Grand Design for the 21st Century

Promotion of Regional Independence and Creation of Beautiful National Land

By Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (Japan)

Cabinet Decision
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The government has decided the following paper, "Grand Design for the 21st Century - Promotion of regional independence and creation of beautiful national land -", as Comprehensive National Development Plan, stipulated in Comprehensive National Land Development Act (Act No.205, 1950) Article 7 Clause 1.

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PART I Basis of the Planned National Land Development

Chapter I

Grand Design for the 21st Century

We are now entering the 21st century. Although it is not clear what new aspects of civilization will mark the new century, there are strong expectations for a society to create new civilization suitable for the new century and to lead the bright future.

Japan is one of the front runners in the global community, and has accomplished the process to catch up with Europe and the United States. The new century will undoubtedly bring with it an increased consciousness of nature and the limited resources on the globe, and raise people's hopes of leading comfortable and dignified lives in which they can enjoy both economic wealth and intellectual satisfaction. As a prerequisite to providing this kind of life, a national land plan is necessary to lead the country toward the following goals: maintaining socioeconomic vitality as the sources of affluence; conserving and recovering the natural environment in order to soothe and heal the human spirit by its blessings; creating the basis for a culture that brings fulfillment and significance to human activities; and providing its citizens with the capability to choose their own lifestyles from various possibilities. In this document, we propose such a plan; we have called it the "Grand Design for the 21st Century."

Section 1
Significant changes in the conditions of the national land
The 20th century's civilization has brought quantitative expansion in economy and unprecedented improvements in living standards, but now people confront the limitation of nature and global resources. At the same time, however, they are finding new possibilities with the progress of advanced informatization. The 20th century has seen Japan eagerly advancing to catch up with other countries—a movement that has resulted in the unipolar concentration in Tokyo. As we move towards the close of the century, however, significant changes are taking place in national consciousness as well as in the trend of times as a whole. In creating a socioeconomic structure for the 21st century, the social and economic features in Japan and its regions will differ greatly from the infrastructure that has prevailed during the fifty years from World War II.

1. Significant changes in national consciousness

Although Japan has achieved remarkable quantitative expansion in economy in the 20th century, it is facing a whole range of problems related to people's lives, the environment, culture and industry. In these circumstances, sense of values and lifestyles are diversifying; these facts have indicated that Japanese socioeconomic should start to pursue not merely efficiency but also qualitative improvements including a balance between human activities and nature. Economically, Japan has accomplished the process to catch up with Europe and the United States. In parallel with this economic maturity, people are beginning to place a higher value on mental fulfillment such as human interaction rather than on material fulfillment. Some elderly people are able to live without being financially dependent on their children, and thanks to improved medical standards, the health of these elderly has much improved. The participation of the healthy and affluent older citizens in society puts more importance on "quality" and "maturity" in every aspect of the socioeconomic.

The systems and customs that were established to make an efficient society that would be able to catch up with Europe and the United States placed importance on uniformity and equality, but they cannot correspond to the change of the times; they have sometimes placed limits on people's freedom to choose in their lives, and have hindered the development of new industries. To correct this situation, deregulation is presently underway to give consumers and entrepreneurs more opportunities to choose at their own risk. Traditional ways of doing things are being reviewed; decentralization is giving local governments more autonomy and helping them to become more independent. More and more volunteer and NPO activities are being conducted, and the systems to support these activities are being studied closely. In the educational field, the focus is shifting toward respect for the individual and specialization to encourage the development of creativity. Significant changes are taking place also in the employment field, including institutional reforms for easier entry to and greater mobility of the labor force.

As a result of urbanization and decreased opportunities to enjoy nature in daily lives, more importance is now being attached to contact with nature than to living convenience. As a result, the number of people is increasing, who place a higher value on nature-rich areas as a place where they spend their free times, bring up their children, etc. They are demanding clean water and air, and have clearly seen the
fundamental importance of a natural environment in their lives. For them nature is not something to be conquered, and they are searching for a new relationship with nature. More attention is being placed on being able to respond flexibly to natural disasters, in addition to safeguards and preventive action.

With the increase in the number of women participating in social affairs, the diversified lifestyles regardless of sex are increasingly being called for. There is a trend towards dismantling the barriers that hinder full female participation in the social affairs. Traditionally, women have been expected to take on household duties and bring up children and take care of the elderly. The conditions necessary to make women full partners in the economic society have yet to be established. Facing a falling birthrate and the resultant decrease in population, there is a movement to establish a system in which children can be brought up by society as a whole. There is also great concern over how to manage the care of the rapidly-increasing number of elderly people in the population.

The changes in people's values described here can be summarized:
1) People are placing more value on quality than on quantity, on comfortable living than on higher income, and on relaxation than on novel experiences and new stimuli.
2) More importance is now being placed on freedom to choose and on self-responsibility.
3) People have realized that nature is a precious part of life and are placing more value on a natural environment.
4) Equal opportunity and equal responsibility for men and women in society are causes that are supported by increasing numbers of people. People are beginning to transcend the traditional gender-based roles and responsibilities.

With this change in values, people are seeking for new cultural experiences and new lifestyles, and desire for the kind of national land development that will enable them to choose how to live, and they want to play a major part in that development process.

2. Global age

The world is moving towards a single global zone in various senses. The environment may suffer further damage from global warming and other factors, and it is highly likely that supplies of food, resources and energy will be restricted on a global scale. In response to such concerns, international systems are being strengthened to preserve the global environment and to promote the circulatory use of resources. In these circumstances, the efforts to conserve the natural environment as a common asset of the future generations and the global community are being undertaken.

More and more, companies are selective in choosing which countries are the best place for their business activities. Also at an individual level, it has become the norm for people to work on an international scale. This means that regional competition will intensify beyond national boundaries. To survive the competition, each region needs to have its own many-sided attractions, including a high quality of life environment, richness in nature and culture, substantiality of the intellectual resources, efficiency of
industrial infrastructure, a high-quality transportation infrastructure, and especially accessibility to the global network. For regions to develop in the right way, drastic reforms must be made to the socioeconomic system to change the existing high-cost structure.

As a result of economic growth in China and the ASEAN countries, it is expected that exchanges between Japan and other Asian countries will increase dramatically in the 21st century. Accordingly, Japan's international exchange system that now focuses on exchanges between large cities with countries that are far away in Europe and the Unites States will be restructured into a system that enables wider forms of exchange including direct exchange with neighboring countries.

3. Decreasing population and the aging society

Japan's population growth has been slowing rapidly mainly because the birthrate is falling. At the beginning of the 21st century, the population will reach a peak and then will almost certainly come into the decrease phase. Concurrently, the number of elderly will all the more increase. As a result of a decrease in the number of people who will shoulder the future development of the regions and an increase in the number of elderly people in the whole country, regional society will change markedly. In the aging society of the 21st century, the economic growth rate will fall off and availability of investment will decrease. To counteract these trends, Japan is now promoting economic efficiency and technical innovation, and pursuing well-focused and more efficient investment in the infrastructure, etc.

With a stagnant population growth, the necessity to transform into urban land use style in order to support an increasing population, will decrease as a whole country. Instead, there is possibility that the land will be developed from a long-term viewpoint. It must also be remembered that there are good sides to an aging society. An aging society is one with a larger number of people who are highly motivated to participate fully in society, and who are content and established in their lives.

4. Highly informatized society

From the beginning of the 21st century, restrictions caused by time and distance will be overcome on both national and global scales, and two-way communications almost "face-to-face," will be possible. As a result, information and communications will take on dramatically greater roles, in various socioeconomic aspects.

If the limitations imposed by distance and transportation are overcome, people will have more freedom to choose where to live, where to work, where to study, etc. At the same time, all regions will have equal access to knowledge and information; barriers on access to information will not be due to distance, but to the capability and determination of the individual. If information on the attractiveness of each region such as richness in nature and culture is readily available, mobility of people may be increased.

Teleworking (working in a remote site using information and communications networks) will reduce the need of traffic and electronic media will replace printed
matter. If these steps are taken properly, they will lead to savings of resources and energy and reduce the load on the environment.

New industries will appear in the field of information and communications. Access to global information resources that are indispensable in many industrial fields will be possible nationwide. Under these circumstances, companies will be able to select the locations of their offices more freely, including the site of their head offices where the managerial decisions are made.

As a result, Japan will become a free and open society. Regional communities, which has suffered from disadvantages that include limited accumulation, and the distance from the large cities, will have greater opportunities to develop themselves. In order to lead regional development, the efforts to utilize global information networks will be one of the significant factors.

Section 2
Necessity for changes in the national land structure

So far, Japan has been structured in a way that has led to an overconcentration of population and function in the Pacific belt, and control emanating from the single polar that is Tokyo. This structure reflects the historical development of the country's economy in this century, in catching up with Europe and the United States within the shortest possible period. Japan's current high economic standard is a result of focusing everything on quantitative growth in economy. At the same time, however, the country has grown around the single polar, Tokyo, and with a single national axis that is called the Pacific belt. This structure is at the root of numerous problems including lack of vitality in rural communities, the lack of comfortable living in large cities, destruction of the natural environment, loss of much of Japan's beautiful scenery, and the country's vulnerability to local disasters.

(The process toward the formation of the unipolar, uniaxial national land structure)

The unipolar, uniaxial national land structure of today's Japan was initially formed under the supervision of the pre-war centralized government to build up heavy chemical industries for the production of materials for the war. Because the Pacific coastal areas provided good locations for importing resources, factories and infrastructures for industries were constructed in those areas. The industrial facilities were devastated during World War II but recovered after the war. Because the infrastructure for heavy chemical industries was already in place, both the government and private companies invested heavily in the areas to catch up with Europe and the United States. With the buildup of industry in these areas, more and more people moved there searching for jobs. The development of urban areas soon followed, with the whole zone eventually forming an axial one that is known as the "Pacific belt." The region led Japan's high economic growth, but also suffered from the problems of overpopulation. Areas outside of the Pacific belt also played their role in production and in environmental conservation. However, the population quickly moved away from those areas that did not provide urban conveniences, resulting in serious
depopulation. This process led Japan into its uniaxial national land structure and emphasized the disparity between regions.

Around the end of the period of high economic growth, heavy industries started to decentralize, induced by government policies and motivated by serious problems related to overpopulation and pollution within the Pacific belt. This trend, however, was brought to a halt during the first and second oil crises. In the period of stable economic growth, industries producing basic materials suffered from structural depression, while processing and assembly industries prospered, leading to unbalanced development within the Pacific belt. Along with the developing service economy, the central managerial functions of companies and financial sectors have been more and more concentrated in Tokyo. This process has resulted in the uniaxial concentration of all important functions around this single polar.

Recently, however, the uniaxial national land structure, which is one of the nation's biggest problems, seems to begin to change. In rural areas, high-speed traffic networks including expressways have been constructed. As a result, the province and prefecture center cities are functioning much better as hubs for their region, and this is having a good result on surrounding communities. However, concentration on Tokyo metropolitan area is still high.

(Numerous problems in the national land)

There are factories in regions outside the Pacific belt, but most are simple production facilities without advanced managerial or R&D functions. More and more these regions are facing severe international competition from the global economy and production facilities in these regions move overseas. Both for international and domestic exchange, these regions depend in the main upon the international exchange functions and the advanced urban functions of the metropolitan areas, relying on cultural knowledge and information that originates from Tokyo via the media. The regions are still far from making full use of histories of their own culture and interactions. People living in the regions are also far from enjoying the riches of their natural environment. Within a prefecture or regional block, there are places where functions are concentrated all in one area. Problems of depopulation and aging are becoming more noticeable, mainly in regions where there is a lack of urban conveniences from province and prefecture center cities. Especially in the hilly and mountainous areas that cover most of the nation and that have played various roles in people's livelihoods, young people who would normally form the core of the community workforce are leaving for the cities, and the population is falling drastically. As a result, it has become difficult for these areas to keep the communities running smoothly. This threatens the safety and security of people's livelihoods, because farmland, forests, etc., which form a large part of the land management, cannot be managed properly, leading to numerous problems related to environmental conservation, disaster prevention and food productivity.

Within the Pacific belt where there is an overconcentration of population and functions, especially in large cities, there are many problems including degradation of the living environment, traffic jams, increased load on the environment bringing more
air and water pollution, and tight supplies of water. In the process towards urbanization, farmland and forests areas have decreased drastically. The water quality in rivers and coastal areas has fallen and embankments have been built that prevent people from approaching easily. As a result, people have few opportunities to enjoy nature in their daily lives. As a result of the formation of modern but sterile and uniform regions, there is no diversity of culture and lifestyle between regions. No progress has been made in solving the overpopulation problem, while in the centers of large cities including Tokyo, the population is decreasing and communities of the areas are being destroyed. In the industrial zones, because of changes in the industrial structure and logistics, vacant lots around the coast where factories or railroad loading yards used to be are sometimes left unused or are not used fully.

Tokyo is the capital of Japan and companies concentrate their central management and international exchange functions in the Tokyo metropolitan area. These functions are becoming an important part of business, and other regions rely on Tokyo to provide these functions. If a major earthquake or some similar disaster befalls Tokyo and the city can no longer function, the whole nation will be paralyzed. In addition, some of Japan's main transportation channels converge on a very narrow area to respond to the concentrated traffic demands within the Pacific belt, and this could result in traffic throughout the nation grinding to a halt if these channels are damaged by disaster such as a major earthquake or flood.

It is clear that if Japan continues with this unbalanced national land structure, the socioeconomic prospects for the future are grim.

(Restructuring the national land structure for the 21st century)

National land structure in Japan has undergone numerous changes reflecting the characteristics of the age. In keeping pace with socioeconomic development, the factors that determine national land structure have been diverse and complicated; in the beginning, natural conditions such as geographic and climatic, and also political systems, industrial and traffic systems, cultural considerations, and interactions with foreign countries. Viewed from an overall historical perspective, the current national land structure that is concentrated on Tokyo and the Pacific belt is only 100 years old, and should not be thought of as a fixed national land structure. Urbanization fed by the rapid growth in population and industrialization has now reached a turning point, under the circumstance; a decreasing population and changes in the industrial structure. In these circumstances it is well within our capabilities to restructure the national land structure.

The nation's uniaxial, unipolar national land structure must be changed if we are to rebuild national land structure that will fit for the 21st century civilization, in order to keep pace with changes in national consciousness and with current global trends.

Section 3
Creating multi-axial national land structure

(National land development for the 21st century)
To lead the new land structure, the following concept will be realized.

First, the hierarchical inter-city structure with Tokyo at the top has created a "hub and dependent satellites" relationship. This hierarchy needs to be flattened to create one based on independence and mutual support. In other words, instead of pursuing a scale merit through concentration of cities, another merit will be pursued through interregional cooperation and interactions of cities over the wide range.

Second, comfortable living conditions must be supported by more efficient production, distribution and consumption. Each region should be developed to provide wide-ranging functions including protecting and restoring the natural environment and creating new cultures and lifestyles.

Third, each region should have the facilities to conduct international exchange and be able to provide the most advanced urban functions, not only according to their role within the regional structure of Japan, but also as a member of the Asian Pacific region and of the global society.

From this viewpoint, regions located outside the Pacific belt have certain advantages. They have not been greatly influenced by the urbanization and industrialization of the 20th century, and thus they are still surrounded by a rich natural environment and many residents still live a traditional lifestyle. Some regions have a long history of international exchange because of their geographical position. These regions will be positioned at the frontier of the evolution of new cultures for the 21st century. The Pacific belt and adjacent areas will be rebuilt to improve the quality of life, making use of all that has been accumulated so far.

(Direction of formation of national axial zones)

By changing the idea to restructure the country, the leading roles played by concentrations of population and industries in the nation's development in the 20th century will decrease, and the roles played by the following elements will be increased. They are: climate (basic conditions determining culture and lifestyle), the natural environment network including the ecological and water systems, historical experience of exchange and cultural heritage, and geographical features that position them in the Asian Pacific region. If Japan continues with efforts to formation of multi axial national land structure consistently through the 21st century, individual and unique regions will form into zones based on common factors. The zones will gradually establish their own distinctive features and the country will enjoy regional differences and diversity based on mutual support and cooperation between these unique regions.

There are currently, activities to form long north-south axial zones are underway in several areas in Japan under the "Plans of National Axial Zone." These areas are called "national axial zones." Through mutual cooperation of several national axial zones, the uniaxial land structure will be transformed into a multiaxial one.

Based on following four plans proposed by the regions, formations of three national axial zones are currently expected.
1) "North-Eastern National Axial Zone", which covers the central highlands, the north part of the Kanto area, the Pacific side of the Tohoku area and Hokkaido, and their peripheral areas
2) "Japan Sea Coastal National Axial Zone," which covers the north part of Kyushu, the Japan Sea side of Honshu, the Japan Sea side of Hokkaido and their peripheral areas
3) "New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone," which covers Okinawa, central and south parts of Kyushu, Shikoku, the Kii Peninsula, coastal areas around Ise Bay and their peripheral areas
4) At the same time, pacific belt and its peripheral is expected to be reconstructed in Western Japan national axial zone.

These national axial zones will gradually develop their own specific features through national and regional efforts.

In the national axial zones that will be formed outside the Pacific belt, features of daily living, working environment, cultural exchange and contact with nature will be qualitatively different from those in the Pacific belt that played a role as a model during Japan's modernization efforts. In these zones, small but well-organized urban communities will flourish based on two different networks: a network of multiple urban communities, which are linked by efficient and environmentally friendly transportation, and information and communications systems, and a nature network including beautiful fields, forests, rivers and coasts. Individually attractive urban communities and rural communities within the zones will cooperate so that residents will be able to enjoy lives that are both comfortable and convenient. Each zone will develop new cultures and lifestyles based on its historic and climatic characteristics and will build unique and intellect-intensive value-added industries. To respond to the expected increase in exchanges involving people, materials and information, it will be necessary to develop new and highly flexible transportation systems and information and communications systems based on regional characteristics.

In the Pacific belt, the current decrease in population growth will give an opportunity to solve the problems related to overpopulation in the large cities. At the same time, the Pacific belt will be made a more attractive place to live as new urban cultures and lifestyles come to maturity, with urban scenery made more attractive, and by restructuring industries and protecting and restoring the natural environment.

With the advent of an advanced information-oriented society, people will be able to make global interactions beyond the limits of time and space wherever they live in Japan. Under the situations, each of the zones will be open to unlimited interaction with the rest of the world, and will actively interact with the countries in the Asian Pacific region that are their geographical neighbors.

The Pacific belt was built up over the more than 100 years since the Meiji era. Taking a similar long-term view, the basic direction of the national land policy for the 21st century is towards well-balanced land development that will give people the freedom to follow diverse lifestyles by changing the unipolar, uniaxial national land into a multi-axial one. Renovating the Pacific belt and peripheral areas, and promoting mutual support and cooperation between the new national axial zones, will transform...
Japan into an attractive country that provides its citizens with diversified opportunities to live and work comfortably regardless of gender or age. This "garden island" will be a country that we can rightfully be proud of; one in which people can evolve new cultures and lifestyles based on the historic and climatic characteristics of each individual region. This will be Japan's new identity in the global age.

Section 4
The four national axial zones

Each of the four national axial zones is expected to use its potential to develop itself and to involve itself in international interactions with neighboring countries as explained below.

In the North-Eastern National Axial Zone, two layers of networks will be established: a network of cities and towns on a scale suited to coexistence with nature in the 21st century, and a network of rich green mountains, wide river valleys and basins. The zone will make further exchanges with the Asian Pacific region and northern regions overseas. Especially in Hokkaido, which covers a vast area, an international exchange base will be established to promote exchange with the northern regions overseas.

In the Japan Sea Coastal National Axial Zone, two layers of networks will be established: a network of historical and traditional cities and towns, and a network of snowy highlands, rivers and small- and medium-sized coastal plains. The zone will cooperate internationally with areas on the Korean Peninsula, the north-eastern part of China and coastal areas in Russia for environmental conservation of the Japan Sea. The zone will also make further economic and cultural exchange with the areas located around the Japan Sea.

In the New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone, two layers of networks will be established: a network of advanced cities, where oceanic resources can be utilized for urban development while protecting the environment, and a network of the Kii Peninsula that is swept by the Kuroshio Current, small islands and inland seas characterized by their warm climate. The zone will make further exchanges with the rapidly-developing Asian Pacific region. Because of its geographical and historical features, an important international exchange base will be established in Okinawa.

In the Western Japan National Axial Zone, attractive residential areas will be created by linking highly urbanized areas, areas of water, and peripheral areas in which the natural environment has been restored by planting and managing forests and farmland. It is expected that the areas within the zone will share roles with the world's other megalopolises in the Asian Pacific region, while also competing with them.

Chapter II
Objectives and Strategies
This plan sets out objectives and develops strategic measures that meet the demands of the age. Targeting the years 2010 through 2015, it aims at establishing the basis for attainment of the goals set out in the "Grand Design for the 21st Century," a long-term plan for restructuring the country.

In the targeted period, people's ways of thinking will further change and there will be more restrictions on human and financial resources imposed by an aging society with fewer children. To restructure the country under these circumstances, each region must make its own efforts towards a unique and autonomous regional development. Not only the central government and local governments, but also private companies, volunteer organizations, and local citizens should all be encouraged to positively participate in regional development based on mutual cooperation that will enable each of the entities to display their capabilities. This plan, with its emphasis on autonomous regional development based on each region's decision and responsibilities, reveals new guidelines for national land development through participation and mutual cooperation among the different entities.

Section 1
Basic objectives

To establish the basis for implementing the "Grand Design for the 21st Century," the following fundamental issues should be tackled comprehensively in restructuring the country.

(Create regions that are independent and that residents can take pride in)

First, encourage each region to develop independently and to find its own identity as a region rich in nature and culture that residents can be proud of.

To restructure the country around more than one axis, to provide people with more freedom to follow their own lifestyles, and to provide the country with more diversity, it is important to encourage autonomous regional development. Each region needs to develop itself as a place where people can lead fulfilling lives in a high-quality working environment, making full use of its regional characteristics including history, climate, and cultural traditions. This development should be the autonomous efforts of each region, based on its options and responsibilities.

For each region to promote its independence under its own efforts, it is necessary to improve the institutional framework, including further decentralization. It is also necessary to bring improvements to people's lives and the overall infrastructure of the country within a certain range, in order to give equal opportunity to each of the regions. With establishment of equal opportunities, it is expected that each of the regions will creatively and wisely develop itself into an attractive region, making the most of its own individual characteristics.

(Make Japan a safe and comfortable place to live)
Second, improve safety measures against a range of natural disasters including large-scale earthquakes, and guarantee people's safety in a society that will have more old people and a smaller population in the face of global climate changes and reductions in global resources.

The major earthquake that struck the Hanshin and Awaji areas forcibly reminded people of the importance of emergency preparedness, and there are loud calls for increased safeguards and improvements to the country's risk management systems. Natural disasters are fairly prevalent in Japan, and it is important for the country to be able to respond with purposeful but flexible measures that give people greater protection against disasters while not disturbing the natural environment unduly. The Hanshin and Awaji areas must be steadily rebuilt to serve as models in the national and regional development of a safe country.

With the increasing number of old people and the decreasing number of children, people's values and lifestyles are diversifying more and more, and they are calling for development of the regions that will enable each citizen to participate fully in society and to lead a meaningful life regardless of gender or age. Furthermore, to deal with global climate changes and tightening supplies of food and energy, it is necessary to ensure stable supplies of water, food, energy and other essentials.

(Enjoy and nourish sound nature's blessing)

Third, recognize that the environment and its resources that form an indispensable part of the basis for human existence are limited. From this recognition, enjoy the blessings of nature (both spiritual and physical) in sustainable styles and nourish them for future generations.

A natural environment is an indispensable part of a comfortable and attractive lifestyle, because it provides both spiritual and physical benefits. Japan's natural environment is an integral part of the global environment, and common basis for human existence. Japanese citizens should be able to enjoy the abundance of nature's blessing, but they need to pass on to the future generations the attractive and well-conserved environment.

Responding to quantitative and qualitative degradation of the natural environment, it is important to try to conserve and restore attractive rural areas, forests, rivers and coasts, building up the structure of the country around a network of nature areas with the standpoint of securing biological diversity. It is also important to reorganize the relationship between human activities and the natural environment. Socioeconomic activities and accompanying lifestyles that cause damage to the global environment as a result of mass production, mass consumption and mass waste should be stopped, and recycling and the efficient use of resources and energies should be promoted, making use of nature's own powers of purifying and recovery. Japan needs to build a land structure that is environmentally friendly, based upon the natural circulation of materials.

(Build a vigorous economic society)
Fourth, in the intensified regional competition both inside and outside Japan, promote economic structural reform and build a vigorous economy that ensures a high standard of living and stable employment.

In accordance with the further globalization and rapid growth of the Asian economies, regional competition is intensifying beyond national boundaries, and private companies are starting to be selective about the countries and regions where they do business. With the increase in the number of old people and the decreasing number of children, there is concern that Japan's economic vitality will diminish. To build the basis of a suitable land structure, a vigorous economic society must be established by developing highly value-added industries that use regional resources and that create new industries to match new lifestyles.

It is therefore important to promote deregulation and create a less restrictive business environment, change the high-cost structure, and improve commodity distribution systems, information and communications, and international exchange including software aspects. These measures will ensure that Japan is able to provide an internationally-attractive industrial environment and that companies locating to this country will be able to become internationally competitive. It is also important to improve facilities for research, technological development, and manpower development, to create new industries, and upgrade existing ones based on cooperation between the industrial, academic and governmental sectors.

(Make the nation open to the world)

Fifth, to make every part of Japan open to the world, encourage each region to play an international role and use its individual characteristics in making exchanges with the world.

As a result it is expected that regional exchange will become more active in numerous fields including economics, science, culture, sport, and tourism beyond national boundaries. It is also expected that, in addition to increases in overseas activities by Japanese companies and individuals, more foreign companies and individuals will visit Japan for a variety of activities. In the global age, Japan needs to establish an identity that it can be proud of, with each of its regions constituting part of the global society. It is important to provide the regions with what they need to enable them to make use of their own resources and appeal in playing an international role, and to build the basis for a country that is truly open to the Asian Pacific region and the world.

In addition to establishing and improving the systems and infrastructure for international exchange, it is also important to have a world-class scientific and medical infrastructure that is beneficial to the global society, and especially to the peoples of the Asian Pacific region. On global issues including those related to the environment and disaster prevention, Japan and its regions need to participate aggressively and contribute their technology and experience to international activities.

Section 2
Strategies
The following strategies will be adopted to attain the basic objectives and to open a way to restructure the country to form the proposed regionally-distributed structure, while promoting public participation and regional cooperation.

As the strategies targeting specific areas, develop communities in rural villages and small and medium-sized towns that are independent and that residents can feel proud of, where the rich natural environment and unique traditions are preserved despite the trend towards depopulation and aging. Also in the metropolitan areas, which have led national economic development, renovate urban space to develop safer living environment, to restore natures, and to establish a more vibrant economic society.

As the strategies targeting wider areas, encourage the spread of inter-regional cooperation and exchange to help each region to develop itself into a unique and independent community, in order to increase inter-regional competition both inside and outside the country. Also create large-scale interaction spheres to assist each region to become internationally independent in order to make Japan more open to the world.

Build and improve the information and communications and transportation infrastructures to facilitate inter-regional cooperation and exchange, and to give each region equal access to the range of functions.

(Build nature-rich residential areas)

Create a web of communities rich in nature as the frontiers of a new way of living for the 21st century. These areas will include small and medium-sized towns and rural communities including hilly and mountainous areas. Further cooperation within and between areas will allow them to develop as independent "nature-rich residential areas," in which people can live with dignity and comforts and enjoy rural lives and urban services.

Nature-rich residential areas will be formed autonomously by regional cooperation. The areas will be comprised of small and medium-sized towns functioning as their centers, and of surrounding rural communities. The towns, as the centers of the areas, will provide the surrounding rural communities with basic medical and welfare services, educational and cultural facilities and other urban services including services for consumers, together with employment opportunities. In the nature-rich residential areas, high quality of life and work will result from the following measures. Establish new industrial systems based on agriculture, forestry and fishery and on the comprehensive utilization of natural and cultural resources in the area. Develop new industries that are not dependent on the location by using advanced information and communications technologies. Improve the living conditions and infrastructure in the area. Or protect and manage the natural environment in rural areas, forests, rivers and coastline to provide the area with attractive amenities.

