

## Environmental Protection in SEGAMISAWA

The great nature "Segamisawa" is located in the southern part of Yokohama City. Under the state of a large-scale development being planned, residents are trying to protect and save nature where a diverse ecosystem of fireflies remains.



Photo by Hotaruno Furusato Segamisawa Kikin(Fund) Blog

<https://ameblo.jp/segamisawa>

## What kind of place is SEGAMISAWA??



Photo authorized by photo AC

It is said that in Yokohama city, where urbanization is progressing, Segamisawa is the last great nature left.

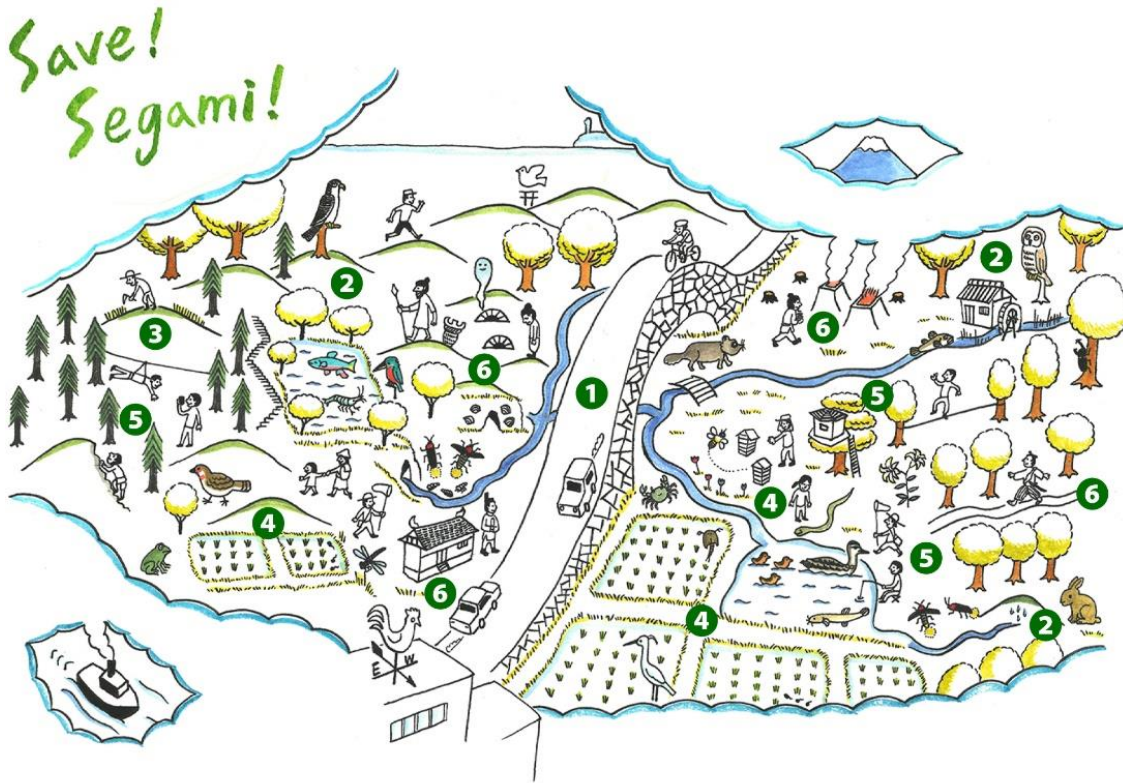
Wetlands and grasslands spread out along the beautiful small stream, and the scenery of the valley that surrounds them is preserved.

This green region is Yokohama's largest habitat of fireflies. It is a treasure trove of nature where various creatures live, including wild birds such as goshawks, egrets, kingfishers and insects such as butterflies and dragonflies.

In addition, there are many valuable historical and cultural heritages, such as ruins from the Jomon and Nara periods, ancient steelmaking ruins, and shell fossils.

## Conservation more than Development

-Plans for human being and ecosystem and for Yokohama's future-



### **(1) Halting the decline of green space**

Rebuilding the green belt: Regeneration of the western side of the green space, where the breath of life has decreased due to the city road splitting the green space.

Making the municipal road 'Maioka kamigou-sen' an overpass will resurrect the waterflow, which is now an underdrainage. In addition, by reviving the paddy fields, an even richer ecosystem will return.

### **(2) Keeping the ecosystem of the valley**

Protecting the fireflies and other wildlife that inhabit in the Satoyama by keeping the water source of the valley: In Segamisawa, you can find various living things such as fireflies, loaches, goshawks, and kingfishers. The water originating from the valley flows into Sagami Bay via Itachi River to Kashio River, then to Sakai River, nurturing abundant lives.

### **(3) Appropriate maintenance and management leading to conservation**

Appropriate maintenance and management by human hands promotes a healthy balance of satoyama ecosystem: Conservation does not mean that we don't touch anything. There is a difference between human intervention (to maintain a satoyama in a healthy state) and development.

