

# Overview of the Master Plan for the “Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony”

## Nature of the Master Plan

- The Master Plan shows the basic direction for facility development and expected activities in the Symbolic Space.
- It should be subject to change, based upon further consideration.

## Significance and Location of the Symbolic Space

- The Symbolic Space, as **the national center for the revival of Ainu culture**, should be a base:
  - 1) To promote nationwide understanding of the history and culture of the Ainu; and
  - 2) To pass on traditional Ainu culture and expand the horizons of Ainu culture toward the creation and development of new culture.
- The Symbolic Space will be developed **around Lake Poroto** and its surrounding area in **Shiraoi**, Hokkaido Prefecture.
- The **nickname** of the Symbolic Space **in the Ainu language** should be sought from the public.



Location of Shiraoi

## Functions of the Symbolic Space

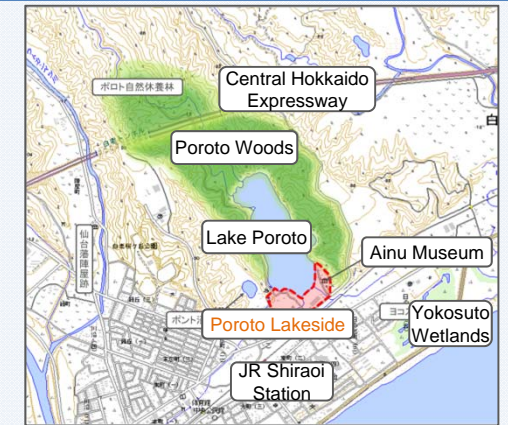
- **As the national center where people study and pass on the history and culture of the Ainu**, the Symbolic Space will have the museum, traditional houses, craft studios, and other facilities, to ensure multifaceted transmission and sharing of Ainu culture.
- The Symbolic Space must be *literally symbolic* in the sense that it embodies mutual respect and harmony among different ethnicities.
- Well-planned activities will be offered so that people of all ages can learn Ainu views of nature and the world.
- Major functions are:
  - 1) **Exhibition and Research**
    - The Symbolic Space should introduce the history and culture of the Ainu in a comprehensive and integrated manner, ensure the implementation of practical research and study, and work as a hub of the museum network in Japan.
  - 2) **Succession to Ainu Traditions and Culture, and Fostering of Successors**
    - With its rich natural environment fully utilized, the Symbolic Space should enable Ainu people to practice and hand down their cultural activities, and to foster their successors.
  - 3) **Hands-on Experiences and Cultural Exchanges**
    - In order to enhance public understanding of the Ainu, the Symbolic Space should enable the general public to learn and experience various elements of Ainu culture, including traditional dances as well as arts and crafts, and should ensure face-to-face exchanges with Ainu people.
  - 4) **Information Dissemination**
    - The Symbolic Space should work as the national/international center for Ainu cultural information, providing the information on Ainu cultural activities across the country.
  - 5) **Park**
    - The Symbolic Space should provide an attractive space where diverse users feel relaxed and comfortable, with making the most of the natural splendor of the Lake Poroto area.
  - 6) **Respect for Spirituality of the Ainu**
    - The Symbolic Space should promote understanding of and respect for the spirituality of the Ainu, through exhibiting traditional rituals and ceremonies.
    - The Space should also give special consideration to memorial ceremonies by Ainu people for Ainu human remains.
- The on-going *Ior* (traditional living spaces of Ainu people) Regeneration Project at Shiraoi should be integrated into the functions of the Symbolic Space.



Lake Poroto and traditional Ainu houses

## Spatial Area of the Symbolic Space

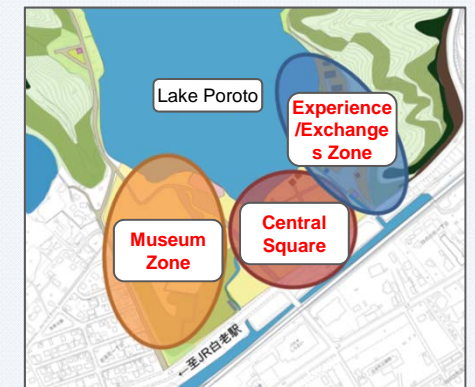
- The Symbolic Space will consist of two types of areas:
  - **Core Area:** With the museum etc. at its center, the whole of the Core Area is to be used as a park, and utilized for a variety of activities.
    - ➔ The area will be comprised of the Poroto Lakeside area, together with part of the adjoining Poroto Woods (national forest).
  - **Related Areas:** Surrounding the Core Area, the Related Areas are to be sites for handing down and hands-on experiences of Ainu traditions and culture, with preserving their natural splendor.
    - ➔ The areas will be mainly comprised of the sites of the on-going *Ior* (traditional living spaces of Ainu people) Regeneration Project at Shiraoi.



Lake Poroto and its Environs

## Zoning of Poroto Lakeside

- With regard to the use of Poroto Lakeside, it should be divided into the following three zones:
  - 1) **Central Square**
    - As the entrance to the Symbolic Space, this zone should play the role of welcoming visitors, who can appreciate the natural splendor of the Lake Poroto area.
  - 2) **Museum Zone**
    - With the museum at its center, this zone should play the role of exhibiting the history and culture of the Ainu in a comprehensive and integrated manner, as well as conducting practical research and study, and fostering successors to Ainu traditions.
  - 3) **Experience/Exchanges Zone**
    - In this zone, a *kotan* (traditional Ainu village) will be replicated for handing down of Ainu traditions, hands-on experiences of Ainu culture, and cultural exchanges among people across the world, including foreign indigenous peoples.



Prospective Zoning of Poroto Lakeside

## Issues to be Considered

- **The Basic Vision for the museum** should be formulated **by no later than the summer of 2013**.
- **The outline of planned activities to inherit traditional Ainu culture, to train successors, and to promote cultural experiences** should be drawn **by no later than the summer of 2013**, with interviews with experts and young Ainu people.
- **The framework of the development and management schemes** for the Symbolic Space should be established **within FY2013**.
- The human resources and expertise of the Ainu Museum, which is currently operating on Poroto Lakeside, should be utilized to the fullest in managing and operating the Symbolic Space.
- Cooperation and collaboration among the national, prefectural, and municipal governments should be strengthened.
- Expedient consideration is required to **repatriate Ainu human remains** in universities to, if known, the descendants, and to **move the remaining human remains to a memorial facility** to be developed **in the Symbolic Space**.