Further, improve the transportation and information and communications infrastructures to encourage exchange and cooperation between nature-rich residential areas and larger cities. Based on this exchange and cooperation, the nature-rich residential areas will be able to provide its residents with the advanced medical and
cultural services of the cities, and more people will visit or move to the areas. At the same time, encourage people to adopt a "multi-habitation" (more than one residence) lifestyle and to choose "teleworking" (remote working using information and communications networks) to further stimulate the areas. Make the areas into international sightseeing areas or routes that represent Japan to make residents feel proud and develop "small world cities."

(Renovate metropolitan areas)

Metropolitan areas that have generated numerous problems related to overpopulation and overconcentration of functions will be made into places where people can live full and comfortable lives, where the human dimension has been restored. At the same time, to aggressively contribute to the maintenance of Japan's economic vitality, sophisticated functions that only metropolitan areas can offer will be put to efficient use, and their spaces will be renovated and utilized effectively.

To renovate the areas into comfortable urban places, solve problems relating to long commuting time and traffic jams. Redevelop areas in which old wooden houses are built close together and establish centers for disaster relief. Improve urban communities, placing importance on environment, amenities and scenery, and restore and preserve the natural environment along the bay areas in these metropolitan areas. Furthermore, distribute the numerous functions concentrated in the central districts among the areas. Efficiently utilize large tracts of land that have not been fully utilized because of the changes in the industrial structure, and improve the basic urban functions as part of a drastic restructuring of urban areas.

To respond to changes in social needs and to progress in the international division of labor, consolidate and further develop advanced technologies and skills accumulated in industrial sectors that have supported Japan's economy. At the same time, taking advantage of the urban facilities and easy access to accumulated industrial assets, promote new businesses and enterprises in these areas.

While making efforts to improve urban functions and quality of industry, establish "major core city areas" throughout the country as centers of advanced urban functions and as international spheres of interaction. "Major core city areas" include the three metropolitan areas, hub cities acting as provincial centers and prefectural hub cities of similar scale and importance. The "major core city areas" will share roles and mutually cooperate to reduce the loads on metropolitan areas and to contribute to the renovation of these areas.

(Form regional cooperation corridors)

Municipalities that have different characteristics will mutually cooperate widely even beyond prefectoral boundaries to develop independent and dynamic regional communities. These "regional cooperation corridors" will form in range with each other throughout the country.

In the regional cooperation corridors, each of the municipalities will share regional resources and attractive features widely, and share roles based on cooperation that they see fit.
Transportation and information and communications infrastructures in the regional cooperation corridors will form the basis for active exchange of people, materials, and information. Cultural, industrial and other activities will be conducted widely, beyond the ordinary living areas, giving people more options in their lives. Inter-regional cooperation will promote efficient locating and effective use of various facilities among regions. In addition, tourism and other regional industries will be promoted and active regional communities will be formed. The regional cooperation corridors will provide space in which each region, with its different history and culture, can cooperate and conduct exchanges to enhance recognition of the unique characteristics of the region and to create new cultural experiences and values.

The formation of attractive and unique regional cooperation corridors throughout the country will contribute to active and independent regional development.

(Form international spheres of interaction on a large scale)

Form international spheres of interaction on a large scale in multiple parts of Japan to enable every part of the country to survive regional competition and promote inter-regional cooperation beyond national boundaries. These spheres will be independent of large cities such as Tokyo and make their own autonomous international exchanges.

The international spheres of interaction on a large scale will have world-class infrastructures for exchange. Designed around Japan's geographical features and socioeconomic situation, the spheres will be a little larger than regional blocks and will be formed around major core city areas, based on inter-regional cooperation.

In these spheres, numerous facilities will be established and made use of for international exchange based on the transportation infrastructure-including airports and harbors that provide easier access to other countries such as the Asian Pacific region-and the information and communications infrastructure. In addition, people will be encouraged to develop the skills needed to improve international communications. As a result, more international exchanges will be made in diverse fields including economics, science, culture, sports and tourism. Through such international cooperation and exchange, each region will develop its own internationally-attractive environment that the residents can take pride in.

The formation of international spheres of interaction on a large scale will stimulate the establishment of Japan's new dynamic regional economic structure, and will be the basis for creating a country that is open to the world through numerous international exchanges.

The strategies described above will promote the achievement of the basic objectives and will form the basis for further efforts towards the implementation of the Grand Design for the 21st Century. The creation of nature-rich residential areas will promote regional linkage in areas located outside the urban areas including the Pacific belt, assist regional independence, and will contribute to nature conservation. As a result, attractive regions that residents can take pride in will develop throughout the country, and the formation of the proposed regionally-distributed structure will be promoted. The renovation of metropolitan areas will contribute to solving problems
related to overpopulation in these areas including Tokyo, where population and functions are concentrated. Safe and amenable living space will be provided with the most advanced urban services. The industrial structure will be changed and the Pacific belt and its surrounding areas will be redeveloped into the Western Japan National Axial Zone. The formation of major core city areas will contribute to changing the hierarchical structure between the cities and towns into a flattened network structure.

The creation of regional cooperation corridors will activate the communities through inter-regional cooperation and exchanges. Multiple regional cooperation corridors in the north-south direction will be grouped into four national axial zones. Also corridors formed in the east-west direction will help the zones to mutually supplement and cooperate with each other. Furthermore the creation of international spheres of interaction throughout the country will dramatically increase the opportunities for global international exchange. As a result, all parts of Japan will be open to the world, grouped into national axial zones that have unique international capabilities.

Section 3
Specific tasks and their accomplishment

In the course of implementing the Grand Design for the 21st Century, it is important to tackle the following two themes as specific tasks. The first theme is "Metropolitan functions and problems related to Tokyo," which must be dealt with to change Japan's structure from that of the single hub of Tokyo. The second theme is "Revitalizing Okinawa, and the problems related to US military bases." To restructure Japan into a multiaxial country that is more open to the world, it is necessary to give Okinawa a new role in the relationship with the Asian Pacific region.

1. Metropolitan functions and problems related to Tokyo

The concentration of population and functions in the Tokyo metropolitan area seems to have been somewhat mitigated in recent years. However, human and other resources are still heavily concentrated in the area, which is a serious problem in the structure of the country. Tokyo can no longer provide efficient urban services to its citizens, and the city is not fulfilling its economic and cultural functions smoothly. In addition, there are numerous problems in the city connected with long commuting times, traffic jams, the city's vulnerability to disasters, air and water pollution, tight water supply, and disposal of waste.

Tokyo, the capital of Japan, contains the world's largest metropolitan area, with a population exceeding 30 million. It is also one of the world's major cities. In order to redistribute the concentration of functions on the city, and to enable Tokyo to fulfill its role in providing advanced services and the dynamism that accompanies the shift to the 21st century, the following comprehensive measures need to be taken.

First, in order to restructure the country around more than one axis from the long-term view, efforts should be made to prevent excessive concentration of advanced urban functions in the central parts of Tokyo. Following the concept of
regional role-sharing and cooperation throughout the country, these functions need to be redistributed among the regions, and the regions must be aggressively developed in a way that gives a good balance between work areas and residential areas.

Specifically, based on a wide-area view of the whole country, correct the hierarchical structure of cities, with Tokyo at the top. To achieve this, redistribute functions and promote mutual cooperation between the Tokyo metropolitan area and other central urban areas to establish a national network of advanced urban functions. In the Tokyo metropolitan area, develop comprehensive business centers that play multiple roles and encourage people to live in the city center. At the same time, make the city safe against large-scale earthquakes, secure stable sources for the water supply, and improve the environment and amenities so that the inhabitants of Tokyo, Japan's flagship city, can live full lives in a comfortable environment.

Second, it is important to think realistically about how to start to transfer the functions of the capital from Tokyo to the other regions. The transfer, which is now being studied by the Council for Relocation of the National Diet and Other Organizations, will physically separate the center of politics and administration from the center of the economy and culture. Such separation is very important in relieving the concentration on Tokyo because it will take away the city's dominance. The transfer will have a wide range of results, and in restructuring the country it will:

1) Create new cities that are qualitatively different from Tokyo, and will stimulate many kinds of cooperation between central urban areas using transportation and information and communications networks. This will effectively remove Tokyo from its position at the head of the current structure of the country.

2) Separate politics from the economy, which will enable the development of new cities on the same scale of prosperity as Tokyo. By sharing functions and cooperating closely to solve the problems associated with large cities, these new cities (centers of politics and administration) and Tokyo (center of economy and culture) will be able to fulfill their roles more smoothly.

3) Improve the county's risk management; its ability to survive disasters including major earthquakes. Even if disaster strikes Tokyo, the new cities will not be affected by the disaster. Also, effective use of the land where the governmental functions used to be will further strengthen Tokyo's ability to cope with disasters.

As explained above, the transfer of the functions of the capital will be an extremely effective national development policy. Presently the Council for Relocation of the National Diet and Other Organizations is deciding on target areas in order to select candidates for the new capital, and examining specific areas. It is necessary to conduct studies aggressively for the actual transfer of the capital, while steadily promoting political reforms that include decentralization, deregulation and administrative and fiscal reform.

The transfer of the capital will have a major influence on Japan's politics, economy and culture in the 21st century, being closely related to people's ways of thinking and values. It is therefore necessary to reach a national consensus under open and fair procedures, based on the Act for Relocation of the National Diet and Other Organizations.
2. Revitalizing Okinawa, and problems related to US military bases

More than 25 years have passed since Okinawa, which suffered great human and material losses in World War II, was returned to Japan in 1972. For more than 26 years before it was returned to Japan, Okinawa was outside the territorial jurisdiction of the Japanese government. The government, since its return, has spent vast amounts of the national budget in improving Okinawa's basic infrastructure and in promoting the natural and geographic characteristics of the region. As a result, the differences between Okinawa and the rest of Japan have been gradually reduced. Despite stable growth, Okinawa still has disadvantages, including the fact that it comprises numerous isolated islands, far from the rest of the country. In addition, under the US-Japan Security Treaty that plays a central role in the peace and stability of the Asian Pacific region, 75% of the US military facilities and bases existing in Japan are located in Okinawa, which accounts for only 0.6% of the land. Okinawa has had to endure a heavy burden, and this fact has created situations different from those observed in the rest of the country.

However, it is expected that Japan and other countries including those in the Asian Pacific region will become more mutually dependent and that more exchanges will be made in terms of people, materials, money and information. Under such circumstances, it is important to develop Okinawa, with its problems related to US military bases, into a unique region. Because of its geographical and natural characteristics, its unique traditions and international character, the region will be expected to contribute to the socioeconomic and cultural development of not only Japan, but also of the entire Asian Pacific region.

Okinawa is located on the node that connects the New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone with the tropical and subtropical zones of Southeast Asian countries. In addition to this geographical feature, it is the only region in Japan that has a subtropical oceanic climate. Okinawa is surrounded by vast seas and has precious regional resources including a rich natural environment and a unique cultural heritage. It has developed into an attractive region, characterized by the residents' international outlook that welcomes diversity, and by a spirit of mutual support.

Okinawa is expected to become a center for peaceful exchanges and international cooperation; a place where many exchanges will take place. For Okinawa to live up to this expectation, it is important for the region to develop tourism as its basic industry. Making good use of its regional resources including the subtropical climate, rich natural environment and unique history and culture, Okinawa also needs to provide attractive international sightseeing spots and recreational facilities. It is also expected that the region will develop as a trade center, with new industrial development including the establishment of a special free trade area. Furthermore, the use of highly advanced information and communications facilities and expansion of transportation facilities will lead to the creation of nature-rich residential areas that overcome the disadvantages experienced as isolated islands. By living up to its role, Okinawa will open the way to forming a New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone that
contributes to socioeconomic and cultural development both in Japan and in the whole Asian Pacific region.

These potentials for development position Okinawa as a "Pacific Crossroads."

With the concepts described here as the base, the government should carry out policies that support Okinawa in making autonomous efforts towards economic development and solution of the problems related to US military bases.

US military facilities and bases greatly restrict the use of land in Okinawa, and in this regard, the plan described in the final report of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) in December 1996 should be steadily implemented. Included in the plan is a reduction of US military facilities and bases in Okinawa by 5,002 hectares (about 21%), including the return of Futenma Airport. As this plan is implemented, plans should be made for the use of the returned land.

Chapter III

Implementation

Section 1
National land development based on "participation and cooperation"

To carry out regional development that is unique and attractive, it is important that residents, volunteer organizations, private companies and other entities fully participate in the process. This range of different participants will supplement the administrative services in fields in which the administration is unable to provide sufficient services, and will lead to more detailed and more effective administrative services that can respond to a whole range of demands.

With the decreasing population and the aging of society and in midst of intensification of inter-regional competition beyond national boundaries, it is important to have a wide vision that is beyond the framework of existing administrative units. This kind of vision is a requisite for responding to people's wide-ranging demands, including land management, and for developing well-developed and independent regional communities. The government needs to implement its policies based on such a vision, and supported by autonomous cooperation between the regions concerned. Such inter-regional cooperation will create new development opportunities, raise the level of regional services, create more efficient regional infrastructures, and will contribute to the solution of wide-area problems involving multiple regions.

This plan makes "participation and cooperation" the basis for national and regional development.

1. Role-sharing between the different entities
National land development based on "participation and cooperation" makes it essential for public and private entities to share roles. It is also essential for public entities, specifically national and local governments, to share their various roles.

For role-sharing between public and private entities, the public entities should in principle be responsible for proposing national and regional development plans that incorporate the opinion of the general public whenever possible, and should be responsible for coordinating those plans and establishing the institutional systems for the development. Private entities should in principle participate in the national and regional development process of their own initiative. The national government and local public entities will be responsible for improving the infrastructure, and services that private entities are not able to provide to a sufficient level, either qualitatively or quantitatively. However, the roles of the national government and local governments should be minimized.

For role-sharing between public entities, the national government will carry out improvements to the key infrastructure, supporting "participation and cooperation" from a national level. It will also collect information from each region and provide it to other regions. The national government will in this way support inter-regional cooperation based around the concept of serving a wide area. The municipal governments, including prefectures, cities, towns and villages, will support, coordinate, and make use of the participation of different entities in regional development from a regional perspective, and will play the leading roles in inter-regional cooperation.

The financial burdens of promoting national and regional development should be shared properly and equally between present and future generations. Working on the concept that those who benefit should bear the cost, the burden of each development project will be shared between public and private entities and between central and local governments.

2. Encouraging the participation of different entities

It is essential to implement the following measures to encourage different entities to participate in national and regional development under their own responsibility.

(Disclosure of basic information to encourage people to participate)

To enable citizens to participate aggressively in regional development, they need access to key information, which will provide the basis for their decision on what activities they can participate in and how they can participate in them. It is therefore necessary to establish a system of extensive disclosure for both the national and local governments, to provide administrative information on land development, and to arrange for citizens to have easy access to the information. Objectivity and transparency in the decision-making process regarding improvement of the country's infrastructure should be maintained by disclosing the criteria used for deciding on infrastructure investment projects and the information on cost-effectiveness analyses.

Furthermore, based on the need for citizens to take the lead in environmental protection including restricting emissions of carbon dioxide, the national government
and local public entities should aggressively disclose information on how individual citizens can become involved in environmental protection. They also need to make available measures to help citizens deepen their understanding of the importance of environmental protection, including public relation activities.

(Utilization of private sector know-how and capital)
Promote deregulation to encourage the participation of private entities while carrying out aggressive administrative reform, in order to make the best use of private sector know-how and capital in improving the national infrastructure and in providing services to citizens. Also study methods used to promote projects that utilize private sector know-how and capital.

For volunteer and NPO activities that could be major routes for citizens to participate in regional development, implement measures in cooperation with related organizations to give them further support, by introducing a volunteer vacation system, or by incorporating NPOs or volunteer organizations.

(Aggressive decentralization)
In order for each region to develop itself around its own choices and responsibilities with the enthusiastic support of its citizens, it is indispensable for each local public entity to have sufficient authority and financial resources to implement projects geared towards regional development. To achieve this, study and successively implement measures that enable each local public entity to take leadership in improving the regional infrastructure. Specifically, decentralize, give more power to local public entities with regard to regional development and the provision of services for citizens, ensure that they have sufficient overall financial resources, streamline subsidies, and reduce the involvement of the national government in local issues.

(Establishing systems that enable citizens to participate in and reach consensus on developing their region)
In response to the increasing interest that citizens are showing in participating in regional development, it is important that local public entities establish their own systems to enable citizens to participate in and reach consensus on developing their region. Especially with regard to land use and improvements to the infrastructure in the course of regional development, the national government and local public entities should, from the planning stage, establish systems to gather opinions from as many citizens as possible. To encourage citizens to participate in the process of regional development with responsibility, it is also necessary to establish systems that provide them with information on the expected effects of infrastructural investment, the funds required, and how they are shared, the expected influence on the environment, and the regional disaster risks.

3. Cooperation between regions
In order to promote cooperation between regions, it is fundamentally important to help citizens to understand the importance of exchanges, mutual understanding, and links and cooperation between regions. It is thus necessary for national government to make supportive measures, taking in consideration the following views.

(Recognizing the importance of cooperation and forming the proper entities)

To encourage each region to make aggressive efforts to cooperate with other regions, implement exchange projects between citizens of different regions to help them to recognize the importance of inter-regional cooperation, and establish facilities for inter-regional use. It is expected that these measures will help in building cooperation between regions.

It is important to form the proper entities to implement projects that center on creating nature-rich residential areas and to make progress in inter-regional cooperation, including the development of regional cooperation corridors. To form these entities, make use of existing extended administrative systems including wide-area federations and certain of the administrative cooperatives. Also study measures to support organizations, including councils that can become entities for inter-regional cooperation. To make inter-regional cooperation more effective, encourage cities, towns, and villages that are basic local public entities to voluntarily merge into single entities.

(Governmental support for inter-regional cooperation)

The national government will support and encourage cooperation between numerous regions beyond the existing administrative districts while aggressively promoting decentralization in order to make inter-regional cooperation really effective. The government will organize and spread measures and projects for inter-regional cooperation based on the efforts of each autonomous region, especially for those regions that are leading the formation of regional cooperation corridors and the creation of nature-rich residential areas. The national government needs to make specific plans to give support to regions, including improvements to the basic infrastructure and assistance on joint projects that are the result of plans made jointly by several local public entities. As part of such plans, the government will provide basic information for interregional cooperation and exchange and give advice to local public entities. Furthermore, measures will be studied to make the contacts and coordination between the national government and local public entities smoother.

Section 2
Schedule for attracting investment in the country's infrastructure

For this plan to attain its objectives, it is necessary to improve the national infrastructure based on the concept of consistent and well-balanced national land development. Investment in the country's new infrastructure for the coming century should be encouraged, keeping in mind the great situational changes that are now under way as explained below.
1) It is necessary to improve the country's infrastructure steadily and in a planned manner to respond to the remarkable changes in the socioeconomic structure that will be made beyond the target period of this plan. Such changes include changes in people's ways of thinking (giving more importance to leisure, comfort and the natural environment) and the high possibility of a decrease in the population.

2) Investment in the infrastructure should be associated with fiscal structural reform, and should survive the long-term decrease in investment potential.

3) Although past policies have contributed to a mitigation of regional differences in incomes, new regional problems have appeared, including the difficulty in maintaining regional communities in many of the hilly areas, and the loss of regional characteristics that has led to national uniformity.

The future investments in the country's infrastructure should be truly effective, based on the clear recognition that financial resources are limited. In every field, limited funds should be utilized effectively to attain the objectives of each policy in the light of the present severe fiscal situation, the long-term decrease in investment potential, and the advent of a mature society with a decrease in population. Anticipating future increases in investment for maintaining and improving the existing infrastructure, it is also necessary to keep a balance between investment for improvements and new investment.

First of all, investments in the country's infrastructure should be made from a long-term viewpoint that gives importance to infrastructural improvements that can respond to great changes in the socioeconomic structure as set out in the basic plan for public investments made in June 1997. The basic plan aims at establishing the overall social capital by the beginning of the 21st century. This kind of investments should be made in an effective, well-focused and efficient manner, by taking measures that are effective and that include putting to use the existing infrastructure.

Second, adequate investment should be made based on regional characteristics. This plan aims at developing Japan into a country that encompasses diversity in its unique regional structure. It is therefore necessary to promote well-focused, efficient and effective investment, taking into consideration the different natural and socioeconomic conditions of each region, towards the development of unique regions.

Third, consistent efforts should be made beyond the target period of this plan to secure investment for future generations and to establish new investment concepts. The target period is to be used to build the basis for attainment of the long-term objectives, and efforts should be made to effectively tackle the decrease in population and of investment potential that will continue through the end of the target period and beyond.

1. Efficient and well-focused investment in the infrastructure
   (1) Well-focused investment in the infrastructure
   (Infrastructural investment that helps to fulfill the objectives of this plan)

   Since the Meiji era, the focus of investment in Japan's infrastructure has moved in response to the needs of the age. This plan, made at the turning point of the century, has basic and specific objectives that include the promotion of regional independence
and the creation of well-founded regional communities. These are objectives that should be tackled during the target period to respond to great changes in the socioeconomic structure. They will be achieved by making essential investments in the infrastructure, and by taking effective measures. Taking the long-term view, investment that focuses on improving the infrastructure will be encouraged in order to reach the objectives set out in Chapter II of this plan.

The focus of public investment that has been made in the field to contribute to improvements in people's living standards and to economic structural reform is the same focus as that of infrastructural investment. Promoting public investment will lead to achieving the objectives set out in this plan.

(Infrastructural investment that will contribute to these strategies)

In order to attain these basic objectives, it will be particularly effective for multiple local public entities to cooperate with the national government, etc. to develop strategies based on the autonomous decisions of each region. On the regional scale, infrastructural investment should be made for the following purposes: to protect the rich natural environment and land for the creation of nature-rich residential areas; to improve basic living standards for regional independence; to raise the level of industries by the use of regional resources; to drastically restructure urban areas, strengthen disaster preparedness, restore and preserve the environment and raise the level of industries. On a countrywide scale, the national government, local public entities, and the private sector should make comprehensive efforts to promote investments in the infrastructure that will contribute to the formation of transportation and information and communications systems, and to create international spheres of interaction on a large scale towards the further development of regional cooperation corridors and the creation of international spheres of interaction.

(2) Efficient investment in the infrastructure
(Promoting cooperative investment)

For efficient investment in the country's infrastructure, it is necessary for the ministries engaged in infrastructural improvement and local public entities to cooperate effectively. The national government will strengthen cooperation between investment projects beyond the boundaries of the ministerial organizations, to enable a comprehensive response to national problems related to carbon dioxide emissions, logistics, disaster preparedness etc., and to allow similar projects to be combined for greater efficiency. For this purpose, a full-scale coordination system should be established to achieve smooth adjustment of measures between administrative entities, to give flexibility in the adjustment of different long-term infrastructure improvement projects, and to further cooperation between the entities. As part of the coordination system, a budget will be established for adjusting comprehensive national development projects. Local public entities will be expected to pursue efficient investment in improving the national infrastructure in cooperation with other local public entities, freed from the obsession of comprehensive construction of facilities by a single entity.
Establish the coordination system for infrastructural investment between the national government and local public entities, and inside local public entities, in order for each region to decide its own course and budget for development with national government support.

(Reducing construction costs)

One of the most important elements for efficient investment is to reduce construction costs that are higher than equivalent costs in other countries, and to make investment in the infrastructure within a limited budget more efficient. It will, however, be difficult to reduce construction costs, because of numerous obstructing factors that include severe natural conditions, Japan's high-cost structure with high manpower costs and prices, the established system of making and receiving orders, productivity in the construction industry, and complicating rights including property rights. Reductions must therefore be made by following the objectives set out in the guidelines for reducing the cost of public works laid down in April 1997. The objective is to reduce the cost of public works by at least 10%. Lower costs by reducing material costs, improving productivity by increased mechanization, deregulating the implementation of projects, developing and smoothing the introduction of new cost-saving technologies, utilizing competition in the bidding process, and properly controlling building standards according to the circumstances in each region. In the course of fully implementing these measures, review them as appropriate when necessary. Also to reduce the cost of acquiring land, further study the feasibility of using technologies for deep underground construction.

In accordance with the increase in facilities, it will also become important to reduce total costs, including the maintenance and improvement costs, and to construct facilities that are easy to maintain and improve. To enable this to be done, select structures that have low life cycle costs, including maintenance costs, and encourage development of technologies that will contribute to efficient and economical maintenance and improvement of these structures.

(Effective use of existing infrastructure)

Secure the funds needed to properly maintain and improve the existing infrastructure, emphasizing the remarkable growth this far. Make maintenance and management of the existing infrastructure more efficient by using information and communications systems. In addition, when establishing new facilities, make full use of the existing infrastructure.

Improve out-of-date facilities and encourage full use of facilities that are not being fully used. Develop methods to evaluate the structures of the existing facilities and develop technologies to improve facilities. Extend the use of existing schools, police boxes (koban) and post offices within each community to provide residents with welfare facilities for the elderly, disaster centers and information networks. At the same time, plant more green belts and make use of land that is not fully used, channels and canals. These measures will actually reduce the amount of new infrastructural investment needed.
To make use of the existing infrastructure effective, also introduce systems such as traffic demands management (TDM) in large cities to relieve traffic congestion, and introduce intelligent traffic systems (ITS). Provide people with more opportunities to use the country's infrastructure without new infrastructural investment by the following measures: adjust timetables between different transportation systems to make it more convenient for commuters; and expand opening hours for sports facilities and the areas they cover. Study institutional measures to make the use of public facilities more flexible, overcoming restrictions related to property rights, and encouraging public facilities to entrust their management to private entities.

(Investment based on objective evaluations that include cost-effectiveness analyses)

Before making new infrastructural investment, it is necessary to confirm the need for the investment, and to make it truly effective. With this in mind, carry out objective evaluations that include a cost-effectiveness analysis for each investment project, and decide the investment priorities in order to make the investment well-focused and efficient. This kind of evaluation will enable the national government and local public entities make new investments effective from the outset. To avoid inflexibility in implementing projects, confirm the suitability and effectiveness of investment projects where appropriate, and take proper measures based on the results. Especially with projects where some time has passed since the decision was made to go ahead with the project, reexamine those that have not yet started, or ones that are to be implemented over a long period. Revise the project where this seems necessary, based on the results of the examination.

Fully disclose all procedures and data on cost-effectiveness analyses and examinations to the general public to ensure transparency.

(Promoting investment in the infrastructure by the private sector)

It is expected that by entrusting parts or all of infrastructural investment projects that have traditionally been conducted by public entities to private entities that are run on a principle of competition, the projects will become more effective at lower costs. For future infrastructural improvement, utilize the power of the private sector in investment fields dominated by public entities, as has been done in other countries; for example, in the UK's Private Finance Initiative (PFI).

2. Effective investment in an infrastructure based on regional characteristics
(Investment for unique regional development)

In order to develop Japan into a country of diversified regions, it is important for each region to take the initiative and compete in developing itself into a unique region based on its natural and social characteristics.

This kind of regional development necessitates the following measures. First, give regions equal opportunities that include, within certain conditions, improving the country's infrastructure to assist in regional independence. Focus investment on the facilities, including centers and access points, that play important roles in mitigating
regional differences, and that provide access to facilities that improve the standard of living and make advanced urban facilities available to more people.

Next, respect regional needs so that each region can take the initiative in regional development. Promote decentralization to allow each region to be responsible for developing as it wishes, and make consistent efforts to streamline subsidies and ensure local sources for the necessary revenue. Furthermore, put into effect a wide range of measures related to investment in the infrastructure, including the following. Establish a full-scale system that enables local public entities to choose which projects subsidized by the national government they want to adopt. Make building standards for facilities more flexible, so that each region can construct facilities suited to local conditions and designs. Projects implemented by the national government must have stronger regional representation during planning.

Moreover, invest in strategic measures for regions that have many problems, and make consistent investment in the infrastructure to create nature-rich residential areas comprised of large and small towns and hilly areas, as well as in the infrastructure needed to revitalize large city areas.

