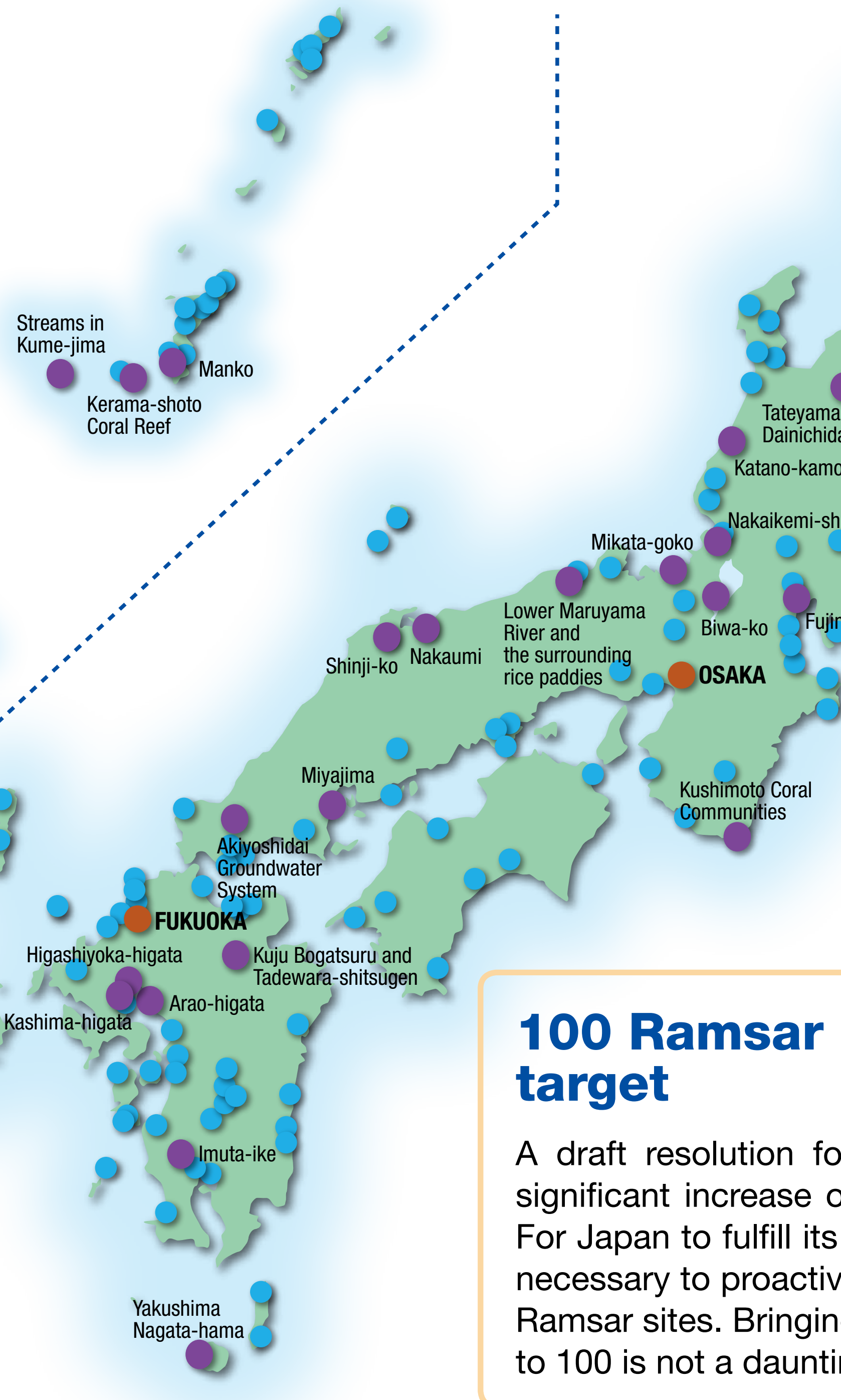
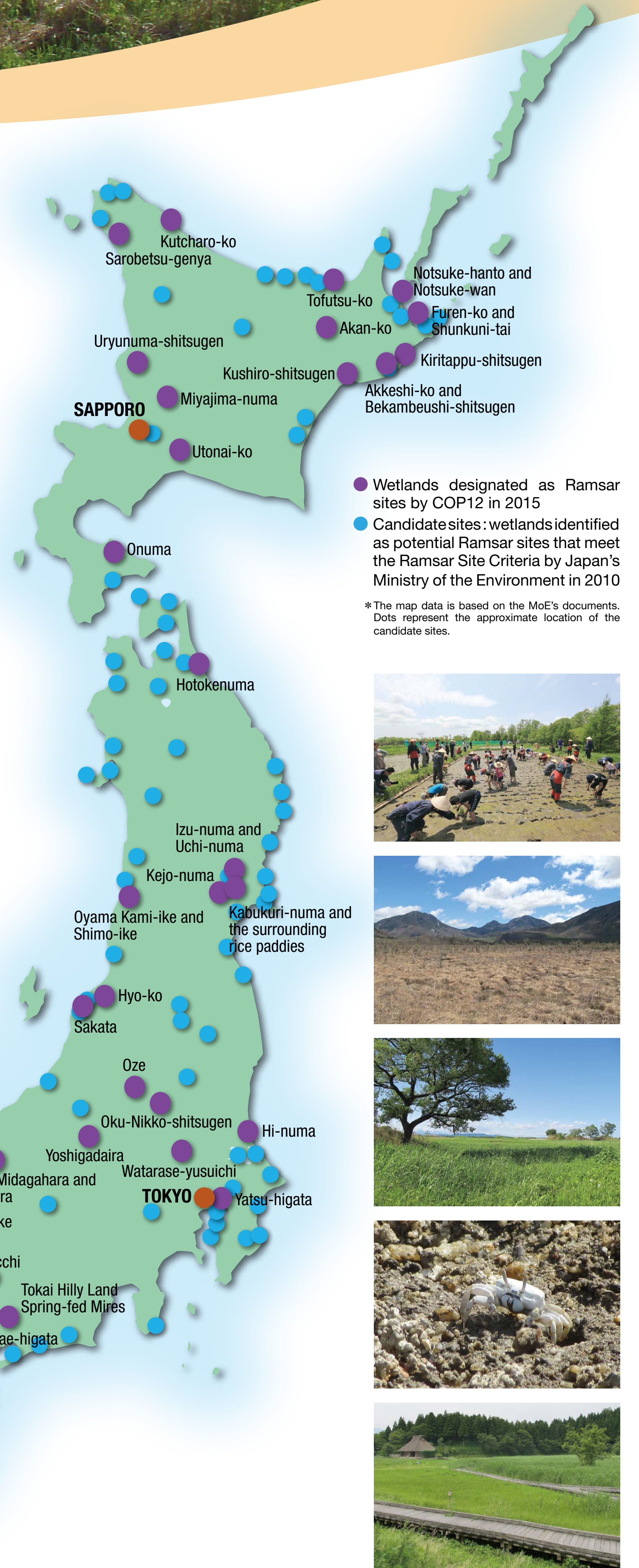
Aiming to further increase Ramsar sites from the current 50 to 100

50 wetlands designated in the last 35 years

The number of Ramsar sites in Japan reached 50 with the designation of four new wetlands in May 2015. Only 11 wetlands were designated in the period of 19 years from 1980, when Japan became a contracting party to Ramsar Convention, to COP7 in 1999. A resolution at COP7 that provided a short-term objective of doubling the Ramsar sites prompted the Japanese government to set a numerical target and undertake its task under The National Biodiversity Strategy in the following 16 years. As a result the number of Ramsar sites in Japan reached 50.

Japan has more than 150 potential Ramsar sites

We proposed to the Ministry of the Environment that it set a long-term objective of bringing the number of Japan's Ramsar sites to 100. Although the position of the Ministry in 2005 was that about 50 Ramsar sites might be the upper limit, they announced as many as 172 candidate sites in September 2010. Twelve of them have since been designated and 160 remain to be designated.



100 Ramsar sites as mid-to-long-term target

A draft resolution for adoption by COP12 also recognizes a significant increase of Ramsar sites as an important objective. For Japan to fulfill its responsibilities as a contracting party, it is necessary to proactively designate those 160 candidate sites as Ramsar sites. Bringing the total number of Japan's Ramsar sites to 100 is not a daunting target.