### **(4) Opening of urban farms**

Realization of Yokohama City's urban agricultural Plan 'Creating a place where citizens can feel agriculture close to them.': Holding workshops by experts. Agricultural experiences in the satoyama's nature enable the development of healthy civic communities and the realization of healthy lifestyles.

### **(5) Satoyama for children**

Open the space as a place for children to encounter the nature of satoyama: Opportunities to spend time in the nature nurture rich sensibilities. In addition, the improvement of the parenting environment will lead to the foundation of the future of Yokohama City, such as population growth.

### **(6) Research, learn and enjoy!**

Research on the ecology and history of flora and fauna by students and research institutes: Segamisawa is an outcrop of shellfish fossils dating back 1.6 million years. It is preserved and utilized as a field of biology, geology, and surveys and research of scattered Jomon and Edo period ruins.

Holding marche, festivals and outdoor events: Harvest festivals for products from Segamisawa such as vegetables, rice, honey, etc. and marche for Yokohama's local vegetables and animal products will be held on a regular basis. Also, outdoor events that make use of Segamisawa's nature will become a popular event too.

## **The History of SEGAMISAWA's Conservation**

Author: Kamigo Signature Association

“Segamisawa, connected to the Segami Citizen's Forest, one of Yokohama's seven major green spaces, is known as the home of fireflies. And it is a treasure trove of nature where precious animals and plants live. In addition, it is a green space that can be called a common asset of the citizens of Yokohama, where the lush green satoyama scenery, and cultural heritage such as ancient steelmaking ruins and a horizontal weir used in Edo period remain.

A large-scale Kamigo development plan emerged in 2005. In June 2007, citizens who loved Segamisawa and had been involved in conservation campaigns formed the “Signature Group to Protect Green Spaces from Kamigo Development” and began activities calling for the cancellation of the development plan and the full preservation of green spaces. In December of the same year, they submitted a petition to the Mayor of Yokohama and the City Council with more than 92,000 signatures from all over the city and the country.

In September 2008, the Yokohama City Planning Council did not approve the plan, and the Kamigo Development Project was canceled. However, Tokyu Construction, a developer who is also the landowner, continued to express their “intension to develop”. In January 2012, they finally submitted a preliminary consultation form for the third development plan to the City of Yokohama. We the “Signature Association”, once again pointed out the problems of this development plan and started a new activity to call for the full preservation of Segamisawa.

And the new movement that began in January 2014 is now at a critical crossroads that shakes the living and natural environment of the region. In January 2014, the developer submitted a large-scale development plan to the city again. The plan was to reduce the area of development from the previous plan. While most of the valley on the east side of the city street would be developed as a park, the entire valley on the west side of the city street would be changed from an urbanization control zone to an urbanization zone and converted to housing, commercial, medical, and

welfare facilities, etc. Part of the valley on the east side would be converted to a circular road, restaurants, etc. The City of Yokohama accepted this new plan as a "balanced plan," and it became the Yokohama City Draft Urban Plan."

### Abandon the Development Project

Then the plan was approved by a majority vote at the 147th Yokohama City Urban Planning Council meeting held on January 15, 2018. Tokyu Construction then proceeded with preparations for the development, but as the following newspaper article states, it was suddenly announced that the development project would be discontinued in March 2023.

The below is a translation of the article from Tokyo Shimbun.

"Yokohama's Kamigo district, where wetlands and ancient ruins still remain, has stopped development of the main part of the site." Tokyo Shimbun, March 3, 2023

"Tokyu Construction (Shibuya-ku, Tokyo) decided to abandon the main part of the Kamigo development project. The project was premised on a large amount of fill would be used, but public concern about the fill increased due to the mudslide disaster in Atami City, Shizuoka Prefecture. In addition, the project was determined to be difficult to continue due to the inflated construction costs caused by rising prices. For many years, the project had gone through twists and turns, involving citizens who wanted to preserve green space and landowners who wanted the project to go forward. The sudden decision has surprised those involved and caused a stir. (Hiroyuki Abe)"



The signboard that Tokyu Construction installed at the site in accordance with Yokohama City ordinances has red diagonal tape and "Notice of Discontinuation of Development Project" affixed in the middle. = In Sakae Ward, Yokohama City

[Note] Tokyu Construction had mainly positioned the project to build housing, commercial stores, and medical facilities on the west side of the approximately 30 hectares (about seven times the size of the Tokyo Dome)

## Reference

1) Save! Segami Homepage

< [SAVE! SEGAMI | 横浜最後の大自然を守るアクション \(savesegami.com\)](https://www.savesegami.com/)>

2) Blog by Signature Association 上郷開発から緑地を守る署名の会のブログ

< [瀬上沢だより 上郷開発から緑地を守る署名の会のブログ \(fc2.com\)](https://fc2.com/blog/entry/168533498)>

3) The Tokyo Shimbun (Tokyo web) Article of 2023/3/3

< [湿地・古代遺跡残る横浜・上郷地区 主要部分の開発中止 盛り土前提「新たな配慮必要」：東京新](https://www.tokyo-np.co.jp/article/20230303-01)

[聞 TOKYO Web \(tokyo-np.co.jp\)](https://www.tokyo-np.co.jp)>

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