(Promoting investment that is in harmony with the existing regional infrastructure)

Each region already has a wealth of facilities, and it is important to promote planned investment in regions that makes effective use of the existing infrastructure. In particular, transportation and information and communications systems have contributed to the extensive use of facilities beyond municipal or prefectural boundaries. By developing regional cooperation corridors, encourage regions to utilize each other's existing facilities. Before building new infrastructure, examine the possibility of reusing existing facilities from a wide-area view, and plan investment on the assumption that the facilities will be used from a wide area of interregional cooperation.

3. Effective investment in the infrastructure for future generations
   (Investment for developing new technologies)

Invest in the development and application of new technologies that are indispensable for Japan to achieve growth. Always ensure that thorough studies have been made at the research and development stage, and make extensive use of information and communications technologies to disseminate the R&D results effectively. Carry out R&D on the following and put them into practical use:

1) Transportation and information and communications technologies that will provide new possibilities for 21st century Japan, including superconducting magnetic levitated railway systems, ITS, TSL (techno super liner), new logistics systems, and optical communications systems
2) Technologies that will contribute to a reduction in the environmental load, including low-emission cars, new energy sources, energy-saving technology, and recycling of waste
3) Technologies for urban disaster preparedness and environmental improvement, for environmental and productivity improvements involving living creatures and
biotechnology, and technologies that facilitate coexistence with nature and effective use of land, such as the construction of super-large floating structures in the ocean.

At the same time, carry out R&D on new transportation systems that can respond to quantitative and qualitative changes in the demand structure caused by aging and decreases in the population, and on waste water treatment technologies. To ensure that investment is effective, carry out detailed evaluation of the research results.

(Investment in the country's infrastructure putting the emphasis on new perspectives)

It is also important to make infrastructural investment with an emphasis on new perspectives to respond to the great changes that will occur in the socioeconomic structure. To counter the decrease in investment potential, focus on improving efficiency in use of the infrastructure, including the provision of extremely safe, extended service life, and ability to function in emergency situation. Also focus on users and coexistence with nature, including easy access, blending in with local scenery, contact with nature, and contribution to environmental restoration and conservation. In the progress of globalization, it is also important to invest to improve the level of facilities that are on a scale and with functions below international standard, so that infrastructural improvement coordinates with the plans of other countries and fits in with international standards.

(Comprehensive examination of methods to ensure effective investment in the infrastructure)

In order to offset the effects of the long-term decrease in investment potential, make consistent efforts to ensure that investment in the country's infrastructure is effective. As parts of such efforts, examine methods for objective evaluation of effectiveness, including cost-effectiveness analyses and the most suitable evaluation systems. Examination should be carried out as dictated by the characteristics of individual investment projects. Furthermore, comprehensively examine methods of analyzing the cost-effectiveness, something that has yet to be clearly established. For example, technical methods that are common to several investment projects, methods to evaluate multiple projects, and methods to measure environmental values and differences in regional conditions. Examination is also necessary for the best way to use the evaluation results after completion of a project in order to feedback correctly to the evaluation.

As the residents of each region will be the beneficiaries of the development, it is they who must make their own decisions on the benefits and responsibilities of developing their regions in the way that they want, keeping in mind concerns that fiscal restrictions will become more severe with the progressive aging of society and the decreasing birthrate. Conduct studies to ensure that the burden of investment in the infrastructure in each region is shared appropriately between regions, based on the expected mid-term and long-term benefits.

Section 3
Improving institutions and the social system
1. Making the plan effective

Implementation of the plan should be made as effective as possible with the participation of numerous entities. In particular, the national government will as soon as possible set out guidelines for implementing the following four strategies (indicated below) based on "participation and cooperation," and clearly indicate specific measures to make them effective, taking into account the opinions of the separate regions and local public entities, and various private entities. The four strategies are: creation of nature-rich residential areas, renovation of large cities, formation of regional cooperation corridors, and formation of international spheres of interaction on a large scale.

In implementing the specific objectives set out in this plan, flexible measures are necessary that can respond to future situational changes and the progress of reforms now under way while still keeping to the basic points in the objectives. The National Land Development Council will check the progress of the plan every year, and will make proposals to related administrative agencies to promote the plan, while paying careful attention to the implementation of the related measures in each region and to the general public's opinion of the plan.

Steady improvement of Japan's infrastructure will serve as the basis to develop it into a country with the structure we envisage. The improvements will proceed with close cooperation and coordination between this plan and other infrastructure-related long-term plans. As the plan proceeds there will be coordination between land use plans and infrastructure development projects, and also between the various development projects. Furthermore to give environmental considerations due priority, improvements to the infrastructure will run in parallel with a variety of environmental conservation plans, carried out after proper environmental assessment.

The Fourth Comprehensive National Development Plan aims at multipolar national land development (establishing multiple regional centers within the country). Multipolar national land development should be regarded as one step in the long-term process of giving the country a multiaxial structure. Effective use of existing measures will be made in implementing the plan, including plans that are based on the Act for Multipolar Development of the Country.

The plan will be comprehensively reviewed and modified as necessary in the light of any changes in the situation and progress in administrative and fiscal reform.

Development plans should also be made for the Northern Territories as part of this country. However, special circumstances prevail at the present. When related problems have been solved, this plan needs to be urgently revised to show the basic direction of the comprehensive development of these Territories.

2. Links with other measures related to land use

For regions to develop in their own individual attractive way based on the strategies and measures set out in this plan, including the creation of nature-rich residential areas and renovation of metropolitan areas within the target period in order to restructure the country in a form suitable for the 21st century, it is necessary to
strengthen links with other measures related to land use. These measures will be closely associated with regional development in terms of conservation of land and natural environment, restructuring of urban structures, and the provision of attractive amenities.

(Links with land-use policies)
Based on the concept of making use of owned land, make links with the comprehensive land-use measures described in the "Outline of the Introduction of New Comprehensive Land-use Policies" formulated by the Cabinet on February 10, 1997. Through these links, ensure the proper use of land to build comfortable houses and to improve the social capital, as well as to build quite restful regional communities that adapt themselves to the natural system. Improve the urban structure, especially in the existing metropolitan areas, and encourage the use of land that is not fully utilized, rebuild areas where old wooden houses are built close together to make them safe against disasters, and encourage people to live in urban centers. These measures will all lead to effective use of land.

(Well-balanced land-use plans in line with this plan)
Local public entities are expected to make well-balanced land-use plans in line with this plan with the following objectives.
1) Provide residents with more benefits and welfare by improving the social infrastructure
2) Build facilities, provide open space, and make regional classifications to make the regions safe and comfortable
3) Conserve the natural environment to give residents the opportunity to come in contact with nature, and to preserve the environment for future generations
4) Develop regions into attractive communities full of amenities
5) Improve the urban structure to provide residents with increased urban functions
6) Establish an industrial infrastructure to support the regional economy

In order to create areas of production and residential areas that are integrated into rural communities, plans related to land use, including national land-use plans, must be made use of, and management of these plans needs to be improved. The national government needs to help local public entities make suitable land-use plans by carrying out the following measures.
1) Improve the system for smoothly coordinating the numerous plans related to land use.
2) Improve the system for collecting and providing information and for giving technical support.

3. Informatization of the national land administration
With the advent of the age of information, many entities have accumulated, and are using, information about land. The accumulated information will be useful not only for administrative planning and implementation by public entities, but also for private
companies and the general public as the basis for their actions and daily lives in today's information society.

Improve the level of the national land administration and make it more efficient by further automation, including computerization of information that is used as the basis for national land policies and studies. In addition, the national government and local public entities will cooperate to establish common standards and rules to improve and utilize land-related information, will build a database of land-related information and will make efforts to allow wide access to the database.

In addition, disclose to the public basic land-related information accumulated by the national government or by local public entities in forms that are easy to use and process, to establish a basis for surveying people's opinions when planning and examining national land policies. Aggressive disclosure of land-related information through the media might also lead to the creation of new industries.

4. Establishing a new national land planning system

The present national land planning system was established through the enactment of the Comprehensive National Land Development Act of 1950, numerous relevant laws and ordinances, legislated especially from 1955 to 1965, and the National Land Use Planning Act of 1974. In response to demands for clarification of the philosophy of national land planning, and to the need for diverse reforms including decentralization and administrative reforms, it is necessary to drastically review the Comprehensive National Land Development Act and the National Land Use Planning Act and establish a new national land planning system that can meet the demands of the 21st century. The details are explained below.

(National land planning philosophy)

National land planning embraces a wide range of concepts, not only related to development, but also to the conservation and appropriate use of land. It is therefore necessary to make clear definitions of these concepts in developing a comprehensive national land planning philosophy to promote national land development for the 21st century in response to people's diversifying values and changes in the socioeconomic situation.

(Taking a range of reforms into considerations)

Taking into considerations a range of reforms, including decentralization and administrative reform, clarify the positioning and roles of national plans and regional plans in national land planning, and improve planning procedures to reflect the opinions of different entities.

(Clear direction)

From the standpoint of well-focused and efficient improvement of the country's infrastructure and development of the country based on regional needs, make national land planning effective in relation to other plans related to national land development, use and conservation.
Planning systems under individual laws on regional development need to be reconsidered in response to new policy issues caused by the changes in the times, although they have different purposes and objectives. Future discussions should be held on the role of the systems, clarifying the new national land planning philosophy and system.

PART II The Basis for Development in Different Fields

Chapter I

National Land Conservation and Management

We need to make Japan a safe country, with a well-preserved natural environment. However, we should keep in mind that while nature is benevolent, it can also bring danger to our lives. Japan is blessed with a wide variety of natural habitats, which are home to a wide variety of animals and plants. On the other hand the country is exposed to natural disasters including earthquakes, and damage from typhoons and floods. To cope with these special conditions, the people of Japan have, since old times, built up a multi-faceted relationship with the natural environment. In day-to-day activities, they have acquired the wisdom to make effective use of natural resources while continuously preserving the natural environment. And they have developed the ability to protect themselves against the elements, and to help each other when regional disasters strike, building up a reservoir of "disaster know-how." However, contact with the natural environment has been decreasing in the process of modernization and urbanization, and people are becoming less aware of nature's role as lifestyles continue to change. We must reestablish the relationship between people and nature as we move into the 21st century, keeping in mind both nature's benevolence and its force for destruction.

1) Implement measures to make Japan safer to live in, learning from the disastrous Hanshin-Awaji earthquake. These measures should include improvements to risk management systems, recognition of the roles of individuals and regional communities, and measures for the unavoidable aspects of disasters.

2) Take aggressive action to preserve the country's natural environment for future generations and for the entire world as a shared asset. For example, take the preservation and habitat of wildlife into consideration when developing land. Take action to preserve the environment when implementing development projects, prevent global warming, and reduce the load on nature's cycles by recycling waste, etc.

3) Improve actions to preserve and recover the hydrological cycle and raise land management standards to support the development of a safe and nature-rich country of "basins" that comprise natural river systems and their forests, farmland and urban
areas. In the process, cooperation between areas and within administrative agencies will be promoted based on the creation of a horizontally-linked organization.

4) Encourage regional cooperation for the comprehensive conservation and use of coastal areas that have common natural characteristics.

Section 1
Making the country safer to live in

1. Establishing disaster-preparedness systems to maximize safety
   (1) Focus on measures to limit the damage caused by disasters

   Strengthen preparations for disasters including large-scale natural disasters such as the Hanshin-Awaji earthquake. The focus should be placed on preparedness, represented by a flexible response, and minimizing the damage caused by disasters.

   Preparedness measures include a transportation and information and communications infrastructures that can respond to emergencies, and the introduction of design criteria for buildings based on their importance. Ensure that structures are capable of resisting disasters including earthquakes that are few and far between but that apply enormous forces to the structures. Also improve the system of monitoring disasters including the earthquake observation network. Promote research into natural disaster prediction techniques and disaster preparedness. Evaluate the disaster risks in each area, make the results available to the general public, and use the evaluations in planning regional development and land use.

   Encourage each area, company and administrative agency to prepare disaster manuals for different kinds and degrees of disaster. Furthermore improve the following systems to allow proper responses to disasters. They are the systems for providing information, evacuation, rescue operations and first-aid activities, assignment of volunteers, and back-up services for administrative functions and corporate activities. In the process, special attention should be paid to people who are most vulnerable to disasters, and wide-area systems of cooperation should be established between prefectures and municipalities.

   (2) The importance of the roles of individuals and communities in creating "disaster-proof living zones"

   In implementing disaster-preparedness, it is important to encourage regional communities and residents to take independent action in protecting themselves and their areas. This encouragement should take the form of building "disaster-proof living zones" based on regional disaster mitigation centers, and the disaster risks of each area should be published so that citizens can be aware of the dangers and feel encouraged to participate in disaster-preparedness training. This will provide residents with the means to cope with potential disasters as part of their daily activities. Furthermore, educate children in the vulnerability of regions to disasters and the history of disasters at school. Train members of the fire service to be leaders in regional disaster preparedness, and encourage regional voluntary disaster-preparedness organizations to play a bigger role. Support their activities by
establishing regional disaster mitigation centers and evacuation areas, and improve
the facilities at schools, public halls and in administrative agencies' buildings so that
they can be used as evacuation centers in the event of emergencies. Promote
cooperation between disaster mitigation centers and other bodies.

For each "disaster-proof living zones" to cooperate over a wide area for disaster
mitigation, encourage the disaster centers to make contact with and cooperate with
each other, and establish wide-area disaster centers. Also encourage local public
entities to make agreements with local companies and organizations such as medical
associations so that the power of the private sector can be utilized in emergencies.

(3) Responding to different types of disaster and improving risk management
systems
Because of the nature of the changes affecting urban areas, including the
concentration of population and services, the increasing dependence on the social
infrastructure in day-to-day life, the development of informatization, the aging of
society, and internationalization, disasters can take many forms, not only from natural
causes. Once a disaster strikes, the effects can multiply, and Japan is becoming more
and more vulnerable to disasters.

To reverse this vulnerability, identify the different types of potential disaster and
make comprehensive preparedness plans including concrete facilities planning. These
plans should include improving disaster mitigation facilities and equipment used to
minimize damage, improvement of safety criteria and disaster plans, disaster
preparedness training, and distributing financial risk. Furthermore, develop advanced
and highly specialized techniques to mitigate the effects of natural disasters that can
affect wide areas and large-scale disasters from artificial causes. Improving disaster
preparedness in this way will also lead to improvement in risk management systems
and a safer infrastructure both at the regional and national levels. Also distribute
appropriate disaster preparedness information in response to the changes in people's
lifestyles, develop new disaster mitigation technologies, build up experience for
dealing with disasters, and establish an international network of cooperation to be
used in the event of a disaster.

(4) Rebuilding devastated areas
Restore services and functions to devastated areas speedily, incorporating
disaster-proof measures that take the surrounding environment into account. Improve
the systems for restoring and rebuilding to cope with larger disasters.

2. Rebuilding the Hanshin-Awaji area
In rebuilding the Hanshin-Awaji area, efforts are being directed towards three basic
objectives: restoring services and functions for everyday life, rebuilding the local
economy, and making regional communities safe. The resulting experience should be
utilized in many ways to make Japan and its regions safer to live in. The area will
provide an example of how to rebuild a large and densely-populated city and
industrial center after a major earthquake. Long-term measures will be implemented
for the recovery of the Hanshin-Awaji area based on a close working relationship between the public and private sectors and incorporating regional ideas and interests.

In restoring the services and functions necessary for everyday life, provide the victims of the earthquake who lost their houses and are living in temporary housing with an environment where they can settle back into normal life. Ensure stable employment and support for the victims in finding new jobs, increase the support to elderly victims who need care, including psychological support in their daily lives, establish medical services that will function well in times of disasters, and rebuild educational facilities. Also give more support to cultural activities directed towards rebuilding a happy and comfortable living environment. In rebuilding the local economy, rebuild the transportation and information and communications infrastructures that are basic to the recovery of the entire area, and improve the systems for supporting industries in economic recovery. In making regional communities safe, build safe and comfortable communities that have both open space and a backup transportation infrastructure, establish disaster-proof public utilities (water, gas and electricity) and improve public facilities so that they can serve as temporary evacuation centers during a disaster.

Study the special recovery projects proposed by the Committee for the Recovery and Rebuilding of the Hanshin-Awaji Area, with a view to implementation.

3. Better disaster control
To protect the land from potential disaster-related damage, encourage more afforestation and flood prevention measures. Improve national land conservation facilities including those located in coastal areas to make regional communities more able to cope with disasters. In the improvement process, take the natural environment into account, encourage use of facilities in normal times, and make the facilities comfortable and blend in with the natural scenery. Also improve the information and communications infrastructure so that information on disaster preparedness can be distributed using advanced information and communications technologies. To predict and be prepared for disasters caused by volcanic eruptions, strengthen development of technologies for monitoring and predicting volcanic activity, and carry out research. Improve volcanic and erosion control measures, and improve measures to prevent secondary disasters.

Section 2
Conserving and enjoying nature's blessing

To pass on to the future generations a beauty and well-conserved natural environment of national land, different entities including the national government, local public entities, businesses, other private organizations, and individual citizens should participate in and cooperate with implementing in combination different types of measures including environmental assessment, improvement of social capital, environmental awareness, provision of information, economic measures, and regulatory measures, according to the nature of the problems incurred. In the process,
a basis of scientific knowledge in developing technologies will be built. To make implementation of the measures effective, the national government should develop guidelines for the long-term objectives of the environmental policies, and plan and implement measures to achieve the objectives set for each of the tasks, including the policies on global warming and waste.

1. Conserving the natural environment

Responding to the general public’s desire for nature and demand for securing biological diversity, and taking into consideration the natural and social characteristics of the regions and international agreements including the Ramsar Convention, conserve and manage closely interrelated natural environments such as national parks, which provide abundant and attractive areas of nature. They will serve as the basis for developing Japan into a more attractive country. Encourage the maintenance and expansion of the secondary nature through agriculture, forestry and fishery. Encourage the improvement of forests located in villages in cooperation with citizen groups. In urban or coastal areas where nature has been seriously damaged, create and recover forests and waterside areas as projects to improve public facilities. Also create green spaces and habitats for wildlife, even using artificial structures to provide quasi-natural environments.

(1) Creating an ecological network on a national scale

In conserving and restoring the natural environment, balanced and stable ecosystems should be established based on the idea of coexistence with wildlife. It is necessary to consider ecosystems at different levels including at global, national and regional levels, and to ensure that wildlife habitats are interconnected and fully-integrated. In other words, an ecological network should be created on a national scale. Use this as a basis for maintaining and creating systematic, basic and continuous networks of natural habitats for various species of wildlife in the mountain range, river basins and coastal areas. Based on these networks and the characteristics of the region, wildlife habitats of each area should be maintained and created.

Conserve existing natural environments if they are sound, and make improvements in areas that need them, so that they can form habitats for wildlife. In constructing artificial structures, give due consideration to preserving the connections between the natural habitats. As a basis for these activities, prepare a plan (Eco-Net Map) for maintaining and creating wildlife habitats using organized information about wildlife. At the same time, to maintain a balanced ecosystem and to help people towards a deeper understanding, control population in some species, establish structures to prevent wildlife causing damage, improve conditions for admitting visitors, such as construction of more informative centers, and development of talent.

(2) Improving conditions for recreational use of nature

For people to have more contact with nature and come to a deeper understanding of the role of nature, implement the following measures for conserving and restoring the natural environment, taking into consideration the characteristics of the nature
maintenance areas, such as national parks, rural areas or urban areas. Plan and build facilities for recreation, for observation of nature, for outdoor activities and for experiencing agriculture, forestry and fishery, or construct a wide-area network of walking trails. Furthermore to encourage people to participate in nature-conservation activities, provide education and more information. Moreover the management systems including payment by visitors will be improved.

(3) Mitigation (Avoiding, minimizing and compensating for negative influences on the environment)

When implementing land development projects, it is necessary to take proper measures to conserve the natural environment by carrying out environmental assessments, preferentially to avoid or minimize changes to places where the natural environment needs to be protected.

For this purpose, implement the following.
1) Systematically collect environmental information as the basis for avoiding or minimizing the changes, and establish a system to distribute the information widely.
2) Conduct surveys and studies for environmental conservation at an early stage of land development, including selecting the site for the development, while encouraging citizens and experts to participate in the process.

If it is difficult to avoid or minimize the effects on the environment by the development project, a quasi-natural environment should be planned as an alternative to a natural environment, and it should be established and constantly managed based on regional characteristics of natural environment. To achieve this, make further studies into the following.
1) How to provide satisfactory compensation, conduct monitoring surveys, and properly implement additional measures after them.
2) How to share the costs for environmental conservation between the project entities and the entities that provide compensative schemes.

2. Decreasing the load on the cycles of nature

To recover a sound and attractive natural environment, it is vital to decrease the load on the cycles of nature. This load is the result of business activities and everyday life activities of people throughout the country. Promote environmental conservation measures to help to decrease the load.

(1) Prevention of global warming

Global warming is one of the most important environmental issues that threatens the lives of human beings. Because it is too late to take action after the damage has been done, the present generation should make aggressive efforts to restrain emissions of greenhouse gases including carbon dioxide in order to fulfill its responsibilities to the welfare of future generations.

Establish the basic facilities required to build urban or regional structures, transportation systems, production structures and energy supply systems that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Educate and encourage each person to review their
lifestyle and participate in the efforts to reduce emissions. To absorb carbon dioxide, conserve and expand forest areas and woods in urban areas, and promote the use of trees. Concurrently study, develop and distribute the necessary technologies. To decrease the load on the cycle of nature, comprehensively examine action to be taken against global warming, and take necessary action to implement requirements of the Kyoto Protocol that was adopted at COP 3 consistently. In addition, conduct further research and studies into economic measures for the prevention of global warming.

(2) Reducing and recycling waste

To respond to the increase in the volume and type of waste and the overloading of landfill sites, reduce the amount of waste, and reuse or regenerate raw materials or energy resources. Properly dispose of waste that cannot be recycled.

Establish and improve a system to collect resources from each kind of wastes or from construction byproducts and use them. Also establish recycling facilities and facilities that can utilize the heat produced by incineration. Ensure that a sufficient number of landfill sites will be constructed in cooperation with the regions, in a way that will conserve the environment, and particularly promote wide-area waste disposal systems in large urban areas. In addition, improve regulations and procedures concerning the construction and management of landfill sites. Take stronger action against the illegal dumping of waste, implement measures to restore the environment, and construct and involve public entities in constructing disposal facilities for industrial waste.

(3) Putting to work nature's purifying capacity

In areas with nature's purifying capacity or where natural energies are available, these advantages should be utilized to reduce the loads on the cycle of nature by implementing the following measures.
1) Conserve and manage forests, paddy fields, rivers, seaweed beds and tidelands.
2) Reduce the use of chemical fertilizers or pesticides, and recycle animal dung.
3) Establish new and improve existing sewage treatment facilities.
4) Establish facilities for the effective use of regional energy, such as wind power, geothermal energy and energy produced from waste.

Moreover, to make efficient use of recycled resources obtained from garbage or sludge, improve the conditions for cooperation between urban and rural areas.

(4) Responding to urban pollution

In the areas suffering from degradation of the environment due to over-concentration of population and services, great efforts should be made to restore the environment.

To solve air pollution due to nitrous oxide and other gases, problems from traffic noise, and water pollution in closed water systems, implement comprehensive measures and take action. Maintain the quality of the underground water. Furthermore, make efforts to maintain clean air and attractive water areas.
Also implement measures to reduce environmental risks caused by chemical substances that may have a harmful influence on people's health and the ecosystem, including dioxin and endocrine disruptors (environmental hormones).

3. International cooperation for environmental conservation in the global age

Japan needs to take a leadership role in international society in solving global environmental problems and in establishing and strengthening international cooperation with other countries, in view of its geographical characteristics (located in the monsoon area of East Asia).

To deepen mutual understanding on the environment, conduct exchanges and cooperation beyond national boundaries at each of grass-roots, regional and national levels. Furthermore, based on these exchanges and cooperation, promote cooperation in each region in reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and substances that cause acid rain, afforestation, and conservation of wetlands, keeping international agreements and using the environmental technologies and experience that Japan has accumulated. It is also necessary for Japan to participate aggressively in international discussions concerning the prevention of global warming, etc.

Section 3
National land conservation and management focusing on basin areas

1. Comprehensive measures focusing on river basin spheres

In accordance with the urbanization and changes in lifestyle in Japanese society, river basins are undergoing great changes and the beneficial hydrologic cycle is being lost. At the same time, depopulation and aging are under way especially in hilly areas. Under these circumstances, it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain forests and farmland in good condition. To enable sustainable land use and recovery of the hydrologic cycle in the 21st century, define a river basin sphere to include the areas that each basin supplies with water and the river's flood plain. Study records on the climate and pay special attention to the individual roles of rivers, forests and farmland in order to develop comprehensive measures for national land management.

(1) Comprehensive measures for river basin spheres

Basin areas characterized by a hydrologic cycle involve problems related to water, soil and sand. In these areas, water quality, afforestation, flooding, and erosion should be well-controlled over a wide area using a multi-layer or multi-field approach beyond administrative boundaries. This also applies to problems related to good management of forests and farmland, which form the biggest ratio of land use and which are expected to play useful roles in the public interest. The basin areas are comprised of natural water areas and related forests, farmland and urban areas. They form basic units for national land conservation and management. Study and make specific plans to form horizontally-linked councils and similar bodies for coordination and cooperation to respond to related problems. Also study the mechanism of the hydrologic cycle thoroughly, and look at the necessity and methods for controlling...
and conserving river water and groundwater, since they are closely related in the hydrologic cycle.

(2) Preserving and restoring the hydrologic cycle

Problems around riverheads must be solved not only for the upstream areas, but in concert with the downstream areas that the river serves. Based on a correspondence between upstream and downstream areas, plant more forests to re-establish and consolidate the riverhead. Improve the national management of riverhead areas by taking effective action that includes allowing public entities to use funds for afforestation. In the downstream areas and hilly areas, encourage a range of entities to increase the buildup of groundwater by stopping rainwater runoff, and return highly-treated sewage to rivers to recover the hydrologic cycle.

(3) Raising awareness of people in upstream and downstream areas

People are paying more attention to water-related problems and are becoming more interested in nature. In this respect, numerous civil and municipal activities are being conducted in connection with river basins such as the "river basin summit," events sited near forests, farmland and rivers, research on water culture and nature, and preservation of water quality. Support these activities to help people to recognize the importance of both upstream and downstream areas of river basins in their lives. To raise awareness among the general public, support the related governmental agencies in cooperating to establish centers that allow people to come into contact with forests and river areas and in constructing urban facilities in upstream areas. Also encourage citizens to network their activities and to participate more in activities to preserve rivers and forests.

(4) Maintaining a clean, good-tasting water supply

In response to increasing demands for clean and good-tasting water, establish new and improve existing sewage treatment plants, and maintain the quality of water in irrigation/drainage canals for agricultural use, and reservoirs at dams, rivers and lakes. For efficient and effective implementation of purification projects in all the river basin areas, encourage inter-project cooperation and coordination while targeting general pollution sources such as urban areas and farmland, and encouraging the participation and cooperation of citizens, companies and NPOs. For the drinking water supply, improve the capability of water purification plants and strengthen control over water quality including measures to destroy infectious microbes.

Moreover, for areas that need solutions other than the establishment of sewage treatment plants, and for enclosed water areas such as lakes and marshes, develop water purification technologies that use natural purifying methods to improve water quality. Also implement more safeguards against accidents caused by poor water quality, and introduce other water-related risk management measures.

2. Ensuring stable supply and effective use of water resources
Because of unstable patterns of rainfall in recent years, it has been becoming difficult to ensure a stable supply of water, which often causes water shortages. Furthermore, the frequent use of water for industry, changes in people's lifestyles, etc. are increasing the effect that water shortages have on society. In addition, because water resources are concentrated in particular areas, there are areas that tend to suffer from water shortages. To solve these problems, comprehensive action should be taken in river basin areas.

(1) Effective use of water resources

To make Japanese society conscious of conserving water, encourage the use of rainwater and the recycling of sewage in urban areas. At the same time, make people more aware of the importance of saving water, introduce water-saving commodities to more households, reduce leakage at water supply pumps, and improve the recovery rate of water used by industry. To prevent groundwater-related problems including subsidence, maintain levels of groundwater and make proper use of it. Obtain clear data on the present use of water, determine the changes in the demand for the different uses of water including water for agricultural use, for drinking, and for industrial use, and try to meet the new water demand in order to maintain and improve the water environment. Based on the results, study and prepare for the construction of rational water supply systems that meet regional requirements and the present needs of society.

(2) Strengthening measures against water shortages and developing new water resources

To strengthen measures against water shortages, use the council to solve the drought-related problems, etc. and establish the necessary facilities. In the event of extreme shortage of water, examine how to effectively coordinate the use of water between different consumers and areas and between related consumers, including methods of compensation.

In areas that have unstable supplies of water because of increasing demands for water for urban use and delays in the development of new water resources, stabilize the water supply by developing new water resources. For isolated islands or peninsulas that do not have enough water, ensure stable supplies of water by a variety of methods including the construction of reservoirs, desalination, and the construction of underground dams. In the process, it is also necessary to make effective use of existing facilities including rebuilding existing dams and cooperation between reservoirs. For water used in agriculture, review the usage before upgrading water supply facilities so that any surplus water can be used effectively. To enable limited water resources to be managed effectively, establish wide-area water supply systems by improving the connections between rivers and by building facilities that supply water to wide areas.
Changes in land/water use in river basin spheres are causing a range of problems. For example, urbanization has caused an increase in flooding and deterioration of the water quality in rivers, and the drying up of springs has led to a decrease in the volume of water in rivers and to changes in the amounts of alluvial soil and sand in the basins. To solve these concrete problems, encourage river basin spheres to cooperate in taking comprehensive action. Also improve the natural functions of rivers to rebuild the relationship between people and rivers.

(1) Flood control targeting both the river basins and the flood plains

To ensure safety against floods and landslides, encourage each river basin area to make comprehensive efforts towards the development of communities that are more able to deal with floods and that can survive without damage even in the case of floods on a scale exceeding the design levels of the flood control structures. To minimize the damage when rivers flood, conserve forests located around rivers, make dangerous areas and evacuation routes in the event of flood and landslides clear to the general public, and carry out other measures centered on the flood plains. Furthermore, in order to manage structures connected with floods and landslides, build landslide barriers to control erosion effectively. Improve rivers, sewage systems, dams and drainage canals so that they fit in with the life of the communities in the river basin areas. Also build new and improve existing structures to prevent landslides and avalanches of rocks and soil and conserve forests located on slopes at the foot of mountains adjacent to city areas. Build an advanced information and communications infrastructure for disaster prevention and river management. Take a long-term view of improving rivers, and from the beginning of the 21st century, make improvements to large rivers every 30 to 40 years, and to small and medium-sized rivers every five to 10 years based on calculated rainfall amounts.

In large city areas, carry out improvements to rivers as soon as possible because floods in these areas will cause serious and extensive damage. At the same time, build sturdy embankments to prevent flooding under the regional community development plan in preparation for large-scale floods that exceed the design levels of the flood control structures. Or strengthen existing embankments to make them stronger against large floods and earthquakes. Also improve sewage systems and flood control facilities including drainage systems, to solve the problem of frequent flooding in some areas.

With the high possibility that hilly areas could become cut off in the event of floods or landslides, build more flood/landslide control structures to ensure the safety of the residents.

(2) Comprehensive erosion control targeting river basins and coastal areas

In response to lowered riverbeds and retreating coastal lines, carry out surveys and studies on the flow of sand and soil from mountainside to seaside to provide comprehensive erosion control that takes the ecosystem into consideration. In the river basins, build structures to remove sand in reservoir dams, and develop erosion control dams that do not stop the flow of sand and soil in the event of small and
medium-scale floods. In coastal areas, ensure a proper flow of sand along the coastlines, and develop methods to recover and maintain sandy beaches. To ensure safety in coastal areas, construct new and improve existing structures that provide safety against high tides, tidal waves and stormy seas according to the degree of coastal erosion and the state of the hinterland.

(3) Preserving nature and improving the environment along rivers
To preserve nature and improve the environment along rivers, conserve natural riverbanks and forests around rivers, revitalize river channels, develop river areas into nature-rich places by building fish ladders, etc. Build disaster-proof structures and develop new materials that are in harmony with nature along rivers. Also improve the waterside environment so that people including the elderly and the handicapped can have more contact with rivers in their daily lives. Improve the environment around dams to provide local people with access to the reservoirs, ensure stable water levels by building sub dams, and improve the waterside environment by planting trees along the lakefronts. In urban areas, build networks of water and greenery, and encourage extensive afforestation and improve watercourses and rivers as one measure for disaster preparedness.

4. Forest management
(1) Basic forest management policies
Forests cover two thirds of Japan. It is important to ensure that they can continue to be used for public welfare in terms of national safety and water resources. They should be utilized in a sustainable manner as renewable resources.

Recently, however, the traditional forest management system has not been working satisfactorily due to stagnation in the forestry and wood industry, falling numbers and aging of people engaged in forest management, and the subsequent lowering of the management level. On the other hand, in accordance with the increasing concern over natural disasters and water shortages, people are paying more attention to forests located in upstream areas. They regard forests as important in the conservation of a natural and living environment, and are more eager to take part in forest nurturing activities. There are also rising demands for the use of forests as places for events, or for health, cultural and educational purposes.

Based on local conditions, forests will be managed according to the following basic policies.

(Promotion of sustainable forest management)
As one step in the solution of global environmental problems, efforts are being made all over the world towards attaining "sustainable forest management." Promote "sustainable forest management" in Japan too, through technical cooperation with overseas countries and centered around the concept that Japan's forests belong to the world. With this as Japan's basic forest management policy, plan qualitative improvements in forest resources by combining different improvement projects and conservation measures in an organic manner.
(Developing a new culture around forest use in the 21st century)

Japan is blessed with forests; its people have had deep contacts with the numerous aspects of forests, affecting their daily lives, industry, architecture, religion, and art, and this has created a "forest culture." In historical times, Japan established a forest management system to ensure a constant supply of firewood and charcoal, and to ensure a stable supply of water and manure that are indispensable in growing rice in paddy fields. In this system, forests in upstream areas or next to villages were conserved and the benefits of the forest effectively enjoyed. This system has formed the basis of the "forest culture." From this point, encourage more people to recognize the importance of forests and rebuild the forest management system by promoting exchanges and cooperation between urban and rural communities aimed at more contact with forests and increasing afforestation. By taking these measures, establish lifestyles that will enable sustainable and stable use of recyclable forest resources to form a new culture centered around forest use in the 21st century.

(Improving forest management)

Forests represent ecosystems centered around air, water, soil, trees and other plants, and animals. Forests affect the lives of people, including those living in downstream areas and the overall ecological sustainability. If the use of locally produced lumber is encouraged, forestry will be reinvigorated and local forest management will further improve. Based on this idea, pursue consensus and further cooperation between a wide range of related persons (between private and national forests, between forestry and wood industry, and between upstream and downstream areas). Improve forests and reinvigorate forestry by establishing forest management systems suited to each region's characteristics, based on river basin as a unit. Also make efforts to reinvigorate mountain villages as a prerequisite to encouraging citizens to take part in forest nurturing activities, to maintain and strengthen the public role of forests, and to improve forest management.

Change the focus of management of national forests from lumber production to the maintenance of public functions for national safety and to the conservation of primeval forest ecosystems. Sound national forest operation will ensure that forests fulfill their public functions. Develop new projects in response to people's demands and changes in the needs of the times.

(2) Forest management for the 21st century
(Extensive and new uses of forests)

Give the general public a greater awareness of the role of forests, improve the forest environment so that people can use the forest in many different ways, and encourage the use of forests for many purposes. Establish a system that enables each age group including young people to learn about and experience the relationship between human beings and forests, forest ecosystems and the role of the forest through experience in local forests and green tourism. Provide many different entities with the opportunity to experience life in a mountain village, to take part in forest
nurturing activities, and to share in the creation of a "forest culture." As a basis for this, improve forests and promote the use of forests including trails for a walk in forest. In addition, train forest instructors, utilizing the skills of local people, provide more information on forests over the Internet, and make improvements in "software" aspects.

As one new use of forests, study the creation of residential or business space in the forest environment.

(Encouraging more entities to be involved with forest management)

Encourage more people to participate in afforestation. Promote cooperation between upstream and downstream areas and further utilize funds for profit-sharing afforestation and for the forest improvement towards the diverse development of forest management. Based on the concept that forest possessors and forestry enterprises should first of all be self-supporting, provide them with proper support, further utilize the third sector engaged in forest management, and give comprehensive support to propellers of forest management including new participants based on cooperation among related persons. Furthermore promote exchanges and cooperation between urban areas and mountain villages so that people who want to take part in forest nurturing activities can actually contribute to forest management. Also forests that can no longer be managed because the owners have moved to other areas should be placed under proper management by forestry enterprises, forest owners' associations or by public agencies.

(Planning forest improvements)

While promoting participation and cooperation among numerous entities, determine the present structure of forestry and clarify requests related to forest management. Then make long-term forest management plans as shown below.

1) Promote planting on wasteland, thinning and tending for multi-storied forest improvement. Establish facilities to conserve forests. These measures are to provide forests with high levels of water and soil conservation.

2) Create attractive and sound forests that preserve bio-diversity and that are easily accessible. This will be achieved by conserving diverse ecosystems and networking them, planting different kinds of trees, conserving forests located in the suburbs of urban areas and villages, improving forest scenic beauty, conserving and tending broadleaf trees and by improving recreational facilities.

3) Promote the comprehensive recycling of forest resources to make them sustainable, while strengthening the functioning of forests as carbon dioxide sinks.

Improve forest road networks, which are indispensable for forest management. To protect the forests, maintain and strengthen their functions by improving forest conservation facilities. Furthermore, conduct more surveys and studies on sustainable forest management and distribute the results. In addition, provide more information about forest resources, something that is indispensable for proper forest management. In areas that suffer from the aging of forestry workers, clarify ownership and boundaries where necessary.
5. Management of farmland

About 14% of Japan is farmland, consisting of networks of agricultural irrigation and drainage canals and irrigation ponds. Farmland is the basis of food production and supports our high standard of living. Proper maintenance and management of farmland can contribute to public welfare by providing the following benefits. First, terraced paddy fields located on the slopes of mountains serve as reservoirs for rainfall and prevent landslides. Paddy fields located on flat ground also serve as reservoirs and these fields, together with agricultural irrigation and drainage canals and irrigation ponds, provide a pleasant water environment and beautiful views. They provide opportunities for recreation, for children to cultivate aesthetic sensitivities, and for social education in a rich national environment. Recently, however, more and more arable land is being abandoned in hilly areas and it is becoming difficult to manage farmland properly.

In view of these facts, implement the following measures.

(1) Comprehensive management of farmland

Promote comprehensive measures for sound agricultural development and to maintain and secure rich farmland. In particular, improve the agricultural infrastructure including paths between fields and carry out disaster prevention measures as one condition for the proper conservation and management of farmland. In hilly areas, improve farmland according to local conditions. Furthermore, give more support to local citizens to improve the farmland management system, and also support improvement of the local environment based on a strengthened partnership between local citizens, local public entities and private companies. In hilly areas suffering from depopulation, to avoid the farmland including terraced paddy fields from becoming overgrown, implement the following measures for the proper management of farmland and for human development.

1) Promote exchanges and cooperation between rural and urban areas and between farmers and consumers.
2) Give public support according to regional situations with the approval of the people concerned, and encourage the related municipalities, agricultural cooperatives, public associations for land improvement and third sectors to be more actively engaged in farmland management and improving the land.

(2) Utilization of farmland

Support regional activities towards proper farmland management throughout the nation, and promote green tourism and develop attractive rural communities to provide people with more opportunities to visit farmland. For this purpose, plant trees or flowers on abandoned arable land, and establish a bio-tope network to conserve and recover a rich natural environment. Provide urban residents with the opportunities to experience farm work on "citizens' farms," and improve the facilities and support systems that use the experience of farm work as recreation. The continuation of proper agricultural activities and the appropriate management of farmland will also
contribute to the conservation of river basin spheres including the maintenance of water quality, and to an increase in waterside amenities.

Section 4
Conservation and utilization of the ocean and coastal areas

Noting the rise in people's awareness of the importance of the global environment, and based on Japan's rights and obligations provided in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, it is essential to regard the ocean and coastal areas as common assets of humanity and as a valuable part of the country to be handed on to future generations in good condition. These areas will be utilized in multiple ways but should be properly looked after for future generations.

Japan's ocean and coastal areas are in two groups. Included in the first group are the Kuroshio current, the Oyashio current and the Tsushima current areas, and in the second group are the three largest bay areas and the Seto Inland Sea area. The second group of areas are within the Western Japan National Axial Zone and the first group areas are within the remaining three new National Axial Zones. In keeping with the characteristics of each area, implement the following measures to develop the structure of the country in a desirable way.

1. Enabling diversified contacts between people and the sea

Japan's coastal areas are in severe natural conditions, but the country's population and assets are concentrated in these areas. It is therefore necessary to protect people's lives and property and to improve and develop coastal areas into safer areas, providing against natural disasters such as flood tides and tsunamis, and in response to the coastal erosions that can be observed throughout the country. For this, implement urgent countermeasures against earthquakes and tsunamis, strengthen coastal protection structures, improve their durability by complex types of coastal protection, and upgrade the systems that monitor flood tides or tsunamis and provide information on their movements.

In coastal areas where there is interaction between the sea and the land, the natural cycles and the reproductive capacity and diversity of nature are being damaged. This is causing numerous problems including coastal erosion, eutrophication and red tides, and a decrease in places suitable for the many creatures to breed and grow. Depending on the characteristics of each coastal area, prevent erosion, improve the quality of the water and the ocean floor, promote quantitative and qualitative recovery of shoal areas such as tidelands, reed beds and sandy beaches and restore the land's natural purifying power. By taking these measures extensively and comprehensively, recover and create attractive and sound coastal environments where people and nature can coexist.

Furthermore, develop seaside and coastal areas into multi-functional spaces that provide attractive views, public access and attractive waterfronts. Also promote cooperation and exchange among projects related to the seas. For example, promote exchanges for relaxation, study, etc. to provide people with opportunities to
experience the nature of the ocean, and the life and communities that are centered around the seas. Exchanges will take place concerning the researches and technologies on marine themes among the industries including fishing. Events focusing on the oceans will be held and wide-area travel routes will be formed by the use of a marine transportation network. Targeting people who use seaside recreational facilities, establish users' organizations and make rules for their use, ensure that there is a sufficient number of moorings for pleasure boats and build a wide-area network for pleasure boats.

2. Promoting comprehensive plans for the management of coastal areas

Clarify the state of the natural environment in coastal areas in order to keep safety of the areas, make multiple use of them, and create desirable environments and autonomous attractive communities. Local public entities will take the lead in drawing up comprehensive management plans for coastal areas and will implement carefully a range of projects and measures according to a schedule in a comprehensive manner. The national government will set clear guidelines for drawing up such plans and support local public entities through national projects and by encouraging private and non-profit organizations to cooperate with the local entities. If a coastal area belongs to more than one local public entity, the related entities, and if necessary the national government, should cooperate in making and promoting plans for the area.

To improve the coastal environment, it is necessary to make long-term targets and step-by-step plans taking a wide view towards the recovery and creation of a favorable environment. It is also important to coordinate projects and plans between various entities. Each entity should plan and promote cooperation between the leaders of the related entities.

3. Establishing an international oceanic order, and promoting technological development

For proper execution of rights and fulfillment of obligations on fishery resources within the exclusive economic zone, promote proper resource management depending on the characteristics of reproduction resources through the TAC (total allowable catch) system. Protect and recover fishing grounds such as reed beds by reducing the effects of development, and also promote sea-farming and conduct surveys and research for well-planned and sustainable use of resources. To make further use of the sea as the frontier of the 21st century, develop new vessels and floating structures. Improve basic marine productivity and promote technological development and the practical use of new technologies for the use of fishery resources. Conduct research and development into petroleum and natural gas on the continental shelf as well as other mineral resources on the deep sea floor. Also conduct R&D into tide and wave energy generation. In order to protect and conserve the marine environment, and to clarify the causes of and make accurate predictions on global phenomena such as global warming and climate changes, and also to deal properly with marine and coastal accidents, encourage marine studies, surveys, R&D, and data collection in cooperation with international organizations. It is necessary to establish an
international system of cooperation to implement marine resources development, management, surveys and research.

Chapter II

New Evolving Cultures

Cultures represent people's living, lifestyles and ways of thinking. In Japanese society today, a new culture is needed that gives Japan an international identity and enables people to lead comfortable lives beyond the pursuit of mere economic affluence. It is therefore necessary to implement policies both in software and hardware aspects to make lives more comfortable and to restore the country to an attractive land of nature that Japan can be proud of internationally. Regional cultures give identities to each region and encourage residents to love and take pride in their local regions. Regional cultures support the development of unique and diversified regions. To encourage development of diversified regions that give people more living options, it is therefore necessary to stimulate unique regional cultures. In drawing up national land policies, measures to promote individual cultures as well as to encourage people to lead cultural lives should be taken. According to the following basic plans, national land policies that focus on cultures will be promoted:

1) Create living areas giving considerations to amenities and scenery for developing the country into land of culture and beauty. Preserve historical streets and precious cultural heritage.
2) To stimulate unique regional cultures, improve the environment for regional cultural activities, provide more opportunities and places for citizens to participate in cultural and sport activities, and promote artistic activities. Also promote international exchanges in the fields of science, culture and sport.
3) Promote tourism both domestically and internationally to help create new cultures and regional activation through inter-regional exchanges both within Japan and beyond the national boundary.

Section 1
Creating comfortable living areas

1. Creating attractive living areas that blend with the natural environment and history

In the midst of economic growth and urbanization, good living areas have been lost and old streets and rural sights representing regional histories and cultures are disappearing. Also, the traditions and customs passed down in each region are being lost in people's daily lives. To stop such trends, create attractive and good living areas, evolve unique regional cultures by using regional cultural heritage, and develop regions where people can lead meaningful lives. Diversified regional entities will participate in regional development and creation of unique regional cultures.
1. Focusing on attractiveness and comfort

In rural communities, preserve and utilize the forests and environment that have long been preserved as valuable natural assets. At the same time, improve the living environment, create attractive living areas, and promote cooperation with small- and medium-sized towns to enable rural communities to enjoy urban functions. In urban communities, pay attention not only to individual buildings but also to the surrounding environment to ensure harmony with natural sights and skylines in terms of colors and shapes. Bury electric wires underground and remove poles. Strengthen regulations on unsightly outdoor advertisements through urban plans or agreements on advertisements made under local ordinances. Create urban parks, watersides, promenades, etc. for citizens. And also create green spaces with a sense of the seasons by decorating the walls and roofs of buildings with plants. Besides by establishing artistic works that match the environment in public spaces, create attractive and comfortable urban spaces.

For developing communities while preserving Japan's historical environment, conserve and utilize historical buildings. Protect, utilize and restore historical streets, sites and residences. Aggressively preserve the historical characteristics of each region.

2. Preserving and utilizing unique and traditional regional cultures

Regional customs and traditions have evolved in line with regional lifestyles and industries. Especially in rural communities including mountainous areas, people have led uniquely rich lives in harmony with the natural environment including farmland, forests and the sea. They have passed down tangible and intangible cultural assets: traditional food, arts, agricultural tools, logging tools, irrigation facilities, and fishing methods.

Promote activities to introduce such regional intangible cultural assets to the public to help preserve and develop the traditional arts, crafts and customs in Japan. Through such activities, help residents understand more about their cultural assets. Train people to take over such intangible cultural assets and promote traditional cultures and activate regions based on such cultures. For assets that are difficult to preserve, utilize electronic media to record, preserve and utilize them.

3. Preserving and utilizing tangible cultural assets

To preserve and utilize regional tangible cultural assets such as buildings and art objects and crafts, implement plans to repair them and improve disaster-prevention facilities according to the kinds of assets. Provide citizens with more opportunities to see cultural assets in regional museums, etc. For modern cultural heritage such as structures related to industries, transportation and civil engineering that have not yet been recognized as cultural assets, protect them by more diverse methods. Also protect cultural assets buried in the ground with the help of citizens and administrative agencies. Conduct development projects while protecting buried cultural assets, and train experts on buried cultural assets. Promote the exchanges of such experts among
regions. Furthermore, establish centers for buried cultural assets to store unearthed articles and utilize the research results.

2. Encouraging entities to establish regional cultures and comfortable lives
   For citizens to lead comfortable and meaningful lives, they themselves need to participate in the process of establishing regional cultures and communities regardless of gender or age. They should be the leading players. Citizens are becoming more eager to participate in regional development where they live, and volunteer organizations and private companies have been more actively participating in the development process on their own initiative. Implement appropriate policies that encourage numerous entities to participate and cooperate in regional development.

   (1) Promoting regional volunteer activities
       To provide citizens with the opportunities to participate in volunteer activities and to enable them to lead more comfortable and meaningful lives through such activities, improve the conditions so that they can easily participate in volunteer activities including the introduction of vacations for volunteer activities. Also, increase support to individuals and groups engaged in National Trust activities, ground work activities, etc. to help conserve natural and historical environments. Such activities will help protect precious natural and cultural heritage in each region.

   (2) Forming regional cultures based on unique industries
       Traditional crafts, local industries, shopping malls and tourism are closely related with regions, and regional industries often support regional cultures. Regional cultures and industries are closely related, and they are both important elements to make regions more affluent. Therefore, activate regions based on traditional local industries. Also, activate industries in relation to traditional arts and crafts. The promotion of regional cultures and industries will help create more attractive regions.

   (3) Creating corporate cultures
       Companies are expected to aggressively participate in the development of unique, attractive regions and establishment of regional cultures. For companies to do this, employers and employees must follow the management philosophy and create a corporate culture in harmony with the local communities. For companies to participate more in social activities including support for the arts and nature conservation, "mecenat" organizations should be established in each region and a national network of such organizations should be built.

Section 2
Creating and showing new cultures based on regional characteristics

1. Creating and showing very unique regional cultures
   Traditional cultures that have formed in regional climates and lives could be the basis for creating new cultures. Towards the new age, their values should be
recognized again and developed into unique regional cultures that give identity to each region. For this, improve the environment for cultural activities in each region and take steps to help create new cultures. Promote the development of unique regions by using local characteristics.

(1) Improving the regional environment for cultural activities

For creating and showing unique regional cultures, it is important to recognize the traditional regional cultures and to encourage people to become involved in the arts and culture. Facilities such as cultural halls and museums should be used for voluntary cultural activities. Such cultural facilities should focus on regional characteristics to provide citizens with more opportunities to create and show attractive regional cultures. In the process, build a database of information related to Japan's cultures and offer access to the database both within Japan and from overseas. Promote cooperation between regions to make efficient use of special cultural facilities such as halls. Compared with improvements in facilities, the "software" is inadequate. For example, not all independent performances and exhibits are good due to lack of teachers or poor planning and production know-how. Therefore, implement policies to strengthen human skills, management of cultural facilities and the activities of artists and such organizations. Also, improve the environment and enable citizens to continuously participate in cultural and sport activities. Specifically, train instructors and develop schools, improve related facilities, support regional sports, cultural events and seminars, and hold competitions.

(2) Creating new cultures according to regional characteristics

In rural areas, utilize the natural environment to create unique cultures. Attracted by such natural environment, domestic and foreign artists will stay and be creative, attracting more people to visit the areas to experience the rural lifestyle. In important urban areas, establish bases for international cultural activities and build the infrastructure for international exchanges to develop international information and culture centers with many cultures and skills. Also, create new cultures by creating cultural areas in cities and by establishing urban symbols including architecture in harmony with the urban scenery.

2. Creating rich lives full of arts

Different arts give different impressions, joys and comforts to many people regardless of age. It is therefore necessary to provide more opportunities to participate in or come into contact with artistic and cultural activities. Art plays an important role to promote mutual understanding in international society, and so artistic levels must be raised.

(1) Providing more opportunities to come into contact with art

Most creative performances and exhibitions are held in large cities and there are few opportunities to come into contact with art locally. It is therefore necessary to provide local residents with more opportunities to come into contact with high-quality
artistic works. For this, promote cooperation between cultural facilities and implement policies to improve the software aspects. Activate regional artistic and cultural organizations. Local public bodies must work to provide residents with more opportunities to come into contact with artistic works, performances and exhibitions beyond regional boundaries. Extending the opening hours of museums, etc. should be examined to allow more local citizens to enjoy artistic and cultural works. Furthermore, more support should be given to local citizens and local cultural organizations to encourage them to participate in activities to promote regional cultures.

(2) Improving the artistic level

By improving the artistic level up to international standards, an urban culture and "small but international communities" can be created. To do this, promote international artistic and creative activities and encourage artists and artistic organizations to work with local communities. Implement measures to develop "media art" by using film production technologies and new skills.

3. Promoting international exchanges and cooperation

International exchanges and cooperation in the fields of science, culture and sport are key to helping people from different cultures to understand each other. For Japan to contribute to world culture and regional activity, it is important to promote open exchanges with the world.

(1) Promoting international exchanges

In the scientific field, establish a system to accept more researchers in response to the increasing exchanges of researchers. Draw up comprehensive and systematic plans to respond to the increase of foreign students staying in Japan, and provide students with more opportunities to meet Japanese people in the regions where they stay and within and outside the educational institutions in which they are studying. Each region should respond to the growing demand for Japanese-language education.

In the cultural field, support planning and continuous implementation of overseas exhibitions and performances to introduce Japan's regional cultural assets. Promote the regional organization of international artistic festivals. To contribute to overseas efforts to preserve and restore cultural assets, give support to training local experts and cooperate with international organizations engaged in the preservation and restoration of cultural assets.

In the sports field, support the organization of international athletic meetings to be held throughout Japan. Also, support the establishment and management of sport facilities to boost the regions and promote international exchanges.

In the future, international exchanges will be promoted between regions and individuals. Therefore, support international exchanges by the private sector and encourage local public entities to develop international skills.

(2) Forming international exchange bases
In various international exchange spheres, establish the basis for international exchanges and activities. To achieve this, improve museum exhibits and researches in response to internationalization. Promote cooperation between national and private museums in each region. Establish national museums that are international in outlook and have good information systems, and create more international cultural bases. Furthermore, construct exchange facilities including convention halls for international conferences and sport facilities.

Section 3
Promoting tourism at home and abroad
When traveling, people can come into contact with new things, people and cultures. Travels bring new impressions and satisfaction, and refresh one both physically and mentally. The increasing number of tourists can make local people more aware of the value of local nature, history and culture. In addition, internationally attractive sightseeing spots will lead to new business and generate employment in the regions, thus helping regions to develop into unique areas. Especially in rural areas, the living environment and lifestyles including the food can be tourist attractions. Rural areas should preserve and utilize their unique resources including the natural and historical environments while making more exchanges with large cities. An effective measure to make Japan more attractive and to create multiple regional cultures towards the 21st century is to encourage quality tourism and improve the transportation, and information and communications infrastructures to support such tourism. At the same time, implement measures to promote tourism both at home and abroad through cooperation between cities and rural communities.

1. International promotion
Although the number of Japanese people traveling overseas has been increasing and the number of foreigners visiting Asian countries has been also increasing, the number of foreigners visiting Japan has remained roughly the same or has slightly decreased except for an increase in 1996. The number is almost one fourth of that of Japanese people traveling abroad. Most foreigners visit the Tokyo and Osaka metropolitan areas and few visit rural areas. It is essential to encourage more people to visit Japan.

(1) Measures to induce more foreigners to visit Japan
To increase the number of foreigners visiting Japan, conduct more PR activities and develop regional marketing plans to make foreigners want to visit Japan. To reduce the cost of staying in Japan, expand the discount schemes for foreigners including discount transportation tickets. Reduce accommodation costs and provide more information about accommodations. Furthermore, for the convenience of foreign visitors, make signs written in foreign languages or with easy-to-understand symbols in public transportation facilities and on roads. Expand the roles of tourist information desks, simplify the procedures for issuing visas, strengthen the links between
international airports and domestic transportation networks, and provide more tourist information.

(2) Inducing more foreigners to visit rural areas

Through extensive cooperation between the public and private sectors, develop various sightseeing routes based on themes that are appropriate to each region's characteristics. Construct accommodations for such sightseeing routes and form districts with international sightseeing themes representing Japan. In implementing these measures, establish a system to respond to the general needs of foreign tourists within each of the wide-area international exchange spheres. Improve the services and the environment to welcome tourists in a friendly way, and provide more free-of-charge guide services.

2. Promotion within the country

In accordance with the increase of leisure hours, the demands for tourism are diversifying. To respond to the trend, develop measures to promote tourism within the country. This will lead to more interregional exchanges and boost the regional economy and cultures.

(1) Measures to sophisticate the tourist industry

As the number of people wanting to travel alone or with families increases, reduce travel costs and diversify the pricing and servicing systems. Establish accommodations for long stays or trips. Train experts who can provide advanced tourist services. Also, examine measures to promote the entire tourist industry including the provision of food and marketing of crafts to tourists. Furthermore, enable tourists to come into contact with regional cultures and meet local people. Regional citizens, the government and the tourist industry can cooperate in making plans to activate regions by promoting tourism there. Encourage each region to create its own sightseeing spots and improve hospitality independently.

(2) Improving the environment for increasing the number of tourists

Improve the traveling environment so that the elderly and the handicapped can enjoy traveling and meeting others with ease. Also, implement measures to activate regional societies by increasing the number of people involved in exchanges between cities and rural communities under the banners of green tourism, long-term volunteer activities or use of second houses.

(3) Activating regions by tourism and making regional information available

Organize events and sightseeing tours so that people can experience the unique nature, culture and history of each region. Conduct PR activities to demonstrate the attraction of regional resources by preparing guidebooks, etc., and create new sightseeing routes that allow people to make trips through different regions. Furthermore, establish information networks on regional tourist attractions and accommodations, and make regional information widely available.
Chapter III

Improving Living Conditions in Regions

To enable people to lead more comfortable lives, both urban and rural communities should develop their own regions in unique ways using local history, culture and the natural environment to respond to socioeconomic changes and the diversification of people's needs. Based on this concept, promote regional development in the following ways.

1) In cities, to enable citizens to lead safer and more comfortable lives, strengthen disaster-prevention measures, improve living standards, and improve the urban environment. To make cities more convenient and vital, improve the urban and living functions based on local characteristics.

2) For creating unique, nature-rich residential areas, smaller urban communities and rural areas should cooperate to improve inadequate facilities, to maintain forests, farmland, rivers, coasts and communities in good condition, and to utilize regional resources. These efforts will help create pleasant areas, and increase local employment opportunities.

3) To ensure safety, improve social conditions in each region. In today's aging society, the elderly should be able to continue to live in their own houses and communities. People should also be able to raise children in the local area without concern. And to deal with global changes in climate as well as food and energy shortages, secure the stable supply of food and energy for daily living.

Section 1
Making cities more comfortable and lively

To respond to socioeconomic changes and to the diversification and sophistication of people's needs, and to improve the quality of life for residents and to activate regional communities, it is necessary to improve the housing environment and urban functions in cities.

For the housing environment, to enable people to lead safe and comfortable lives, strengthen disaster prevention measures, improve housing standards, and improve the urban and living environment.

For the urban functions, utilize the regional characteristics to improve the fundamental functions according to each city's scale and location. Through various forms of cooperation between cities, wide-area independent regions should be created within a wide, accessible zone where residents can enjoy advanced city functions.

1. Making life safe and pleasant

   Improve disaster prevention measures in cities, build better houses, and improve living environment facilities such as urban parks.
Improving disaster prevention in cities

The Hanshin-Awaji earthquake showed again the importance of disaster prevention in cities. Learning lessons from the tragedy, develop communities that are disaster-proof.

Improve safety in cities against large earthquakes and floods. To minimize confusion both within and outside the country, which is caused by damaged services during disasters, plan and implement urban disaster prevention measures, both in hardware and software aspects.

Make urban structures more disaster-safe by the following: Establish evacuation routes, refuge sites, emergency transportation roads, river routes for boats, and firebreak belts. Establish "disaster-preventive blocks," promote rebuilding in urban areas with densely built old wooden houses, improve the urban infrastructure, and strengthen the banks of large rivers.

For public buildings such as the facilities of the governmental agencies, hospitals, schools, and public halls that are important during a disaster for use as shelters, examine their earthquake resistance and make necessary changes. When constructing new public buildings, provide appropriate earthquake and fire resistance according to their importance. For existing private buildings including houses, encourage owners to check the earthquake resistance of their properties and strengthen them. Measures should also be taken to strengthen the earthquake resistance of urban structures such as roads and railways.

For lifeline services (including water and sewage, electricity, gas and telephone), strengthen disaster protection of the main facilities. In close cooperation with the related agencies, establish common channels for lifeline services including those for electric wires, improve the backup system by using multiple routes and loops, and establish substitute facilities.

For smooth emergency operations in areas struck by disaster, establish regional disaster-prevention bases. In metropolitan areas, national parks, large parks, coastal greenbelts and flood plains should be treated as large disaster prevention bases; enable them to function as storage warehouses, emergency transportation bases and heliports. Especially for emergency heliports, to ensure smooth operation and safety for refugees, establish a proper management system. For example, separate the heliport from other parts of the shelter.

To improve the disaster prevention systems in cities, the national government and local public entities should collect information and establish a system for communicating with each other. To enable agencies to communicate between themselves promptly and securely, clarify the flow of information and prepare multiple communication channels. Teach people about disaster prevention, give them training, and encourage them to voluntarily participate in disaster prevention activities. Develop and strengthen voluntary disaster prevention organizations, and improve the environment for voluntary disaster prevention activities.

Providing better houses and building lots
(Providing better houses)

To make lives more comfortable, improve housing standards and promote the construction of barrier-free, energy-saving, durable houses based on master housing plans and policies for the supply of houses and building lots in large cities. Especially, improve the quality of rented houses that is far inferior to that of owned houses and encourage the building of high-quality rental residences. Improve related public facilities, and encourage people to own high-quality houses by providing public loans or tax breaks. Also, promote the building of high-quality rental housing by designating and supporting such housing. Promote the construction of diverse types of houses including houses based on fixed-term lease tenant rights, and thus give more importance to "use" than to "ownership." Also, improve building regulations including performance criteria, and encourage imports of houses and building materials from overseas to reduce building costs. Furthermore, encourage the development of technologies that enable the long-term use and refurbishing of houses.

(Encouraging people to move according to the changes in their lives)

To meet the changing housing needs of people in accordance with changes in life, utilize existing high-quality housing and encourage people to move into new housing according to changes in their lives. Establish a system to evaluate and announce the level of housing, provide more information about housing, and provide consumers with consulting services to improve the housing infrastructure. Furthermore, as many apartments rapidly become older, examine a system for smooth, large-scale repair or rebuilding both in hardware and software aspects while also improving the disaster resistance of buildings.

(Responding to new needs)

In response to the aging of society, encourage the construction of barrier-free housing by promoting building specifications designed for the elderly. Develop technologies and train experts on housing reform according to the changing physical abilities of the elderly, etc. To promote usage by the elderly, construct welfare facilities adjacent to public apartment complexes and integrate housing policies with welfare policies.

To improve harmony with the environment, introduce energy-saving criteria and promote the construction of residences that are in harmony with the environment and do not impose excessive load on the environment. To encourage people to settle in the provinces and to develop rural areas, construct unique housing that blends in with the scenery, based on housing master plans and local characteristics and uniqueness.

In response to new lifestyles such as multi-habitation (owning multiple residences) and tele-commuting (working from home by telecommunications), construct houses in the suburbs and promote the construction of houses that have information and communication equipment.

(Providing high-quality housing lots)
In response to the diversification of people's residential needs, plan high-quality housing lots at reasonable prices to enable people to afford them. To meet new housing demands, plan urban development and convert farmland within urban areas into housing lots, while improving the urban infrastructure including transportation facilities.

In metropolitan areas, based on the policies for the supply of houses and building lots in large cities, draw up and implement plans for the supply of housing lots. With cooperation between the public and private sectors, develop housing lots in line with the construction of new railroads, while considering the natural environment and convenience for the elderly. Draw up and implement plans to change farmland within the urbanization promotion areas to housing lots, and promote fixed-term lease tenant rights. In the provinces, establish better infrastructure to encourage people to settle there, and develop housing lots and facilities based on local characteristics and diversity.

Improve related public facilities such as roads and revise the Land Development Guidance to moderate the contents appropriately.

(3) Improving living environment facilities
(Urban parks, etc.)

Urban parks make cities more pleasant, help prevent disasters, and promote health and welfare. To reap the benefit of parks, systematically establish parks near residential areas in cities, and link them with other green spaces. Especially, establish parks that will serve as wide-area disaster prevention bases or refuge sites in case of disaster.

To help preserve nature in cities, designate more areas as scenic or green-belt areas. Plant more greenery within the sites of public welfare facilities and along roadsides. Decorate the roofs of buildings and walls of elevated highways with more greenery, which was difficult in the past. Create pleasant waterfronts along rivers and establish biotopes in which various creatures can live. To increase greenery on private land, encourage citizens to plant vegetation based on the agreements or systems to encourage greenery.

Furthermore, establish national parks and other large parks for recreational activities and interregional exchanges.

(Sewerage)

Draw up and implement plans to establish and improve sewerage to raise living standards and maintain the quality of public water bodies. Especially, implement improvement projects focusing on the small- and medium-sized cities having inadequate sewerage facilities. Besides targeting important water bodies including closed bays, rivers and lakes that supply public water, promote advanced water treatment as well as measures to clean rivers.

To prevent flooding by heavy rainfall in cities, take countermeasures against rainwater by utilizing sewerage for the smooth removal, storage and permeation of rainwater, in line with river improvements.
Furthermore, to promote recycling of sewage and to create good urban environments, use sewage after treatment, and recycle sludge as fertilizers or as building materials. For the effective use of sewerage, use sewage pipes for carrying optical fibers.

(Urban roads)

Build and improve trunk roads, section roads, sidewalks, bicycle roads, etc. in line with rising urban traffic demand, to improve city areas and to make roads suitable as evacuation routes, emergency transportation roads and as firebreak belts.

To reduce traffic congestion, build or improve bypasses, beltways and traffic nodes, and take action against bottlenecks. To improve road usage, build or improve public transport facilities including new transportation systems and urban monorails. Build more parking lots, improve the parking availability guidance system, and promote ITS (intelligent transport systems).

Furthermore, to ensure traffic safety in cities, implement comprehensive traffic safety measures and improve road networks. For example, for particularly dangerous roads, install signals or sidewalks, and make intersections safer.

2. Developing lively cities

(1) Urban improvement for development of good national land structure

There are signs of the population concentration in Tokyo abating, and hub city and core areas of similar importance are increasingly providing a wider range of advanced city functions. This is stimulating independent regional development. This tendency should be continued for the development of a balanced national land structure. Taking a long-term view for attaining a desirable national land structure comprising multiple zones, it is necessary to promote urban improvement and convert the hierarchic structure between cities into a horizontal network.

Position the three largest metropolitan areas (Tokyo, Kansai, Nagoya), hub cities (Sapporo, Sendai, Hiroshima, Fukuoka and Kita-kyushu), and the prefectural hub cities of similar scale and importance (Niigata, Kanazawa and Toyama, Shizuoka and Hamamatsu, Okayama and Takamatsu, Matsuyama, Kumamoto, Kagoshima, Naha, etc.) as the major core city areas. These should offer advanced urban functions and serve as centers for international exchange. While promoting cooperation between them, establish a stratified network of these areas on a national scale. Especially, improve the functions of the areas according to their scales and characteristics. Build networks between the prefectural hub cities and other smaller local cities to extend the reach of accumulated urban facilities.

(2) Urban improvement policies

Noting the points described above, correct the excessive concentration of population and functions within the 23 wards of Tokyo, and continuously increase and improve the core business cities in the Tokyo metropolitan area. At the same time, improve the quality of advanced urban functions and promote the wide use of such functions. In the Kansai and Nagoya metropolitan areas, while encouraging cooperation with the Tokyo metropolitan area, develop advanced urban functions with
local characteristics. Promote the renovation of such large cities and better use of their spaces, and hence solve problems of overpopulation and concentration in mega cities and make the three largest metropolitan areas better places to live.

In the provinces, establish and improve the major core city areas and prefectural hub cities as bases for independent development both at the regional and prefectural levels. Position the smaller local cities as cores of nature-rich residential areas and make bases of regional independence. In each of the local cities, depending on its scale and location, improve the urban functions by inter-city cooperation, and promote the strategic improvement of local cities based on their characteristics to create a better residential environment.

Both in the three largest metropolitan areas and in the provinces, revitalize commercial center areas that are suffering from depopulation and promote the rebuilding of cities.

In these processes, according to the national land development concept based on participation and cooperation, each region should strive to develop rich and lively urban communities and the national government should support the regions. Urban improvement should be promoted while encouraging cooperation among the various bodies.

3. Renovating large cities
(1) Basic policy

Large cities are suffering numerous problems, including depopulation in city centers, poor urban structure including increasing commuting hours, traffic congestion, vulnerability to disasters such as large earthquakes, etc., degradation of the urban environment due to air and water pollution, worsening waste disposal problems, and land that is not used at all or not satisfactorily on old factory and railway sites in city centers and coastal areas. Life in cities is impeded by the excessive concentration of population and functions. Can large cities respond to greater inter-city competition beyond national boundaries and increasing international mobility? Can they contribute to Japan's development?

In large cities where such problems are worst including the Tokyo metropolitan area, renovation based on the following concept is needed.

1) Solve problems related to depopulation in city centers and long commuting hours to improve the living and working environment. Redevelop areas where old wooden houses are built close together due to the risk of disaster and make cities safer. Improve the urban environment and amenities, create beautiful urban scenery, and change the large cities into safe, pleasant places.
2) In response to the greater inter-city competition beyond national boundaries and increased mobility, improve the quality of urban functions in large cities so that cities can contribute to Japan's development.

(2) Measures to renovate large cities
(Improving public living standards)
Revitalize city-center residential areas, make effective use of land, and create urban structures that provide well-balanced working and living environments to properly deal with the urban problems including the long commuting hours. For this, designate more districts for the construction of multi-stored residences, and promote the construction of medium- and high-rise buildings in the districts by deregulation on the ratio of building volume to lot area, etc. Encourage people to live in city centers by using land that is not used at all or not used satisfactorily, by building flats in city centers and designing them properly. In commercial areas located in city centers, give training on how to improve urban functions by rebuilding old buildings.

To reduce traffic congestion and make large cities more accessible to citizens, increase traffic capacity by building more bypasses and beltways as well as multi-level railroad crossings. In addition, promote ITS for introducing the VICS (vehicle information and communication system) and automatic fare receiving system. Implement more measures for TDM (transportation demand management) including the introduction of a flex-time system and promote the park and ride system. To reduce the rush hours and long commuting hours, construct new railroads, increase the tracks of the existing urban lines, and establish new transportation systems, urban monorails, etc.

(Redeveloping areas that have many old wooden buildings and establishing disaster prevention bases)

Areas that are crowded with old wooden buildings and the areas surrounding the centers of large cities are extremely vulnerable to disasters such as large earthquakes in terms of fire prevention, evacuation and rescue. Such areas are also suffering from poor amenities and housing. To make large cities better places to live, give priority to the redevelopment of areas with many old wooden buildings and establish disaster prevention bases.

Conduct surveys on problems of such areas in terms of disaster prevention and the residential environment, and announce the survey results. Support the activities of public councils, etc. to encourage citizens to improve local disaster prevention and residential environment for themselves. Make it easier to transfer land rights to boost disaster prevention, destroy old wooden buildings and use the land to build new flats that are more fire resistant. Secure open spaces, implement improvement projects, and build refuge routes and shelters for disasters. Furthermore, to facilitate disaster relief, establish relief bases including disaster prevention centers, storage warehouses and emergency heliports.

(Improving the urban environment, amenities, and scenery)

To harmonize urban spaces with nature, the environmental loads in cities must be reduced. Promote recycling and utilize energies that are not used. Build more bypasses and beltways, construct distribution bases around the interchanges of good highways, build more multi-level crossings, improve public transportation facilities, promote the park and ride system, and implement various measures including greater use of bicycles. Also, improve the water quality of rivers, make effective use of
sewage after treatment, and ensure proper permeation of rainwater to the underground to maintain the hydrologic cycle.

To provide city dwellers with opportunities to come into contact with nature, improve the neighboring river and coastal environment, plant more greenery, and build a network of water and greenery. Establish more farms where citizens can experience planting. Designate more areas as green belts, and utilize greenery agreements and the civil greenery promotion system to preserve and increase urban greenery.

To create beautiful cities, preserve and utilize the historical and cultural heritage and improve the quality of urban communities for the creation of new cultures. Prepare comprehensive guidelines on how to improve public facilities, regulate private buildings based on district planning and building agreements, bury electric wires, etc., regulate outdoor advertisements, plant greenery on slopes, and preserve historical buildings. Encourage local public bodies and citizens to cooperate on building attractive communities.

(Restructuring cities)

Distribute those functions that are excessively concentrated in the centers of large cities into the surrounding urban areas including core business districts or to prefectural hub cities. At the same time, use land in city centers and coastal areas that is not used at all or not used satisfactorily, and improve the urban infrastructure and functions both at the national and international levels. Especially, for disused factory sites in coastal areas, plan and convert the land with a broad vision. In the process, review the regulations on land use, and integrate land for residential, business, and production use. By these measures, improve the quality of advanced urban functions in large cities and promote the use of such functions by improving transportation and communication networks.

In view of the lack of space for building public facilities in large cities, utilize underground and aerial spaces. Establish underground passages for multiple use including for electric wires and underground parking lots. Construct multi-level roads integrated with buildings, draw up and implement plans related to underground rivers, and utilize the spaces above sewage disposal plants. Also, examine ways to encourage public use of very deep underground spaces, in consideration of safety and environmental conservation.

4. Strategically improving provincial cities
(1) Basic policy

In the provinces, the hub cities and the prefectural hub cities are steadily providing more city functions. Especially, major core city areas in the provinces are having a good influence on entire regional blocks. However, functions such as for central management, R&D, information and international exchanges have yet to be improved. Because of the changes in industrial structure, etc. many areas of the smaller local cities are losing their vigor and are not effective as regional bases. Furthermore, roads,
sewerage, public transportation facilities, etc. remain unbuilt or unimproved not only in the smaller local cities, but also in the hub cities and in the prefectural hub cities.

It is therefore necessary to improve the provincial cities as follows.

1) The hub cities and prefectural hub cities should serve as bases for independent regional development both at the regional block level and at the prefectural level. It is thus necessary to strengthen urban functions based on regional characteristics through cooperation. The smaller but important provincial cities will serve as the bases for developing good residential areas, and will cooperate with each other and with the prefectural hub cities to provide better services and more local employment opportunities for regional independence.

2) In each of the provincial cities, utilize the surrounding nature, unique history, culture and industries for the development of unique, attractive urban communities. Also, build better urban infrastructure such as roads, sewerage and public transportation facilities, and improve living standards to levels not found in metropolitan large cities.

(2) Measures for strategically improving provincial cities
(Major core city areas)

In the major core city areas that are to serve as the focus for regional independent development, it is necessary to improve the central management, R&D, information and international exchange functions. Especially, for international exchange, the areas must allow international exchange to promote regional development with a global vision.

In each of the major core city areas, pursue cooperation and role sharing as appropriate to its scale and functions. To strengthen the international exchange infrastructure, build high-quality international airports, harbors, good highways and access roads, public transportation facilities, international conference halls, exhibition halls, and communications infrastructure. In addition, organize international conferences and events, and develop organizations and staff to plan and organize such conferences and events. Also, redesign the main streets and use existing infrastructure more effectively by combining or relocating both commercial and public facilities. Furthermore, to initiate regional industrial development, establish scientific or research areas in cooperation with universities. Improve the universities, R&D institutes, etc. and strengthen cooperation with local companies to develop and train researchers.

Also, to promote cooperation with other metropolitan areas and with prefectural hub cities, create wide-area urban networks by establishing high-quality transportation and communications infrastructure.

Furthermore, because major core city areas will expand as the population grows, avoid city problems and improve the urban and living infrastructure in the early stages, implement TDM measures and provide high-quality housing.

(Prefectural hub cities)
In the prefectural hub cities mainly comprised of prefectural capital cities or cities with a population of 300,000 or more, create prefectural bases for regional independent development. Enable the cities to provide advanced urban functions including those for business management, information, high-level education and culture, and medical care and welfare, based on prefectural needs. For international exchanges, in cooperation with the major core city areas, the prefectural hub cities should serve as secondary centers for international exchange.

In the prefectural hub cities, as with the major core city areas, improve the main streets and build infrastructure for international exchange to provide good public facilities. Also, build advanced infrastructure for production, R&D and service industries to create attractive employment opportunities and encourage people to settle in the provinces.

Besides, for cities that are losing vigor because of delayed response to the changes in industrial structure, promote large-scale land use conversion to utilize the land that is not used at all or not used satisfactorily, and restructure the blocks to improve the main streets. In addition, rejuvenate entire cities by equipping them with better business, commercial, service and cultural functions.

Furthermore, to improve living standards for residents, utilize local characteristics including the natural environment and shorter commuting hours, provide high-quality housing, and improve infrastructure such as roads, rivers and sewerage. Especially, implement TDM measures and improve public transportation facilities.

(Smaller local cities)

Position the smaller local cities that have a population of less than 300,000 as the center of nature-rich residential areas, and provide urban services for the residents. Develop the cities into unique and attractive communities as the basis for regional independence. Especially, in cities that rely on the heavy chemical industry that has not yet adjusted to the changes in industrial structure and the cities that rely on tourism that is now stagnant, make effective use of existing resources. Establish new industrial infrastructure or make the cities more attractive to induce more people to visit them.

In the smaller local cities, provide urban services including basic medicine and welfare, education and culture, and consumer services as well as local employment opportunities. To improve access to the cities from the surrounding areas, improve the transportation and communications infrastructure as well as the cities and surrounding areas. Especially, in urban areas designated to become provincial centers following the prefectural capital cities, strengthen their roles as centers for regional independence. For high-level medical care, culture, and other advanced urban functions that each of the cities cannot provide for fiscal reasons, enable the citizens to enjoy city functions by improving access. Also, promote cooperation between the smaller but important provincial urban areas for the provision of such advanced functions.

In the main streets that are suffering from depopulation, revitalize the shopping malls based on the regional characteristics, establish cultural facilities, exchange
centers and parking lots, improve the access by roads and public transportation, and upgrade telecommunications. Through these measures, create attractive, vibrant urban areas. To respond to the need for higher living standards, improve substandard urban areas including the roads, rivers and sewerage. Provide high-quality comfortable housing in harmony with the natural environment and farmland.

(3) Improving smaller cities and creating nature-rich residential areas

Develop the smaller cities into nature-rich residential areas where new urban lifestyles can be established for the 21st century. Develop cities into unique and distinctive communities, encourage people to return to their hometowns, welcome newcomers from large cities, and use local historical and cultural resources, the natural environment and local industries. The objective is to develop resort and tourist cities, art and culture cities, traditional industrial cities, and other attractive and unique cities that are culture-oriented. The results should be announced nationwide and to the world to develop small but international cities.

Section 2
Improving rural communities to form nature-rich residential areas

1. Basic concept

Nature-rich residential areas will provide residents with urban services as well as a natural environment according to the changes in their values and lifestyles, while also ensuring the stable supply of food and timber through agriculture, forestry and fishery.

These areas will be comprised of smaller cities and rural communities including hilly and mountainous areas. Within each area, communities will cooperate and share roles with each other by using the local transportation and communications networks to form the basis for regional independence.

Smaller cities should provide basic health, medical, educational and welfare services as well as cultural and consumers' services. They also need to offer local employment opportunities and urban conveniences based on the regional characteristics.

Rural communities must recognize the value of local resources including the natural environment, culture, farmland, forests, rivers and the sea, and not follow in the footsteps of urban areas. They should preserve and restore the natural environment, and create unique, attractive rural environments. In the management of rural areas, aggressive attitude and ability are necessary just like corporate management by entrepreneurs.

As mentioned above, cooperation both within and outside nature-rich residential areas is needed. Also, improve the smaller cities and rural communities as the basis for developing safe, unique and attractive regional communities and activate the entire regions to improve the structure of the country.

2. Establishing systems
In order to create nature-rich residential areas, a system is needed that enables the municipalities and other related entities to cooperate towards the goal, including the national government, prefectures, agricultural cooperatives, forestry cooperatives, fishermen's cooperatives, public land improvement associations, chambers of commerce, tourist associations and volunteer organizations. To enable these bodies to work toward the goal as aggressively and skillfully as entrepreneurs, systems to evaluate abilities objectively, find defects, restructure the organizations and promote human development are needed.

Presently, many such cooperatives and associations are merging, as it is essential to make efficient investment using limited capital. The systems, therefore, should be established not by individual municipalities but by wider groups based on the cooperation between municipalities.

The municipalities will form wider groups on their own initiative. These groups may be existing municipal groups, regional living zones or subgroups of the prefectures. Also, such groups may be based on land management needs (forests, farmland or rivers), regional characteristics, or coastal areas. The creation of such groups should be promoted.

It might be effective for some regions to cooperate with private companies and utilize their management methods, human resources and funds for developing nature-rich residential areas. Such cooperation should be encouraged.

3. Developing attractive areas with many amenities

For nature-rich residential areas to be attractive, forests, farmland, rivers, coasts, and rural and urban communities must be well preserved and soundly managed. "Amenities" refers to well-managed facilities for residents and visitors. Local residents should be able to take pride in their areas and enjoy a high standard of living in the surrounding nature. Especially, such areas require attractive amenities. Also, in developing unique areas with local resources and "entrepreneur" spirit, in improving forests and farmland that occupy most of the land of rural communities or in improving rivers or coasts, attractive amenities are essential for preserving and creating a good rural environment. These rural communities will be encouraged to improve towards regional development.

To attain attractive amenities, citizens must take the initiative, respecting the local characteristics. Each citizen and individual community must assume the leadership. Traditionally, Japan's smallest communities are villages, and to promote local development also in terms of the social structure, the activities of villages must be organized to suit local situations. In addition, implement measures to support the citizens' voluntary activities and to enable each community to make decisions swiftly and smoothly.

Local citizens should voluntarily conduct the following activities while preserving and improving the local natural environment and scenery. On their own initiatives, they should manage the local forests, farmland, irrigation and drainage channels for agricultural use, agricultural roads, paths through forests, and fisheries facilities. They should also make local arrangements for the cleaning of roads or channels, and for
waste and drainage disposal, and conclude within individual communities agreements on local land use, flower planting, and management of the streets and buildings.

The municipal governments should improve the public infrastructure for production and daily activities including the irrigation and drainage channels for agriculture, community roads and waterways, while considering the rural environment and local characteristics. Also, to support the local citizens' voluntary efforts, they may dispatch experts such as environmental designers, improve the public facilities, enact ordinances based on the citizens' agreements, and adopt ordinances to preserve the local scenery or to protect local historical and cultural assets. They may also promote local development by drawing up land-use plans, or utilize public corporations to improve forests or commission agricultural works. Especially, it would be important for municipalities in mountainous areas to form sister-city affiliation with large cities for local development.

The activities of individuals, communities and municipalities must be supported. Also, to treat residential areas and production areas in an integrated manner in rural communities, examine ways to improve the management of regional development plans including national land use plans.

4. Improving the living environment in rural communities for creating better local communities

For those living in rural communities, there are differences in employment, education and shopping. It is necessary to improve the living environment to resolve such differences.

First of all, sewage disposal facilities, waterworks and roads must be improved to the national minimum level.

Also, education facilities including public halls, cultural facilities, sport facilities and facilities for fire stations need to be built, because they are key to community activities for local development and disaster prevention. Also, existing facilities should be improved and made better use of. Also, establish favorable waterfronts for local citizens to relax.

Municipalities are basic self-governing bodies and should lead the improvement of local public infrastructure. They also undertake administrative services including education, welfare, fire-fighting and disposal of household waste. They therefore should evaluate and improve their own abilities and train people to provide better services.

Promote school and social education by utilizing the local characteristics including the natural environment. Conduct research and development on various instruction methods including using communication methods for improving the education environment based on local characteristics. For local medical care, improve the medical institutions to ensure primary care. Utilize advanced communication and promote cooperation with other areas to establish a satisfactory medical system that provides comprehensive services including the improvement of health, prevention or treatment of diseases and rehabilitation.
Multi-functional and high-quality sport facilities, musical halls, and so on should be established according to local characteristics through cooperation between central cities, surrounding municipalities and the prefecture. Also, improve cooperation and sharing of responsibilities for general public facilities to deliver quality services. Such improvements should be promoted not individually but comprehensively within specific areas.

Although specific areas are the basic units, it is also important to promote wide-ranging cooperation to maintain water quality, share responsibilities for advanced services, create new exchange opportunities and manage the natural environment in mountainous areas.

Improve transportation and establish an advanced communications infrastructure within each area and links to outside areas. Also, implement satisfactory "software" measures.

5. Improving economic conditions for creating better local communities

To ensure income opportunities for local residents, it is necessary to assess the local resources and make entrepreneurial plans. For agriculture, forestry and fisheries, it is necessary to utilize the local conditions including the geography and climate, and to develop new projects without being trapped in the traditional production, distribution and processing methods. For example, introduce value-added agricultural products, develop new distribution channels beyond the existing market systems, and develop new products by utilizing timber from thinning. In addition, create new industries based on local natural environment and culture, and promote the leisure industries including the "green tourism" and "blue tourism" that are becoming more popular.

Also, for the secondary and tertiary industries, by making nature-rich residential areas more attractive, invite more companies to the areas and ensure income opportunities, targeting companies that have few restrictions in relocating.

Improve the infrastructure and software measures accordingly.

Section 3
Enabling people to lead secure lives

1. An aging society with good welfare systems

As society ages and the birth rate decreases, it is necessary to build an aging society in which people can raise children without worries and in which the elderly can lead secure, meaningful lives through social participation. This requires the following measures and broad participation of numerous organizations beyond age and gender.

(1) Building a social support system that will enable elderly people to live with peace of mind

Help the elderly and the handicapped to lead independent lives as much as possible, without becoming bedridden and needing to be nursed. Even if they need some care, they should be able to continue living in their own homes or hometowns, receiving user-oriented high-quality services. Establish a social support system for this purpose.
(Establishing a comprehensive servicing system covering health, medical care and welfare)

To enable the elderly to live without needing to be nursed, establish a system to provide them with proper health checks and rehabilitation. For the elderly who need some care, establish a system to provide different types of comprehensive care covering health, medical care and welfare under the public long-term care insurance system, and offer user-oriented nursing services according to individual needs. In addition, promote the participation of numerous organizations including private companies and non-profit organizations comprised of citizens, etc., and encourage private companies to construct facilities for the health and welfare of the elderly. In implementing the measures, utilize communications technologies.

Also, examine the reverse mortgage system to offer loans to the elderly with their properties as collateral. The system might help them to gain enough money for nursing or living expenses by using their own assets, or to live in better residential environments. At the same time, support the elderly in looking after their properties, such as by establishing a system to protect the rights of the senile elderly.

(Establishing the regional infrastructure for providing nursing services)

Even if the elderly need to be nursed, they should be able to live continuously in their own homes and hometowns. For this, focus on the services provided at home, and improve the health, medical and welfare services both in quality and quantity according to regional situations. Improve the home-help services including the expansion of 24-hour visits by helpers, and establish more facilities to provide day-care services and short-stay services or the home-visit nursing care stations. Also, for the elderly who cannot easily be nursed at home, draw up and implement plans to establish special nursing homes, health service facilities and sanatorium-type wards. In the process, consider coordination within each of the areas for the health and welfare of the elderly and to the entire regional development plans. In large cities, utilize public land and land that is not used at all or not used satisfactorily, establish nursing facilities in combination with public residences, or construct small facilities if there is not enough land. In smaller cities, promote the joint, efficient establishment and management of facilities by multiple municipalities.

Furthermore, to secure enough nursing staff and to improve their quality, give more training to helpers, promote nursing center projects, and improve information systems on staff engaged in welfare. Also, develop and popularize welfare tools to help the elderly become independent and to reduce the burden on those who look after the elderly. Also, encourage a nursing leave system to enable family members to take care of the elderly and work.

For senile dementia, establish more centers to deal with senile dementia and provide citizens with satisfactory advisory and information services. To mitigate worsening of the disease, provide more day services and group homes for the elderly suffering from senile dementia.
For the handicapped, ensure that they have places to live or work by establishing group homes where they can be looked after or vocational aid centers. Also, improve the nursing services including those provided at home, and establish more facilities to give them training for daily living and help them lead independent lives in each region.

(2) Building welfare-conscious communities
To give the elderly peace of mind, provide them with barrier-free access to houses and public facilities.

(Building houses designed for the elderly, etc.)
By popularizing standard design guidelines that consider the elderly or by developing renovation technologies, build or reform houses that help the elderly to lead independent lives or that consider people who look after the elderly. As households comprised of only aged people will increase, increase the supply of public rental housing for the elderly, and strengthen the links between housing policies and welfare policies. Provide more housing designed to help the elderly, better rental residences for the elderly, care houses and pay homes for the elderly.

(Improving the environment for safe and comfortable activities)
To help the elderly engage in activities with safety and without worries, provide them with barrier-free access to public buildings and facilities. Build wide sidewalks and narrow the gaps between steps to facilitate movement, and comprehensively improve welfare facilities and parks while making layout plans for welfare facilities. Install elevators at stations, introduce buses without steps or buses and taxis with lifts. By providing proper information, enable the elderly to use public transportation easily and safely. Furthermore, as the number of aged drivers increases, establish easy-to-understand road signs and improve the roads around welfare facilities, etc.

(3) Encouraging the elderly to participate in society
For the elderly to participate in social activities and to live healthy, meaningful lives, ensure employment opportunities for the elderly, and make it easier for the elderly to participate in local social activities including sports, leisure and volunteer activities.

Create opportunities for exchanges between the elderly and younger generations, to make it possible for the younger generation to learn from the elderly and to encourage the elderly to participate in society. For this, build residences and housing lots where people of different generations can live together, and build centers of exchange such as parks, squares, public halls and sport and recreation facilities. Also, hold exchange events, provide information, and set up an advisory system.

(4) Establishing systems to support childcare
To enable citizens to raise children without worries and to help children to develop properly in each region, set up childcare systems. To achieve this, improve and
expand the nursing services including those for infants and longer-hour nursing services for which demand will increase. Also, build and improve nursery facilities in line with needs and promote flexible management of kindergartens. Also, create and improve regional childcare supporting systems so that every household with children in the region can receive advice on childcare at daycare centers, etc. In addition, provide safe playgrounds near each regional community. To enable parents to raise children and to work without difficulties, promote the childcare leave system, reduce the working hours, and promote the introduction of flextime.

2. Ensuring a stable food supply

   Japan's food self-sufficiency rate was 42% in fiscal 1996 on a calorie base, which is an extremely low level among the developed countries. The country heavily depends on imported food. In the medium- and long-term, food consumption will increase as the population booms and as the consumption of livestock products increases along with economic growth. On the other hand, certain factors hinder the increase of food production such as restrictions on the expansion of farmland and the environmental problems. The food supply might be increasingly threatened.

   Food is the most fundamental necessity and a stable supply of safe food is essential. To maintain the present rich diet of the Japanese, it is difficult for Japan to be entirely self-sufficient in food under the limited land conditions. It is therefore necessary to properly combine domestic production, import and storage to ensure a stable supply of food. For domestic production, based on estimates of the world's supply and demand for food, maintain and expand production as much as possible, and promote the development and utilization of fisheries resources. Furthermore, to establish a domestic food supply system that can handle contingencies, a certain level of agricultural production within Japan is needed. Also, more international exchanges must be made and stable imports of food to supplement domestic production of agricultural and fisheries products must be promoted by international cooperation.

(1) Agricultural measures for stabilizing food supply

   For a stable food supply, good farmland and water for agricultural use as well as good soil productivity need to be secured and maintained. Skilled farmers with good management abilities as well as modern agricultural technologies are also needed.

   The farmland area will be 4.9 million hectares in 2005 according to the national land use plan. Farmland, once it has been abandoned or converted, is quite difficult to recover. To supply food at proper prices despite stiffer international competition, productivity and the production infrastructure must be improved, and farmland improvement plans created and implemented including for irrigation and drainage facilities. Also, disaster prevention measures for the farmland in coastal areas are needed.

   In the future, different methods for conserving farmland must be examined, including whether they are necessary or feasible in terms of costs, with top priority on securing of good farmland.
To stabilize food imports, it is necessary to strengthen global dependence. For this, promote international harmonization including technical cooperation and economic negotiations, and conduct surveys for establishing an international vision on food supply among countries for the sustainable development of agriculture.

(2) Fisheries measures for stabilizing the food supply

Marine products are important for Japanese people and supply about 40% of animal protein. However, due to the reduction of marine resources in the surrounding waters and because of the stricter international fishing regulations, the yield has been decreasing in offshore and distant water fisheries. The self-sufficiency rate has decreased by 24% over the decade to 58% as of fiscal 1996. Although Japan imports a vast amount of marine products, the world's marine production will not remarkably increase, and the supply and demand situation will become tight. It is therefore urgently required to establish a comprehensive, functional system to supply marine products.

To achieve this, within Japan's exclusive economic zone, which is one of the richest fishing grounds in the world, protect the productive coastal fishing grounds and maintain and improve the fishing environment. At the same time, promote good resource management by implementing a new TAC (total allowable catch) system and so forth. Furthermore, train successors systematically, improve fishing ports and villages as the basis for marine production, improve marine productivity, and promote "aqua-culture fisheries based on stock enhancement".

3. Ensuring a stable energy supply

A stable, efficient energy supply is essential for Japan's sustainable economic development and the life of citizens. It is necessary to develop and implement measures to attain sustainable economic growth, stable energy supply, and environmental conservation at the same time in view of the following. First, Japan depends on imports for about 80% of its energy supply. Second, many factors might destabilize the supply and demand of energy in the mid to long term. Third, emissions of carbon dioxide must be curbed to tackle global warming problems.

To attain these goals, we must introduce new energies, promote energy saving, and ensure the stable supply of electricity to cope with growing demand by promoting nuclear power generation, etc.

(1) Introducing new energies and promoting energy saving

Develop and introduce new energies including solar energy power generation to tackle global environmental problems, and take necessary measures on both the supply and demand sides to improve the economic efficiency of new energies. Also, encourage local public bodies and private companies to use new sources of energies, and encourage energy-saving in industry. In the commercial and residential sector and transportation sector in which energy consumption is increasing rapidly, promote energy-saving by establishing efficient transportation networks through public understanding and cooperation. Furthermore, in view of the mid- to long-term
unstable factors in the supply and demand of energy, try to ensure a stable supply of petroleum and to introduce natural gas to resolve global environmental problems. Also, it is desirable to examine the feasibility of natural gas pipelines including its economic efficiency.

(2) Ensuring the stable supply of electric power

For electric power, develop power sources to ensure the stable supply of electric power in response to the increasing demand. Also, optimize the composition of power sources by diversifying them. Promote the construction of nuclear power plants that do not emit carbon dioxide, while giving priority to safety and public understanding and cooperation, and develop related technologies. For constructing nuclear power plants, regional development based on a broad vision including surrounding areas is needed, regardless of whether the regions already have such plants or not. Give advice and support to long-term comprehensive regional development plans, and improve the infrastructure in the regions by using related systems including the three laws related to the construction of electric sources, and support regional efforts to develop independent regional economies.

Chapter IV

Industrial Development

To maintain its economic vitality and to maintain living standards and stable employment, Japan must reform its economic structure and financial system, convert the industrial structure to focus on industries that are expected to grow, respond to people's needs, and encourage more foreign companies to invest in Japan and establish closer ties with other Asian countries in international business. As international competition increases due to economic globalization and the progress of information systems, and with the changes in industrial structure, Japan's regional industries are being forced to make rapid changes. For the mass-production and assembly industries including the automobile and electric machine industries that have led Japan's economic growth as well as for the traditional local industries and regional communities that are prospering on the back of factory complexes, there are rising concerns about "hollowing-out" due to stiffer international competition. Also, the commercial and service industries in provincial cities are facing severe competition because of the influx of imported goods and restructuring of the distribution network. Furthermore, the reduction of public works due to fiscal structure reform may affect regional economies. In the future, industries that are internationally competitive such as those dealing with capital goods including industrial machines as well as industries that respond to new needs related to medical care and welfare, living and culture and to information communications are likely to grow. Moreover, industries that support the aforementioned industries will also grow, including those involved in business support, human resources, software, and
intellectual goods such as planning and designing. Therefore, implement the following measures, considering economic structure reform, to boost regional industries and create employment opportunities in each of the regions that have different characteristics and conditions throughout the country, and to raise the international competitiveness of companies that locate in Japan.

1) Create a favorable environment for new industries by improving intellectual resources such as R&D and human development, supporting the development of new industries and strengthening cooperation between industry, academia and the government.

2) Establish internationally attractive locations for industries by correcting the high-cost structure through deregulation, and improving the transportation and communications infrastructure.

3) Develop new forms of agriculture, forestry and fisheries. In the nature-rich residential areas, establish a new local industrial system for developing new forms of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and promote leisure-related industries. Also, improve the environment for intellectual production by using advanced information and communications systems.

Section 1
Promoting science and technology and creating a favorable environment for building industries

The facilities, equipment, systems, mechanisms for R&D that produce knowledge, technology, information and creative people are all forms of intellectual resources. Dramatically improve this intellectual resources, support new industries and encourage existing industries to start new businesses. This will help create a favorable environment for building new industries independently in metropolitan areas as well as provincial areas.

1. Improving intellectual resources

(1) Establishing and improving R&D facilities

To assist advanced R&D and education and to promote original and innovative R&D activities which contribute to the international society, improve the training and R&D facilities in higher education such as universities and research facilities. Among higher education facilities, graduate schools play an important role in promoting scientific research today. Therefore, improve graduate schools by establishing new research courses in advanced and interdisciplinary fields. Also, improve the research equipment to respond to the demands for higher performance and larger scale, and promote investment in R&D by means such as enhancement of competitive funds. Furthermore, encourage the establishment of public testing and research institutions, private research institutes and factories that have R&D facilities, as well as joint utilization of such facilities. To improve the R&D environment, introduce the principle of competition. Lift restrictions and promote flexibility in the R&D systems, customs and procedures, improve the intellectual property system including the
examination time, improve the system of providing patent information in each region, and standardize the basic criteria and testing/evaluation methods.

(2) Strengthening human development including training for researchers

To nurture creative researchers and improve the research and possibilities for them, boost support for younger researchers by expanding the fellowship systems, secure research funds, improve the research environment, and improve the research evaluation system. Also, to ensure that there are enough people working in science and technology in the future, provide students with more opportunities to come into contact with science and technology related to, among others, the life and universe, and make the science and engineering departments of universities and technical colleges more attractive. Also, at regional research institutes, install joint research coordinators and utilize them. Furthermore, strengthen training at institutes of higher education for engineers and researchers in IT, improve education on information processing, and improve training systems at local public bodies and private companies.

(3) Establishing new R&D centers

To raise scientific and technological standards in regional areas, promote leading and basic R&D activities in each region. And improve the R&D infrastructure to develop pioneering research at world level and sow creative technological seeds. Also, with enhancement of networking between industry, academia and the government and investment in R&D, improve Tsukuba Academic Newtown and Kansai Science City, and furthermore, establish new R&D centers at international level, which can be cores of international spheres of interaction on a large scale.

2. Environmental improvement for creating new industries and encouraging existing industries to participate in new businesses

(1) Strengthening support for developing new industries

To create new industries and to encourage existing industries to participate in new businesses, and to create employment in each region, provide funds to new companies or companies that are developing new products and establish more factories for rent and improve research facilities. Train staff to integrate the technological seeds of companies with the market needs, provide more information on support systems for venture capital, and strengthen the distribution of technological seeds of universities and testing/research institutes. Also, encourage entrepreneurs at institutes of higher education, give more support to companies that encourage in-house ventures, and support entrepreneurs. These measures will raise the consciousness of people, and contribute to the creation of a "favorable environment for building industries." Also, utilize regional resources including existing production facilities and the natural and cultural environments to improve the streets and to establish more exchange bases. By developing industries and communities in such an integrated and synergistic manner, create attractive regional characteristics, upgrade local industries and encourage existing industries to start new businesses.
(2) Strengthening cooperation between industry, academia and the government

To boost the potential of regional R&D and development of new industries, strengthen the cooperation between institutes of higher education, public testing and research facilities, and the research departments of private companies within the region. In the public testing and research facilities, exchange technical information, encourage joint research and use of testing facilities and pursue cooperation beyond administrative divisions. In institutes of higher education, mobilize funds and researchers to boost joint research, commissioned research, technical consulting and technical education with local private companies. Also, establish more joint research centers to support R&D, and establish councils to promote cooperation between industry, academia and the government in each region, and so improve both human resources and facilities. Furthermore, strengthen the consulting functions including regional strategies, corporate management and market strategies. Also, at special high schools, etc., promote cooperation with local industrial groups.

In addition, enhance R&D to promote joint research and exchange activities between multiple industrial, academic and governmental research facilities by utilizing information and communication networks.

Section 2
Regional development of service industries such as intellectual goods industries by providing more intellectual opportunities

Industries that produce intellectual property including software, plans and designs, advertisement, and research results not only increase regional employment but also add productivity and value to existing industries including agriculture, forestry, fisheries and manufacturing. Also, the intellectual property industries also support the development of social service industries that help improve regional living standards. By providing people with more opportunities for learning and business, in other words by increasing intellectual opportunities, strengthen the regional intellectual resources. Mainly in the major core city areas, hub cities and the prefectural hub cities, promote the establishment of intellectual goods industries.

1. Increasing intellectual opportunities
(1) Providing equal intellectual opportunities by using information and communications

To provide equal intellectual opportunities throughout the country, improve the information and communications infrastructure, promote the use of information and communications, and improve the systems that provide technical information and market information in response to changing needs of users. Establish networks that quickly and properly provide comprehensive scientific and technological information, and build electronic library systems so that many people can easily access necessary information and learning opportunities at affordable prices. Also, establish national networks of multimedia systems for retrieval and use between libraries, and establish and network multimedia systems for providing local citizens with different types of
information concerning lifelong study. Also, provide courses at the University of the Air throughout the country, promote networking among universities by satellite communications, and establish correspondence courses for graduate studies to build a flexible higher education system that can provide intellectual opportunities according to the interests and abilities of learners.

(2) Providing more opportunities to learn and develop vocational abilities

To increase intellectual resources and to promote intellectual goods industries in each region, it is necessary to provide more opportunities to learn or to develop vocational abilities. Higher educational institutions including universities play important roles in the creation of new industries, technologies and cultures in each region. However, the population of people aged 18 will decrease and so universities will not be expanded. The establishment or expansion of universities should be done, paying attention to the regional differences in the number of universities, social demands, and the need for recurrent education increasing with the remarkable progress of technology. To utilize institutions of higher education for recurrent education, provide various entrance opportunities including the selection of employees as students. And, provide flexible courses by establishing satellite graduate schools. Furthermore, provide more open courses and promote the use of university libraries by the public. Moreover, promote interregional cooperation between institutions of higher education including credit exchange systems between universities. For education facilities such as libraries and museums, improve the facilities and equipment as well as the quality by training instructors, etc. Through interregional cooperation, establish a system to promote comprehensive lifelong learning, and provide easier access to such intellectual opportunities.

To develop vocational abilities in response to the changing industrial structure, build and improve public facilities to develop vocational abilities in each region. Also, improve the quality of training and seminars provided at public testing and research institutions and at regional vocational training facilities. Furthermore, help private companies to offer regional training including the opening of learning courses or by establishing corporate museums.

2. New development of service industries including the intellectual goods industries

To promote the establishment of intellectual goods industries near metropolitan areas or in the hub cities and the prefectural hub cities, improve the regional business environment including the intellectual resources by providing more intellectual opportunities. At the same time, improve the regional living environment, and train and encourage more people to be engaged in the fields of information, designing, etc.

The development of social service industries including medical care, welfare and health, and education and culture services, the demand for which will greatly increase, will improve regional living and provide the basis for establishing new industries. It is therefore necessary to promote social services by private companies as well. The development of industries involved in the environment including recycling and disposal of waste will help conserve resources and protect the environment. Such
industries will help boost regional employment opportunities and play an important role to form environment-conscious society which will cope with the environmental issues including global warming.

There are concerns that commercial and service industries will become stagnant in inner-city areas for the following reasons. First, consumption and purchasing powers are diminishing due to the decreasing and aging population. Second, commercial facilities are being set up in the suburbs, which can provide diverse services. To activate these industries in the inner-city areas, expand the market areas by strengthening the cooperation between neighboring cities and establish the facilities of distribution and service industries in combination with parks, cultural facilities, hospitals, etc.

Section 3
Establishing internationally attractive locations for industry

To maintain Japan's economic vitality and to ensure stable employment by ensuring that Japanese companies locate their offices in Japan and by encouraging foreign countries to invest in Japan, it is necessary to establish internationally attractive locations for industry within Japan. To achieve this, promote deregulation in the fields of advanced information and communications, logistics, finance, energy, etc. to correct the high-cost structure of Japan's entire economic system and to promote free business competition. At the same time, improve the business environment as follows.

1. Establishing better locations in agglomerate industrial regions

(1) Maintenance and development of infrastructure technologies and agglomerate skills for industrial regions

For agglomerate industrial regions that have helped Japan's economy to respond flexibly to the international division of labor, they need to utilize their technologies, skills and human resources to develop new products or to pioneer new technologies. Especially, small- and medium-sized companies that have advanced processing technologies and test-production facilities and skilled workers are needed for creating new industries and products. Maintain and develop them as the basis of Japan's industrial production. To provide companies with product and market development information, activate interactions between different industrial fields and between the industrial, academic and governmental sectors. Also, promote the establishment of networks for receiving or giving orders and for developing products between small- and medium-sized companies that have unique technologies.

For the coastal industrial belts in metropolitan areas, develop new industries on land that is not used at all or not used satisfactorily due to changes in industrial structure by utilizing the easy access to urban and industrial functions. To achieve this, encourage the development of new industries in harmony with urban and residential surroundings, and review systems of industrial land use and improve the industrial infrastructure.
(2) Improving the industrial infrastructure

To establish internationally attractive locations, improve the business environment by improving the intellectual resources and living environment. Also, improve transportation networks including harbors, airports and high-standard highways. Also, increase the ease of doing business by computerizing and simplifying the procedures for import/export, customs clearance and clearance at harbors, and establish logistics facilities to improve international interaction. By these measures, improve the industrial infrastructure both in terms of software and hardware, which will thus improve transportation conditions and cooperation between companies. Furthermore, based on diversified corporate needs, improve sites and water facilities in line with regional industrial development strategies, while paying attention to environmental conservation.

For the New Industrial Cities and Special Areas for Industrial Consolidation, continue to improve and develop diversified industries and to create attractive communities and employment opportunities by utilizing existing industrial assets and the urban infrastructure. At the same time, examine how to improve these areas in the regional promotion policies for the long term. For technopolis and intellectual industry areas, there has been industrial development thanks to the past measures. To upgrade the industries and create new industries in the areas, strengthen cooperation and interaction between companies and universities.

In the eastern district of Tomakomai, because of the wonderful location, production facilities, energy-related facilities and a national oil storage base that are vital for Japan have been constructed. Based on recent socioeconomic changes, examine development measures and implement plans accordingly.

In the Mutsu-Ogawara district, a national oil storage base, and nuclear fuel cycling facilities that are vital for Japan and research facilities have been constructed. Based on recent socioeconomic changes and past infrastructural improvements, examine development measures and implement plans accordingly.

However, development measures for the two districts should be properly examined based on the Cabinet decision to streamline public corporations. The decision states as follows. "For the two projects related to the Hokkaido-Tohoku Development Finance Public Corporation, before the establishment of the new bank, the related governmental agencies, local public bodies and private companies shall consult with each other and decide on the treatment."

2. Regional development of manufacturing industries, etc.
(1) Progress of the division of labor with Asia and location of industries

For capital goods such as industrial machinery, intermediate advanced goods such as automobiles and parts of electric machines, and for value-added consumer goods that are produced in small lots, the division of labor will progress between Japan and other Asian countries. As a result, the import and export of finished goods and parts, and human interaction will dramatically increase, and the manufacturing industries will steadily grow.
Also, in provincial areas, improve the international interaction infrastructure to encourage such industries to develop. Also, to promote the development of domestic-demand oriented industries in the provinces, improve the conditions for locating manufacturing industries including the intellectual resources and transportation infrastructures.

To encourage industrial relocation, based on the future prospects of Japan's manufacturing industries in response to the environmental changes including economic globalization, consider balanced national development, while paying attention to the international competitiveness of industrial locations.

(2) Encouraging foreign companies to locate their bases in Japan

Because Japan is an integral part and the biggest market of the growing Asian region and because Japan offers business advantages such as expertise and knowledge in research and technology, more foreign companies are expected to build factories and research institutes in Japan. To encourage foreign companies to invest in Japan, promote deregulation, implement financial measures, provide information, encourage M&A, correct Japanese-style trading habits, and correct the high-cost structure. Each region in Japan should also encourage foreign companies to locate their bases in the region by offering incentives such as preferential systems.

Also, improve the transportation and communications infrastructures, strengthen regional research and technological development infrastructures, and establish good working and educational environments involving language, culture, safety and living that are attractive to foreigners.

3. Coordinating labor supply and demand between industries, jobs and regions

In accordance with the increase of intellectual resources in each region, the demand for researchers and engineers will greatly increase and the occupation structure will greatly change. Employment forms and wage systems are also changing, and the relocation of labor will shift from the traditional relocation by new employment and retirement to that between jobs and industries. Encourage labor mobility without unemployment, and improve the labor markets so that people can participate in and move between jobs more easily. Establish systems to provide good employment information to job seekers including those already in work, and encourage the development of vocational skills including special and technical ones. Also, to enable people to choose jobs and design their own life plans according to their skills, provide vocational training at the elementary and secondary education levels so that students can acquire vocational experience and ideas. At the same time, establish a system to provide vocational information to people regardless of age.

On the other hand, the labor groups who have difficulty in moving between regions will increase including the elderly, and regional differences in employment opportunities may lead to greater mismatched employment. To prevent this, support the development of attractive employment opportunities in each region, encourage people to find jobs in provincial areas, and provide more vocational advisory and training services to increase labor mobility between regions.
Furthermore, in response to the aging of society and to the trends towards the nuclear family, provide the elderly with temporary and short-term employment opportunities according to their needs and regional situations, and promote childcare or nursing leave. Through these measures, improve the support that allows people to work and keep house, and encourage women to have jobs.

Section 4
New development in agriculture, forestry and fisheries

1. New agricultural development

   Japan's agriculture is embarking on structural reform. Skilled successors are utilizing the climatic and soil conditions that often exert influence on harvest to boost agriculture in each region. Prospects look good for Japan's agriculture. However, there are many agricultural problems including the delay in expansion of scale, the decrease and aging of successors, and the increase of abandoned arable land. In Japan, because agricultural production could not respond to the changes in people's dietary habits, the food self-sufficiency rate has been falling rapidly and rural communities are suffering from depopulation. To activate rural communities and to ensure a stable supply of food in the 21st century, the following measures are required to promote structural reform of Japan's agriculture while considering conservation of the land and natural environment.

   (1) Expanding farm scales by promoting the liquidity of farmland

       To ensure efficient, stable agricultural production, it is necessary to expand the scale of agricultural management and concentrate farmland in addition to improving the production infrastructure.

       Based on the recognition that land use involves social responsibilities, coordinate the use of farmland by cooperation among agricultural committees and concentrate the use of farmland through agricultural land-holding rationalization corporations to promote greater liquidity of farmland.

   (2) Nurturing next-generation successors

       To secure agricultural successors despite the predicted decrease and aging of the farming population, the following are necessary: Promote the use of efficient and stable agricultural management, organize regional agriculture, and nurture agricultural successors including encouragement of participation in agriculture from other fields. Re-evaluate the role of women, and clarify the roles of people engaged in agriculture, the elderly and of farming households involved in other businesses. By implementing these measures, help those involved in agriculture.

       Give more support to motivate agricultural management and promote a system for designating certain farmers. Promote the incorporation of agricultural management organizations in accordance with ability. Examine how to encourage people without successors to remain in agricultural production with the help of numerous agricultural management organizations, including the entry of conglomerates. In this case, the
sustainability of agricultural management and prevention of acquisition of farmland for speculation must be considered. Especially, utilize diverse regional resources and promote the conglomerate management to provide production, processing, distribution and provision of services according to regional situations. Furthermore, to attract people to agriculture, strengthen organizations that provide information and mediation services for the acquisition of farmland, etc. and improve the systems that help stabilize the farming population. Also, nurture successors by using third parties, etc., improve school education, establish more farms for citizens, and improve technology. Especially, for hilly and mountainous areas, widely examine ways to keep people in farming.

(3) Improving the agricultural production infrastructure

To improve food productivity and to enable agricultural organizations to sustain productivity and profitability, improve the agricultural production infrastructure.

Establish large-scale farms, improve the irrigation and drainage facilities for farmland including paddy fields, improve the roads between fields, implement disaster-prevention projects for farmland, establish facilities to promote recycling of the resources including soil, and establish facilities to improve water quality. These should be efficiently conducted according to the regional situations, in harmony with the living and rural environments including the ecological system. Through technological progress, improve the quality of production infrastructure by introducing automatic water management facilities, underground irrigation facilities for farmland, and circulating irrigation systems. Furthermore, by utilizing new technologies such as advanced information systems or for utilizing clean energy, draw up and implement efficient plans for improving productivity and for conserving the environment.

Promote by using advanced technologies good maintenance and management of public infrastructure and improved agricultural production infrastructure, improve the quality of capital and draw up and implement upgrading plans. The expansion of scale by increasing the liquidity of farmland will lead to the development of new agriculture managed by fewer people. To make full use of the benefits of the public infrastructure, implement software and hardware measures in a comprehensive manner.

(4) Ensuring stable agricultural production by using new technologies including advanced information and communications

Implement comprehensive measures to improve the communications infrastructure and to develop information systems. These systems will collect climate information for agriculture, survey market trends, and improve agricultural distribution systems. Also, to improve productivity and agricultural working conditions, develop production technologies including those for sowing seeds of paddy rice directly in the fields, and promote basic as well as leading biotechnology research, etc.

(5) Developing sustainable agriculture
Agriculture has been managed based on the circulation of materials in rural communities. Recently, however, agricultural production has been adversely affecting the environment including soil and water by the abuse or improper use of insecticides and chemical fertilizers. It is therefore necessary to develop sustainable agriculture for the future. For this, it is necessary to make agricultural improvements considering the ecosystem, and to promote soil improvement by recycling organic resources for developing sustainable agriculture.

2. New development of forestry

The demand for wood is increasing worldwide, and so effective, sustainable use of domestic forest resources is required in view of the global decrease and degradation of forests. The forestry and wood industries are facing a severe situation. To enable them to help boost the economy of mountain villages and to provide forests with diverse functions, it is necessary to activate the forestry and wood industries based on cooperation between a wide range of related persons. Moreover, we must pursue industrial development in a synthetic manner and create a "tree culture" that makes full use of forest space and natural scenic beauty.

(1) Activating forestry and the wood industries in each basin

For forest improvement and utilization of forest products, establish systems to manage the forests including the production, processing and distribution of wood based on the cooperation between related persons from the upper to lower streams, regarding each basin as one unit. To achieve this, promote the expansion of forest possessors' management scale, multiple management and cooperation between forestry enterprises, and ensure business stability. Also, nurture people engaged in forestry. Moreover, support forestry activities in each basin by renting advanced, highly efficient forestry machinery or by providing information. At the same time, help improve paths through forests and logging roads and the thinning of forests. Furthermore, in response to the demand for timber for building houses, establish an efficient timber supply system to provide sufficient products of stable quality at low cost.

(2) Developing industries that utilize forests

To strengthen forestry management, promote the multiple development of forestry and the comprehensive use of forests. To achieve this, diverse wood, processed wood products and special forest products will be produced, processed and marketed; forest recreation services for physical and mental relaxation will be provided by using forest spaces and scenery, and accommodation and forest guidance services will also be offered.

(3) Developing a "tree culture"

To develop a "tree culture," we must make more people recognize the value of timber including the value for human health and smaller load on the environment. Promote the use of wood as interior finishing materials and for outside facilities, and
make use of wooden resources that have not been utilized. Promote cooperation with research institutes, related companies and consumers to improve the durability of timber, to develop technologies for utilizing timber from thinning, to improve the systems to develop, process and market products in partnership with housing projects, to supply direct-from-the-forest-houses, and to promote the use of timber in public facilities including schools. Furthermore, promote recycling of timber, etc.

3. New development of fisheries
   (1) Developing attractive fisheries
       Establish the new TAC (total allowable catch) system based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Through self-help efforts by fishermen, promote the multiple management of marine resources. In addition, promote "aqua-culture fisheries based on stock enhancement" comprehensively and systematically by improving coastal fishing grounds, and by promoting marine breeding in an organic manner including sea-farming and cultivation for optimal, sustainable and sophisticated use of marine productivity. To achieve this, improve the systems to provide information on marine resources and catch management, and promote the development of related technologies including the technology for building fishing grounds.

       To secure people engaged in fisheries, improve working conditions including efficiency and safety. At the same time, improve the software aspects by providing employment information and improving support systems for those new to fisheries. Also, improve the working conditions of fishermen, considering the elderly and women.

       Furthermore, based on cooperation between fishermen and parties concerned, develop versatile fishery-related industries by utilizing marine resources, and boost the regions. For example, promote recreational fishing and diving based on marine knowledge, provide accommodations, hand down the custom of eating fish, serve dishes, and process and market marine products.

   (2) Developing the production and distribution systems
       Efficiently improve the fishing ports and villages that supply marine products by promoting cooperation between them according to their characteristics as integral parts of coastal areas, considering their roles in conserving and managing the marine and coastal environments. At the same time, improve the living environment of residents to provide people with more opportunities to come into contact with the sea in cooperation with urban communities and consider harmony with the ecology. In the major fishing ports, upgrade the landing and distribution facilities, strengthen the management of proper catches, and enhance communications functions. Also, in response to consumers' demands for safe and fresh marine products, improve the production and distribution systems, and promote the development and use of value-added products.
Section 5
Industrial development in nature-rich residential areas

In smaller urban communities and rural communities including hilly and mountainous areas, the increase of cheap food and imported materials is having a serious influence on the agriculture, forestry and fisheries and on the food processing and timber industries, etc. The commerce and service industries that have been supporting the smaller but important provincial cities are also becoming stagnant. There are concerns that this situation will sap regional strength. On the other hand, people in these areas will have more free time and more diverse lifestyles, and the environment and culture will become more important. Due to such trends and improvements in communications services, these areas will be evaluated differently as nature-rich residential areas that have good natural and social conditions different from those found in large cities or hub cities and prefectural hub cities. In addition to the promotion of agriculture, forestry and fisheries as basic industries, it is also necessary to develop new industries by using regional characteristics and conditions as explained below, to ensure income opportunities in these areas. In preparing industrial development strategies for these areas, it is necessary to regard the central urban community and the surrounding rural communities as an integrated area with a wide view. We must also promote urban and natural functions within the area, and increase the number of people moving between the area and metropolitan areas.

1. Develop new industries by using local resources

In the rural communities including hilly and mountainous areas, industry has relied on traditional local resources. To stimulate these areas and improve nature and living standards, it is important to strengthen the management basis of agriculture, forestry and fisheries. To fully use local resources, develop local industrial systems by promoting processing, marketing and provision of various new services, and make better use of agricultural, forestry and fisheries resources. In the process, each area should utilize its potentials including human resources, technology and skills. Promote cooperation between municipalities, prefectures, the national government, chambers of commerce, tourist associations, agricultural cooperatives, forestry cooperatives, fishermen's cooperatives, public associations for land improvement, research institutes, companies and volunteer activities. Draw up industrial promotion plans based on agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Strengthen both hardware and software support so that people having the will can participate in various fields and build a new local industrial system for using local resources.

2. Developing leisure-related industries

Make exchanges with cities by using the rich natural environments and cultural resources of the areas. Pursue new industrial development based on the growth of the tourist and recreation industries and green tourism, by encouraging the use of accommodations and second houses for urban citizens, and encourage more people to settle in the areas. The number of foreigners visiting Japan is expected to increase
greatly as Asian countries develop. By improving the environment for tourists and by providing them with beautiful natural and cultural views, boost the number of visitors both from within and outside Japan. Furthermore, develop new local industries that produce handicrafts by utilizing traditional skills and special products by using and processing local resources.

3. Creating new industries and employment opportunities by using advanced information and communications systems

To promote industries that are not dependent on locations by using advanced communications systems, such as information processing services and software industries and to generate employment opportunities, provide the environment for intellectual production such as resort-style satellite offices in good natural environments. In addition, improve the transportation and communications infrastructures, reduce the cost of communication, and improve the local business and living environments including the increase of intellectual opportunities. Also, train more people engaged in local industries including the information and designing fields, and encourage people, both locals and newcomers, to find jobs in provincial areas.

Chapter V

Improvement of Transportation and communications Systems

Transportation and communications systems are the basis for linking each area both domestically and internationally, and are becoming increasingly important under the national policy of providing equal opportunities for each region to become independent and develop itself through interregional cooperation. As interregional competition in industry is intensifying, the systems are also important in making each region internationally attractive. Especially, as society becomes more information-dependent, each region must create international spheres of interaction on a large scale and facilitate the international movement of human beings, materials and information. It is thus necessary to improve the transportation and communications systems according to the following guidelines, while considering harmony with nature, safety and the environment, based on suitable role-sharing between the public and private sectors as well as between the national and local governments.

1) To strengthen the international competitiveness of the transportation and communications systems and to give each region equal opportunity to gain access to the world, implement the following. Properly locate the international transportation bases throughout the country, provide better access to them, and establish advanced communications infrastructure on a national scale.

2) To provide equal access to diversified functions that will help each region to become broadly independent, including employment opportunities and advanced
urban services, establish transportation and communications systems that are convenient and easy to use even for the elderly at reasonable prices.

3) To ensure highly stable transportation and communications functions and to help create land that is in harmony with nature, establish transportation and communications systems that will not completely fail even in case of natural disasters, and that will impose less load on the environment by replacing transportation functions by communications functions.

The transportation and communications systems play key roles in national and regional structures, and so should be improved in line with the long-term national axial zone plans.

Section 1
Improving the transportation systems

1. Basic goals

In improving the transportation systems, the long-term objectives are as follows: to establish transportation systems that will enable each region to cooperate with each other and to develop independently and will give citizens more lifestyle options; and to create transportation systems that are in harmony with nature and consider safety and the environment and that will help form national zone where people and nature can interact. In establishing such transportation systems, transportation facilities will cooperate with each other and achieve the goals by utilizing its own characteristics based on competition and free selection by users.

1) Establish central transportation facilities that are international in scale and function to ensure that Japanese citizens have access to international air and marine services. Also, properly locate international transportation facilities to provide quick access to the world, especially to Asian countries.

2) Based on past measures, establish more convenient and quick domestic transportation systems by directly connecting the national transportation systems with the transportation systems of each region. For the national transportation systems, promote the creation of "nation wide one-day traffic ranges" to allow one-day trips between the major cities. For the transportation systems of each region, properly locate the necessary functions and establish convenient transportation systems that will allow citizens to be active.

3) By properly combining the transportation facilities according to their characteristics or by implementing countermeasures against natural disasters, establish a whole transportation network as explained below. The network will be resistant to natural disasters, give less impact on the environment, and will be safe and convenient while being in harmony with culture and nature.

2. Improving the international transportation systems

(1) Long-term plan for improving the international transportation systems

With the advent of the globalization, the movement of people and materials between Japan and other parts of the world will dramatically increase both in the
commercial sector and in tourism. To prepare for such increase, international transportation systems must be planned to provide each region with better access to the world. Exchanges will be encouraged between each region of Japan and East-Asian countries. Targeting the countries, make a plan to establish an "East-Asian one-day zone," in which people can arrive at their destination and complete their work within a day. By promoting the plan, the following transportation systems ("Asian gates" and "global gates") will be created, and a new domestic transportation network will be built to provide access to the gates, including the establishment of high-speed transportation systems. A basis for exchanges between the new national axial zones and the world will thus be created.

(Asian gates)
To provide easier access between each region of Japan and Asian countries, make plans to locate airports and harbors by utilizing the existing infrastructure mainly in the prefectural hub cities to allow access with those Asian countries where movement of people and materials will increase; these airports and harbors are the "Asian gates." Together with the "Global gates" as explained below, they will form the basis for exchanges between regions and neighboring Asian countries.

(Global gates)
Locate international airports in the Tokyo, Kansai and Chubu metropolitan areas as international hubs to connect Japan with the world by frequent airline services. These international airports should be international in scale and function and should be highly competitive. Furthermore, to meet the international demand for airline services to each region of Japan with other countries, plan to locate international airports in each of the regional blocks including Hokkaido, Tohoku, Chugoku and Shikoku, Kyushu and Okinawa by utilizing the existing infrastructure. These international airports will link the domestic network, the Asian network and the parts of global network, and will serve as regional global gates. As in the case of airports, locate highly competitive international harbors that are international in scale and function in the four major bay areas (Tokyo Bay, Osaka Bay, Ise Bay and North-Kyushu) as international hubs for frequent marine services. Furthermore, in addition to the East Asian routes, also pay attention to the parts of European and American routes and plan to locate international harbors as regional global gates in each of Hokkaido, East Tohoku, Chubu on the side of the Japan Sea, North Kanto, coastal area of Suruga Bay, Chugoku, South Kyushu and Okinawa.

(2) Measures during planning improvements of the international transportation systems
In line with the long-term plan, focus on measures to improve the physical distribution efficiency for the time being. Specifically, promote the following measures for the creation of international spheres of interaction on a large scale as well as the long-term formation of national zones.
Focus on the improvement of global central bases. For airports, promote the building of runways for international flights in the projects of the New Tokyo International Airport and the Kansai International Airport (secondary projects) as well as in the project of Chubu International Airport. For harbors, establish deep and high-standard international marine container terminals in the four major bay areas including Tokyo Bay and Osaka Bay. To strengthen the international competitiveness of these central bases, provide 24-hour services that enable global utilization at reasonable prices, and improve efficiency through automation and information technology to provide world-class services. Also, improve the CIQ (customs, immigration and quarantine) services. In the central airports of each region including Tohoku and Chugoku and Shikoku that function as regional global gates, make improvements including the extension of runways to build international networks focusing on the short- and middle-distance airline services including Asia. In the regional blocks such as Kyushu, consider the demand trends and examine measures to strengthen the functions of the airports as global gates. For harbors, improve the harbors in Hokkaido, East Tohoku, North Kanto, etc. in line with demand trends.

For the Asian gates, make long-term plans for the effective use of existing facilities regarding CIQ services, etc. In the process, each region will cooperate with each other to boost port sales and chartering, and in implementing measures to build wide-area international exchange spheres. Furthermore, for Hokkaido and Okinawa, examine from a long-term view how to build international exchange spheres in line with local conditions.

For these airports and harbors to serve as gateways for exchanges with the world, link them with foreign access zones, improve the Arterial high standard highways, Local high standard highways and high-speed railways that connect with the transportation hubs such as airports and harbors to provide easier access to the bases. Also, improve the roads to meet international container standards, and ensure that the airports and harbors look impressive and are convenient for visitors. Also, improve the harbors to ensure stable supply of resources and energy from overseas.

Examine how to provide desirable services at regional airports and harbors in response to the new tourist demand from Asia, including passenger ship routes with Asian countries and charter flights to regional airports.

3. Improving the domestic transportation systems

(1) Long-term plan for improving the domestic transportation systems

Domestic transportation demand will expand until the year 2010, although the growth rate might slow down, as interregional cooperation and leisure travel increase. For the period after 2010, there are uncertain elements such as socioeconomic changes and transportation demand will differ by transportation means. As a whole, however, it is predicted that transportation demand will slightly increase or will show no marked fluctuations. Under such circumstances, as transportation distances increase and information technology progresses, high-quality services (high speed, punctuality, etc.) will be demanded at reasonable prices. In response, it is necessary to improve the domestic transportation systems as explained below and create "nation
wide one-day traffic ranges." As part of these, wide-area regional transportation systems will be established, which will form regional half-day trip zones so that people can travel to another region and return within half a day. The "regional half-day trip zones" will be formed in line with the proper establishment of urban functions. People will be able to travel from their towns to the prefectural hub cities within about one hour and to the major core city areas and to the major distribution terminals within about two hours. The formation of these regional half-day trip zones will equalize opportunities between regions. Based on this plan, the land, marine and air transportation networks will share roles and provide multiple transportation axes running through the country horizontally and vertically as well as the regional transportation systems that support wide-area activities. Japan will be more resistant to natural disasters and the people will have more transportation options. Thus, a domestic transportation network that links high-quality national axial zones will be established.

(Land transportation networks)

Form national high-speed land transportation networks out of integrated automobile networks and high-speed railway networks. The automobile networks will comprise a 14,000-kilometer Arterial high standard highway network that will traverse the land both horizontally and vertically and supplementary local high standard highways that will promote interregional exchanges. The railway networks will connect the metropolitan areas with the hub cities as provincial centers, and with the prefectural hub cities. For the local high standard highways, 6,000 to 8,000 kilometers of roads need to be improved, including the effective use of existing facilities. Through the regional major road and railway networks that directly connect to the high-speed land transportation networks, citizens of each region will be able to access easily the land transportation networks. Accordingly, the creation of "regional half-day trip zones" will be promoted. The transportation networks will support safe, efficient road traffic and high-speed, convenient, punctual railway travel based on the development and introduction of ITS (intelligent transport system) by using advanced communications technology, of new traffic systems such as linear railways, and of high-quality surface cars, as well as the development of new technologies such as mag-lev systems.

(Air and marine transportation networks)

Build domestic air networks that connect remote areas via flexible routes and national maritime transportation networks that connect the Pacific, Seto Inland Sea and the Japan Sea coastal areas and straits and island areas. The central airports in the metropolitan areas, regional central airports, airports located in isolated islands, commuter airports and heliports as well as the three major bays, the bay area in North-Kyushu, regional central harbors and other harbors that supplement the central harbors will function as the terminals of the networks. The transportation networks will assist high-speed, comfortable and stable air traffic as well as high-speed, punctual, high-capacity and reasonably priced maritime traffic, based on the
introduction of less noisy aircraft, high quality facilities for air traffic control, and TSL (Techno super liner).

(2) Measures during planning improvement of the domestic transportation systems

According to the long-term plan, focus on measures to improve the physical distribution efficiency for the time being. Specifically, promote the following measures to support the development of regional cooperation corridors and the long-term creation of national axial zones.

(Roads)

Improve the arterial high standard highways and local high standard highways. For the high-standard principal road networks, at the beginning of the 21st century focus on roads that connect metropolitan areas and on loop roads within the metropolitan areas to reduce bottlenecks. In the provinces, promote the improvement of the roads that traverse the regions both horizontally and vertically to allow wide-area cooperation between regions. In the process, examine the project methods to ensure profitability under proper pricing systems. According to the long-term plan improve the local high standard highways with respect to the demand trends. This will contribute to the national development in the following ways. The loop roads will function as bases for the development of the hub cities that act as provincial centers and the prefectural hub cities. Roads will invigorate the nature-rich residential areas by connecting them to the urban areas. Roads between cities playing a central role in regional development will promote interregional exchange. Roads that connect the wide-area transportation bases such as airports and harbors, urban centers and the regional development bases with the arterial high standard highways network. These roads will play important roles in directly connecting and merging the national basic transportation systems and the regional transportation systems.

The improvements should be promoted in harmony with the systems being built independently by each region towards interregional cooperation. For the projects to connect bays and strait areas, implement measures according to long-term surveys and plans.

For smoother urban transportation, improve the roads and secure spaces for public transportation facilities including high-quality surface cars. For example, expand the road traffic capacity, establish more parking lots, and promote multi-level utilization of roads. Also, promote park and ride systems and examine road pricing to comprehensively promote TDM (transportation demand management) measures. To support wide-area exchanges, build tunnels and bridges to provide easier access between neighboring areas that have limited exchanges with each other due to geographical barriers. Implement both intensive and comprehensive traffic safety measures. For example, secure safe and comfortable spaces for pedestrians and take measures to reduce traffic accidents especially at principal road points where many accidents have occurred.

To dramatically improve road safety and transportation efficiency and comfort, introduce the VICS (vehicle information and communication system) nationwide and
automatic charging systems at toll roads, promote the use of automatic driving systems to support safe driving, and research, develop and introduce ITS to optimize road management. To reduce the road maintenance and to establish roads in harmony with the surroundings, establish common routes for electric wires, etc. Also, establish information boxes to improve road management.

(Railways)
Focus on speeding up railway services and reducing congestion on urban railway lines.
Also, speed up railway services to promote wide-area cooperation. For the new Shinkansen lines to be constructed in conformity with the Law for Construction of Countrywide Shinkansen, promote existing construction works and start basic works for other sections based on the agreement made in January 1998 by a Government committee to examine the construction of new Shinkansen lines. For local lines, increase speeds by introducing through services with the Shinkansen lines, improvement of linear shapes and the development of new carriage types, and integrate the local lines and the Shinkansen lines to form a high-speed railway network.

For urban railway services in the metropolitan areas, reduce the congestion rate to about 150% in general, and to about 180% for the Tokyo metropolitan area in which congestion is severe, in tandem with measures to renovate the metropolitan areas. Establish new lines and promote multiple-track railway lines, and encourage people to commute at off-peak times. To reduce traffic congestion in urban centers and to recover attractive urban spaces in the hub city and prefectoral hub city, establish transit malls that allow pedestrians to move between public transportation facilities while removing general automobile transportation. Then promote the introduction of high-quality surface cars, subways, monorails and new transport systems as railway transportation facilities.

Conduct surveys on the Chuo Shinkansen, and promote technological development on the mag-lev (super conducting magnetically levitated railway) and innovative high-speed railway systems early in the 21st century as a country characterized by technological and scientific creativity.

(Airports)
Quickly complete the ongoing offshore project at the Tokyo International Airport. Conduct surveys on establishing new central airports to respond to the increasing domestic demand for air transportation between Tokyo and other areas. In the provinces, improve the quality of the existing airport facilities including increasing rate of exercise at the provincial airports. Also for the airports located in isolated islands, commuter airports and heliports, make improvements based on their roles including the promotion of regional cooperation. In the process, examine efficient airport improvement measures including the securing of multiple sources of funds. Also, improve the accessibility of the roads to the airports and extend the railway services into the airports.
(Harbors)
Focus on improving harbors that serve as the bases for multimodal (land and marine) transportation according to the regional situations so that most of the regions of the country can enjoy the merits of marine transportation. In the harbors, establish distribution facilities for common use that smoothly link between marine and land transportation and comprehensive logistics facilities with advanced information processing and goods handling functions. In the major harbors, establish ferry terminals, marinas and sightseeing ship terminals for the movement of persons. Besides, improve harbors that support life and industry in isolated islands. Furthermore, examine the practical use of TSL (techno super liners) and improve harbors to support high-speed marine networks based on the results.

(Promoting barrier-free transportation facilities)
Promote barrier-free transportation facilities so that anyone can utilize transportation terminals including railway stations and roads safely and comfortably. For this purpose, establish systematic and easy-to-read information signals and systems, and ensure smooth flows of people by locating elevators at convenient places, provide walking spaces without many differences in level, and establish traffic signals in easy-to-see places, giving considerations also to the elderly.

(Renovating transportation facilities)
Improve the existing facilities in terms of capability and quality. For this, improve the principal roads by promoting multi-level crossings. In accordance with the changes in the use of existing roads brought about by the promotion of the multi-level crossings, rebuild the road systems including the sidewalks. Besides, promote multi-level crossings of roads and railways, improve the alignment for smooth, faster and safe transportation, and start passenger services using freight railway lines also as passenger lines. At passenger facilities such as railway stations that attract many people, provide convenient high-quality services beyond mere transportation services. Furthermore, at harbors and airports, improve the facilities that are unable to take larger ships and airplanes or convert their use in relation to other facilities.

(Cooperation between transportation facilities)
Promote cooperation between transportation facilities, combine them in a comprehensive manner and improve their functions. For this, directly connect the high-speed railway services and principal roads to terminals including airports and harbors, and promote park and ride systems at railway stations. At the same time, establish terminal facilities and station squares to ease transfers between transportation facilities, and build systems to provide information about such transfers. Besides, to improve the convenience for users, expand the availability of multiple transportation facilities by coordinating the service diagrams of neighboring airports and harbors. Furthermore, to provide transportation services even in case of disasters
and to reduce the environmental loads, establish transportation systems based on cooperation among transportation facilities.

4. Measures to establish safe transportation facilities in harmony with nature

(I) Establishing transportation systems that make Japan a safer country

The disastrous Hanshin-Awaji earthquake showed that disasters can attack anywhere in Japan, even though the kinds and frequencies may differ by region. To reduce the damages caused by disasters, establish transportation systems that make Japan a safer country and work towards the following goals.

1) Minimize the direct damages caused by disasters and their influences.
2) Improve the ability to recover.
3) Facilitate restoration and reconstruction.

To improve the transportation infrastructure, encourage early completion of anti-earthquake reinforcement projects for existent facilities. At the same time, for new facilities, strengthen their structures to maintain a certain level of functions even in case of disaster and to ensure persistent and flexible transportation systems that can be used interchangeably in case of disaster. For this, strengthen the structures of the transportation facilities according to their importance, while paying attention to the geological structure and active faults, and construct facilities that are not easily broken and that can be easily repaired. In the process, comprehensively examine the risk points that will have a serious influence on the entire transportation systems if they are interrupted such as large city areas or strait areas where important transportation facilities are concentrated. Then establish multiple networks to ensure safety for the entire transportation system. At the same time, especially strengthen the earthquake resistance of international container terminals, etc.

Furthermore, build emergency transportation networks throughout the country to enable life-saving, first aid and restoration activities in case of earthquakes. In the process, when establishing disaster-prevention bases, strengthen the earthquake resistance of quay walls at harbors and fishing ports, and improve airports and harbors. Then establish principal roads that connect these bases and provide enough width even in case of disaster and establish ship routes at rivers to build networks that directly connect the land, marine and air transportation systems. Besides, to collect accurate information related to disasters, improve the management of transportation facilities by using advanced information and communication facilities. In addition to the countermeasures against earthquakes, check the dangerous points and establish safety measures against damages caused by wind, flood, tidal waves, landslides, etc. Besides, to ensure safe traffic in winter in snowy areas, establish and improve snow removing systems and facilities, and collect and diffuse snow-related information.

(2) Establishing transportation systems that impose smaller loads on the environment
(Promoting measures to reduce the emission of carbon dioxide)

Set energy saving targets and pollution controls for each transportation sector and increase utilization of energy-efficient transportation facilities that impose less load
on the environment through proper competition and free selection by users. To achieve the goals, encourage each of the transportation facilities to strengthen mutual cooperation to form transportation systems that impose less load on the general environment regarding air, noise, vibration, etc. Especially to reduce the emission of carbon dioxide, which is a global issue, implement the following measures.

For vehicle transportation that consumes most energy among the transportation sectors, promote measures to improve energy efficiency. For this, implement measures to encourage the development and use of clean cars such as low fuel consumption cars or electric vehicles. Besides, to improve energy efficiency by improving road conditions, improve loop roads, construct continuous multi-level crossings and sophisticate the transport control centers in the metropolitan areas as well as in the hub cities and prefectural hub cities. By doing this, prevent the reduction in energy efficiency caused by traffic jams and mitigate the subsequent increase of environmental load. Also in the provinces, establish bypasses in the congested sections and reduce traffic jams. Besides, introduce the TDM including the flex time system to level the traffic density, introduce and diffuse the ITS including the provision of road traffic information such as the information about traffic jams, and encourage environmentally friendly driving.

It is especially necessary to improve the efficiency of physical distribution, because it is not only important for the reduction of environmental load but also for promoting economic structural reform. To improve the transportation efficiency of trucks, build joint collection and delivery systems, improve the road networks for larger vehicles, and establish facilities for temporary stopping and handling of goods by freight vehicles. Besides, promote the comprehensive improvement of roads and wide-area distribution bases around the interchanges of the principal roads. To expand the utilization of mass transportation facilities, improve the functions of coastal ferries and container ships, improve the harbors, and improve the railway facilities for container trains. Thus, implement comprehensive measures for multimodal transportation. Make and implement plans to improve the principal roads and regional roads, and link terminals such as harbors and railway stations with the principal road networks for providing better access. Besides, make and implement plans to establish and improve river ship routes to create an efficient physical distribution network involving different transportation means.

Also for the movement of people, establish transportation systems that impose less load on the environment by the cooperation by multiple transportation means. For this, expand the high-speed railway networks, urban high-speed railway services and bus services. Build more parking lots for park and ride at railway stations and high-speed bus terminals, and promote TDM measures for promoting the use of mass transportation facilities such as railways and buses. Besides, by introducing energy efficient and high-quality surface cars, subways, monorails and new transport systems, make urban public transportation more convenient. To ensure good transport in the provinces that suffer from depopulation, rationalize the management of transportation facilities and implement measures to encourage the use of buses and other transport methods. In addition, implement new measures such as establishing a network of
sidewalks to encourage people to walk or ride bicycles, improve roads and parking lots for bicycles, and build a traffic assessment system to evaluate the influence of a development project on the traffic.

(Promoting measures giving considerations to people's lives, the environment, culture, etc.)

To reduce traffic noise along roadsides, implement measures to improve the road structures. In addition, conduct comprehensive measures including measures to control traffic, to promote the proper use of land and to establish greenbelts as buffer zones. Besides, plant more greenery along roads and harbors, and improve the design of bridges, airport terminals and railway stations. Improve the roads in harmony with the ecosystem, minimizing the changes to the natural environment caused by earth removal, etc. and establishing small tunnels for animal in the earth laid on the ground. Implement measures to create natural environments, for example by improving the harbors and equipping them with the seawater cleaning and exchanging functions.

Take measures to enable people to lead calm and comfortable lives, to recognize again the culture and history of their regions, and to pass these down to future generations. For example, create reasonably priced and easy-to-use transportation systems for sightseeing and easier access to nature. Preserve, restore and utilize the historically important roads and railway stations. Make plans to establish a network of sea roads to promote interregional cooperation and exchanges based on ocean culture and history. Improve roads, railway stations and harbors that help spread information and introduce cultures from each region.

Section 2
Improving the communications systems

1. Basic goals

Advanced communications systems must directly connect the regions both domestically and internationally to equalize opportunities between regions. Japan must establish a strong industrial society under international competition and cooperation by exploring the diverse potential of communications systems. The goals for improving the communications systems are as follows.

1) Establish an advanced network infrastructure throughout Japan.
2) Enable anyone to use the infrastructure at any time.
3) Develop Japan as an "information-communications-based society" where people can lead good lives and work effectively.

Based on the goals, properly allocate roles between the public and private sectors and improve the communications systems. Such improvement and utilization of systems are necessary to reduce environmental load, build regional cooperation corridors and form international spheres of interaction on a large scale, and thus build the basis for contact with the world.

2. Improving the communications systems to provide equal conditions for use
(1) Nationwide establishment of optical fiber networks

As the basis of the "information-communications-based society," replace the metal cables with optical fibers and improve the switching devices to create an advanced, high-capacity communications network. Based on the national guidelines, the period before 2000 is the preparatory stage for establishing optical fiber networks and supporting private companies. After the year 2000, continuously improve the communications infrastructure in line with demand. To establish optical fiber networks on a national scale by 2005, earlier than the scheduled completion in the year 2010, utilize the power of the private sector as soon as possible. Under the principle of improvement led by the private sector, improve the environment to reduce the burden on private companies, utilize public spaces including roads and rivers, and enable private companies to utilize the optical fiber networks for managing public facilities such as sewage systems. Furthermore, improve the conditions so that local public entities and the national government can both use the optical fiber networks, etc. for building regional networks, disaster prevention and for managing public facilities.

To respond to the demand for higher-speed communications, urgently expand the ISDN (integrated services digital network) using the existing networks. Furthermore, conduct experiments on B-ISDN and improve ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) switching devices, and create conditions for communications at 100 to 200 Mb/s using optical fiber networks.

For wireless communications services such as mobile phones and portable phones, establish nationwide relay stations through public support.

For broadcasting networks, for multiple-channel broadcasting with sophisticated functions and high-quality images, establish systems to start digital broadcasting by the year 2000 for ground broadcasting. For broadcasting via satellite and for CATV, promote digitization and popularize and improve the media. For poor broadcasting reception areas and receiving interference in urban areas, solve the problem by providing public support, etc.

(2) Strategic establishment and utilization of optical fiber networks in areas with low demand for these networks

Establish advanced network infrastructure also in regions that have low demand for optical fiber networks, etc. to prevent regional differences in the realization of the advanced information society.

In the process, it is important to establish the infrastructure in line with measures to activate the regions. In the provincial smaller but important cities that form the basis for regional independence as well as in mountainous regions and regional communities, the following plans should be carried out by each region: plans to develop and introduce the public application of tele-working (remote working by communications systems), and education and medical care, especially targeting the isolated islands and mountainous areas that lack good transportation services. At the same time, introduce optical fiber networks in the regions, and provide public support to promote CATV. Furthermore, to enable private companies to utilize the optical fiber and CATV networks for administrative services and public facilities, improve
the conditions for utilizing the commission systems related to communications business. By implementing these measures, increase convenience in nature-rich residential areas and promote the strategic use of advanced networks in these areas.

(3) Implementing administrative measures including reduction of utilization costs

To create the "information-communications-based society," it is necessary to ensure equal utilization costs as well as to provide equal conditions for use of network infrastructure. To reduce differences in communications costs by distance, promote competition, and examine the expansion of areas to which the same communications rates are applied to encourage interregional cooperation. For the rating systems, build systems for diversified needs of users, including the introduction of fixed-rate systems for high-volume communication at low prices.

For the Internet that is rapidly gaining popularity, provide equal conditions for its use to each region and activate regional development through the dispatch and reception of information. For this purpose, help establish Internet access points for users to gain access to the Internet at local telephone call rates from anywhere in the country. Also, help local public entities to promote use of the Internet.

To establish barrier-free conditions in which anyone can use the communications systems easily, promote technological development of terminals and applications so that even the elderly can easily utilize them. Besides, to enable the elderly and the handicapped to obtain information, provide more broadcast programs with captions or descriptions. Furthermore, raise information literacy (the ability to utilize information), such as by providing information-related education at schools using multimedia including the Internet, provide learning opportunities, giving considerations also to the elderly, and hold information technology events.

3. Establishing advanced, efficient communications systems

(1) Establishing seamless and multiple communications systems

With the progress of information technology, it is required to establish advanced and efficient systems that can respond to increasingly diversified and sophisticated needs by: replacing the present networks mainly composed of wire systems, and establishing "seamless" multiple communications systems that are comprised of wire and wireless networks. In the seamless systems, the wire and wireless networks will complement each other. Each of them will be digitized and users will be able to utilize the networks as if a single network.

In addition to establishing optical fiber networks, expand and improve the wireless networks in line with efficient use of radio waves as limited resources. At the same time, expand their use to new radio frequency bands. Especially for mobile communications to create seamless information conditions with optical fiber networks to meet the demands for higher capacity, promote wireless access to enable smooth connection with optical fiber networks based on R&D on increasing the speed and bandwidth of communications. Broadcasting via satellite that offers wide-area utilization and simultaneous provision of information will be further utilized to ensure versatile communications systems and deliver higher capacity. Improve the environment to expand the use of broadcasting via satellite, and promote
technological development to increase the speed, expand bandwidth, and utilize mobile communications.

By implementing these measures, each of the wire and wireless networks will be digitized. At the same time, each of the wire and wireless networks, and the mobile and fixed communication networks will be digitized to form a seamless "total digital network," with optical fiber networks established and broadcasting digitized.

(2) Establishing disaster-resistant communications systems

To establish communications systems that are more resistant to disasters, build multiple communications systems involving broadcasting via satellite on a national scale. Strengthen the disaster resistance of important facilities, bury communication cables underground, establish backup transmission channels, and take countermeasures against power failure, while taking into account the reduction of costs for private carriers.

In case of disaster, despite the desperate needs for information, the ability to collect, process and communicate information will be remarkably diminished in the areas that are attacked by the disaster. This is due to the malfunction of communications system caused by disconnection or power failure or because of the concentration of telephone calls for inquiries. As countermeasures against such situations, establish communications systems that are more resistant to disasters, making full use of the features of both communications and broadcasting methods. Specifically, conduct the following in cooperation with private carriers.

1) Ensure that important information can be communicated regarding the damages caused by the disaster by using radiocommunication systems for disaster prevention administration or by providing priority telephone services.

2) Ensure diverse methods to communicate information including that regarding the safety of citizens by developing and introducing a system to store information that can be accessed via phone, and by using the existing regional networks of police boxes and post offices, or by using community broadcasting and PC communications.

3) Ensure diverse communications methods by using wireless communications methods including via satellite.

4. Improving the conditions for creating an information-oriented society

(1) Expanding the availability of advanced communications systems and rebuilding the regulatory framework

Make life more convenient and reduce the environmental load through vigorous industrial activities and provision of new functions that replace transportation methods. For this, it is indispensable to improve the contents (details of information, especially the materials including the images and sounds) to be distributed via the networks and broadcasting that form the basis for intellectual activities both in terms of quality and quantity. It is also important to develop and popularize the advanced applications to fully utilize the functions of the network infrastructure. Japan is falling behind other developed countries in this field, and these measures are also necessary to ensure Japan's international competitiveness in industry.
Improve the contents by establishing databases and disclosing them to the public as well as by supporting helping local public entities and private companies to develop databases. For smoother flow of information on the networks, improve the GIS (geographic information system), and promote the verification and popularization of EC (electronic commerce), CALS (Continuous Acquisition and Life-cycle Support) system, etc. Besides, in the fields where demand is expected such as the administrative services, education, research, science, culture, medical care, transportation and disaster prevention, promote the development of public applications, verification of their availability, and popularization of their use through public supports. This will be done in linkage with the regional activation measures, giving considerations to the desires of local public entities, etc. towards the creation and development of new industries in each region including the information and communications industries. At the same time, stimulate demand for applications in the private sector. Based on the results, improve the conditions to integrate each of the applications and utilize them in a wider range to support wide-area and comprehensive socioeconomic activities beyond existing administrative units. As a result, the network infrastructure will be improved and the contents and applications be developed and introduced. The favorable cycle will improve the information technology of the entire country, industrial productivity, growth of communications industries, and the creation of other related industries.

To enable people to use advanced communications in their daily lives, utilize the existing public facilities such as town halls and post offices. At the same time, systematically examine existing systems and their objectives, and implement measures while considering security and the protection of privacy.

(2) Promoting international competition and cooperation

In the world of advanced information technology, promote the technological development of B-ISDN, holophotal processing system, the stratospheric wireless platform and ISDB (integrated services digital broadcasting) to build the next-generation communications systems. Besides, to strengthen Japan's competitiveness in the field, improve technologies to world-class levels. For this, obtain the required capital and promote technological development based on close cooperation between the public and private sectors.

To build seamless communications systems and advanced information technology of the global age, implement diverse measures based on international cooperation. Standardize the international communications systems such as the world's land mobile communication system (IMT-2000/FPLMTS), develop and verify world-common applications, and promote global joint projects. Besides, pursue international harmony in terms of regulatory systems including copyrights. Furthermore, help developing countries to improve their communications infrastructure and establish a global network, and promote international understanding between countries by using broadcasting media, by making exchanges through international TV broadcasting or programs or by jointly producing broadcasting programs.
PART III Basic Direction of Regional Improvement

To establish the basis for implementing the plans made in this "Grand Design for the 21st Century" for creating a multi-axial land structure, it is important to encourage each region to become independent and to enable people to take pride in their local regions. Each region must develop itself based on mutual participation and cooperation under its own responsibilities, and the plans will play different roles in each region. However, the various entities participating in regional development must share the same concepts of regional improvement and take action to attain the core objectives in a well-organized manner.

The "Basic Direction of Regional Improvement" will reveal the good economic, cultural and natural characteristics and the potential of each region, on which the long-term development policy shall be based. Regional development measures in different fields are discussed further in Part II under the four strategies set out in the plan.

Of the major infrastructure development projects including those for transportation for interregional cooperation and exchange, Part III describes the projects that will be implemented after the period 2010 to 2015 and those that need substantial surveys before implementation. Such projects require coordination and consideration of the economic and financial situations. It is also important to draw up and implement specific project plans after conducting cost analyses, environmental assessments, technological development, cost reductions and reviews of the structural criteria, fund-raising, coordination of cost sharing, and cooperation by regional citizens.

Each region should develop regional development plans in line with those proposed in this document, but not limited to them.

The regional blocks discussed below are those given in the past plans. This document, however, proposes strategies beyond the framework of the existing regional blocks, including the development of regional cooperation corridors and the formation of international spheres of interaction. The national government, local governments and the private sector will make specific plans based on the plans, and each region will implement measures as decentralization and administrative reform progress.

1. Hokkaido
   - Frontier to create a new northern culture -

   (1) Basic direction of improvement

   Hokkaido covers a large area and has a rich natural environment, good resources and cool weather. It is positioned as a base to connect the northern region with the Asia-Pacific region, and has developed its own northern culture and lifestyles.
including the Ainu culture. In the future, Hokkaido will develop into a unique region as a "Frontier to create a new northern culture" based on its pioneering spirit and frankness, as well as its natural and geographic features and cultural riches. Along with it, lifestyles will change in the 21st century in the Asian region including Japan.

It is necessary to create nature-rich residential areas that also serve as bases for the supply of food and lumber to other areas throughout Japan. At the same time, develop unique industries based on the characteristics of each area of Hokkaido. Also, create independent and unique areas by promoting diverse cooperation among areas and strengthen cooperation between the central cities in Hokkaido and the residential areas. In addition, utilize information and communications to strengthen cooperation between areas. Furthermore, for creating an international sphere of interaction on a large scale to communicate with the northern region and Asia-Pacific region, promote international exchanges in economics and technology. Hokkaido will serve as a sightseeing and recreational base, especially for Asian people, based on its unique, attractive natural environment including magnificent views and snow. By implementing these measures, develop Hokkaido into a more attractive region that has more versatility, taking a long-term view towards the formation of the North-Eastern National Axial Zone and the Japan Sea Coastal National Axial Zone.

(2) Development of measures

To create nature-rich residential areas based on the unique natural environment and climate characteristics of a northern region, establish and improve advanced communications infrastructure, regional transportation infrastructure and living infrastructure. Also, provide smaller, regional cities with better functions. In addition, improve the production, processing and distribution infrastructures for the supply of food and lumber. Develop productive large-scale farms, promote resource management and cultivation in fisheries in the three sea areas including the Sea of Okhotsk, which is a key fisheries area. Improve the lumber supply system and forest conditions including those of wild forests. Develop value-added agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and promote the marketing of brands and diversified management of multiple industries. Besides, preserve and restore the rich natural environment including the primeval forests and marshlands registered under the Ramsar Convention. At the same time, promote Ainu culture that has been developed in harmony with nature, and preserve and develop other unique traditional cultures of Hokkaido. Besides, create new cultures mainly in the Teshio, Mukawa, and Sarugawa basins in order to develop unique regional cultures and publicize them. Furthermore, to develop safe and convenient communities suitable for the northern climate, provide better resistance to snow and cold weather and improve conditions for the elderly. At the same time, strengthen the disaster prevention measures and improve coastal safety against earthquakes, floods, avalanches and landslides, taking into consideration the cold and snowy climate, vast area and volcanic regions.

Hokkaido is a broad area. To develop independent regions centering on core cities with local characteristics, focus on the urban centers of Asahikawa, Hakodate, Kushiro, Obihiro, Kitami and Abashiri, and improve the functions of cities. In the
process, consider the elderly in response to the aging society. In each area of Hokkaido, cooperation will be promoted between central cities and the surrounding municipalities under "Partnership Projects." To support these Projects and to promote cooperation and exchanges within and outside of Hokkaido, improve the principal roads (Hokkaido Longitudinal Expressway and Hokkaido Traverse Expressway), and the connecting roads, including the following: Hakodate-Esashi Expressway located in southern Hokkaido, Hidaka Expressway in the central part, Fukagawa-Rumoi Expressway in the central and northern parts, Asahikawa-Monbetsu Expressway connecting the northern part with the Okhotsk area, and the Obihiro-Hiroo Expressway in the Tokachi area. Besides, improve the standard of roads of each area including the Kushiro-Nakashibetsu Expressway. Also, make greater use of commuter airlines, and establish and improve airports, harbors, high-speed railway networks and advanced communications infrastructures. For the Hokkaido Shinkansen, implement projects in line with examinations by governmental committees. Implement software and hardware measures to promote cooperation between areas, and use the industrial base in central Hokkaido, while promoting exchanges between different industrial sectors including agriculture, forestry, fisheries and manufacturing and cooperation between industrial, academic and governmental sectors. At the same time, promote unique R&D using the cold weather in winter, and encourage the take-up of R&D results by industry. Thus, develop new, modern industries that utilize local resources.

For the Seikan area, examine ways to further utilize the Seikan Tunnel and new transportation systems based on a long-term view. The area is located at a crossroads, extending over Hakodate in Hokkaido and Aomori in the Tohoku region and is located around the Straits of Tsugaru that connects Japan with the Pacific Ocean and the Japan Sea. It is therefore expected to develop into an exchange zone between the regional blocks. Promote further exchanges and cooperation by establishing advanced communications infrastructures and by promoting the sharing of information.

To create an international sphere of interaction on a large scale that is open to the world, covering the northern region and the Asia-Pacific region, establish strong central communities and improve urban functions around Sapporo. In each area of Hokkaido including the Furano-Taisetsu and the Niseko-Yotei-Toya areas, promote green tourism using local resources such as the magnificent views of the dairy farming areas, beautiful hills and mountains, rich natural forests, snow, icebergs and hot springs that are among the best in Japan. Establish large sightseeing and resort areas, and create an attractive network for tourism that links the established areas with other tourist attractions inside and outside Hokkaido. In addition, by conducting PR activities worldwide, especially the Asian region, and by attracting more foreign tourists, create world-class sightseeing and recreation facilities. Also, improve Shinchitose Airport, Tomakomai Port and Kushiro Port that serve as international exchange hubs and build new airports and harbors that provide access to the northern region near Hokkaido. Thus, make northern Japan an international gateway, and improve the transportation infrastructure. Besides, improve the distribution and R&D functions of the areas surrounding the transportation bases to international standards. Through these efforts, promote exchanges and cooperation with the northern area and
coastal areas of the Japan Sea. At the same time, based on a long-term view, give
greater support to development projects in the Russian Far East. Especially, establish
a base for supporting energy development in Sakhalin.

In the eastern district of Tomakomai, emphasis has been placed on constructing
production facilities and energy facilities including a national oil storage base. Based
on recent socioeconomic changes and by utilizing the benefits of good access to air
and marine transportation facilities as well as urban centers, and past infrastructure
improvements, examine development measures, including the utilization of airport
function to respond to the demands for international interaction, and implement plans
accordingly.

2. Tohoku
- Frontier that develops new, well-balanced lifestyles towards the 21st century -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

The Tohoku region has mountainous parts with rich forests and basins, and coastal
areas with variations. In addition to such geographic characteristics, the region has
different natural conditions within itself. For example, the climatic conditions are
different on either side of the mountain ridge, although the region is generally cold
and snowy in winter. The region also has rich local culture, lifestyles, industries and
technologies, including ruins from the Jomon Era throughout the region including the
Sannaimaruyama ruins. The Tohoku region serves as a major center of production for
food, lumber and energy, and the cities are growing in importance as hub cities or
prefectural hub cities as high-speed transportation infrastructures are improved.

The region is expected to develop into an attractive area that is in harmony with
nature, based on its characteristics and potential. To achieve this, it is necessary to
further develop the individual features and strengths of the hub cities and the
prefectural hub cities. At the same time, build nature-rich residential areas with high
living standards in the smaller cities as well as coastal and mountainous areas that are
suffering depopulation and aging problems. By strengthening cooperation between
these areas, make the region a "frontier that develops new, well-balanced lifestyles
towards the 21st century". In addition, develop regional corridors that traverse
horizontally and vertically across the Tohoku region. Concurrently, strengthen the
functions of the region as a gateway for international cultural and economic
exchanges in the Far East Asia, particularly the areas near the Japan Sea in
cooperation with the Hokuriku region. Besides, improve the functions as a gateway in
the Pacific region in cooperation with Hokkaido and the Kanto region, and thus form
international spheres of interaction on a large scale. Through these efforts, wide-area
interregional exchanges and cooperation will be promoted, the Tohoku region will
further develop, and the basis for creating the North-Eastern National Axial Zone and
the Japan Sea Coastal National Axial Zone will be established.

(2) Development of measures
Although the historical and cultural environments and lifestyles differ between the two sides of the Ou Mountains, promote cooperation and exchange in living, industry and culture to ensure well-balanced development of the entire Tohoku region. Furthermore, form regional cooperation corridors connecting Iwate and Akita, Miyagi and Yamagata, and Fukushima and Niigata. Besides, promote regional cooperation mainly in the Towada and Hachimantai area, and in the Sendai, Fukushima and Yamagata cities to form large areas of interaction in the North and South of Tohoku. Besides, strengthen cooperation at the cross-border areas of prefectures including Ibaraki and Tochigi prefectures. For this purpose, further improve the following high-standard principal roads: the Tohoku Longitudinal Expressway (Hachinohe Line), Japan Sea Coast Tohoku Expressway, Joban Expressway, Tsugaru Expressway, Sanriku Longitudinal Expressway, Hachinohe-Kuji Expressway, Tohoku Central Expressway that connects the cities in central Tohoku, and the Tohoku Traverse Expressway that connects the cities on the Pacific and Japan Sea sides (Kamaishi-Akita Line and Sakata Line). Besides, improve the local high-standard roads, which complete the network of the principal roads, including the Miyako-Morioka Traverse Expressway. Furthermore, improve the airports, harbors and railways. For the Tohoku Shinkansen, continue the project for the Morioka-Shinaomori section based on the examination by the governmental committee. In addition, establish advanced information and communications infrastructures. For the Seikan area, because it is located at the crossing of the Japanese Islands that stretch from south to north and the Straits of Tsugaru that connects the Pacific Ocean and the Japan Sea, the area is expected to develop into an inter-block interaction area. To achieve this expectation, examine ways to further utilize the Seikan Tunnel and new transportation systems based on a long-term view. Promote further exchanges and cooperation by establishing advanced information and communications infrastructures and by promoting the sharing of information in the area. For the Japan Sea coastal areas and Sanriku coastal areas, use the rich local marine resources and advanced technological industries to create bases for R&D, physical distribution, and for marine recreation in harmony with the environment. Promote exchanges and cooperation among the coastal cities and the inland areas. In the Abukuma area, based on the high-speed transportation systems now being built, make and implement wide-area comprehensive plans.

To form international spheres of interaction on a large scale, establish and improve the urban functions that can be accessed from the world in the provincial urban hubs centering around Sendai and Niigata. These urban functions will include expertise and facilities for central management, R&D, commercial and services, physical distribution, conventions, advanced education, culture and sports. Besides, upgrade the Sendai and Niigata Airports and Shiogama and Niigata Ports that will serve as the bases for international interaction, and improve the transportation infrastructures to provide better access to the bases. Thus, establish diverse transportation infrastructures and international sightseeing and recreation bases with links both within and outside of Japan. Furthermore, to create areas where new industries and technologies will be developed, improve the higher education institutions as well as
examination and research institutes. By promoting networking and cooperation between the industrial, academic and governmental sectors in the Tohoku region, stimulate unique R&D activities and help establish the region as a center of international R&D. In addition, develop venture enterprises through the support of regional industrial groups, and make better use of the results of R&D and developed technologies. At the same time, utilize the research results and technologies of the advanced industries in the region, and create the bases for making value-added products that meet the needs of the age.

Towards the creation of nature-rich residential areas, utilize the historical and traditional resources developed in the rich natural environment including the Shirakami-sanchi that is registered as a world Natural Heritage site, conserve and utilize the local natural environment and cultural heritage through the activities including the regional development in harmony with nature in the Mogami area and the regional development by using local resources in the Oku-aizu area. Besides, create and introduce new cultures that are characteristic of the Tohoku region, which is also called "Michinoku." Improve and develop the hot spring facilities that are distinguished throughout the country, sports facilities in which international competitions can be held, advanced information and communications infrastructures and the regional transportation infrastructures. Strengthen countermeasures against floods, avalanches, landslides and other natural disasters and improve the safety of the coastal areas. Thus, develop a living and cultural environment that is safe and in harmony with nature, improve the sightseeing and recreational facilities, and thus promote exchanges both within and outside the region. Furthermore, improve the smaller cities that will serve as the bases of each area, and implement measures to provide medical and welfare services in response to the aging society. Promote the development and utilization of natural energies such as geothermal energy and wind power. Improve the production and living environment to develop communities that are better able to withstand snowfall. In the basins including Kitakami and Abukuma, improve the circulation of water and support efforts to promote diverse interaction and cooperation within the basins.

The Tohoku region is an important center of production of food and lumber for Japan. Expand the scale of agricultural management by improving the production, processing and distribution infrastructures, and promote better multiple management of agriculture by plant breeding and the development of new cultivation technologies. For forestry, improve forest growth by thinning, etc., improve the system for supplying lumber, and promote research on the effective use of forest resources. Besides, turn the forests into areas for mental and physical refreshment for people. For fisheries, maintain the fishing environment, promote cultivation, and improve the production, processing and distribution infrastructures and marketing systems. Furthermore, establish production and distribution systems that can meet diverse consumer needs by using information networks. At the same time, promote multiple management and green tourism by using local resources, rich agricultural, forestry and marine products and one of the most natural environments in Japan. Thus, improve the production and living infrastructures according to local conditions.
In the Mutsu-Ogawara district, a national oil storage base, nuclear fuel cycling facilities and research facilities have been constructed. Based on recent socioeconomic changes and past infrastructure improvements, examine development measures, including the construction of more facilities, and implement plans accordingly.

3. Kanto
- A key metropolitan area in the 21st century that provides a well-balanced relationship between business, living and nature -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

The Kanto region has led Japan's growth. It is comprised of the vast Kanto plains and the surrounding areas, centering around Tokyo, the capital of Japan. With a population of 40 million and its advanced functions, the region has become a huge metropolitan area unlike any other in the world. The Kanto region will continuously contribute to the growth of Japan as a key metropolitan area in the 21st century, and will provide a well-balanced relationship between business, living and nature. This will be achieved based on cooperation among the Tokyo metropolitan area, north Kanto and inland west areas, using the huge accumulation of facilities and infrastructures.

The Tokyo metropolitan area will continue to play a central role both domestically and internationally as a modern, energetic city. Urban activities will be promoted while industrial activities will be improved to survive global competition. To achieve this, promote role-sharing and cooperation between the Tokyo ward area and core business cities, and convert the pyramid-typed regional structure into a network structure. At the same time, create a good residential environment where people can lead a high standard of living and enjoy culture in harmony with nature. By implementing these measures, renovate the Tokyo metropolitan area for the long-term development of the Western Japan National Axial Zone.

The northern Kanto and inland west areas offer good development prospects because they are near to Tokyo, have manufacturing infrastructures and a rich natural environment. Strengthen cooperation between the areas, establish advanced urban functions including international interaction functions, and develop advanced technological industries in the areas. By these measures, the areas will become more independent of Tokyo and will serve as gateways to form regional cooperation corridors between the Kanto region and other areas including Tohoku, Hokuriku and Chubu. Besides, in the smaller cities and rural areas including hilly and mountainous areas, create attractive nature-rich residential areas. Centering round the northern mountain ranges and surroundings, a natural network will be formed and inter-city cooperation will be promoted, extending from the mountain areas in the Chubu region to the Tohoku area. As a result, the basis for creating the North-Eastern National Axial Zone will be formed.

(2) Development measures
In the Tokyo metropolitan area including the Tokyo ward area and the coastal area around Tokyo Bay, make the following improvements in line with the characteristics of each area.

To correct the city structure that is overly dependent on the Tokyo ward area and to create a network structure between each area, establish according to new needs core business cities with concentration of various functions such as business functions. Besides, improve the principal transportation networks such as ring roads like the Metropolitan Center Ring Expressway and Tokyo Outer Ring Expressway. At the same time, improve the expressways in Tokyo including the Tokyo Bay Shore Road to reduce the traffic jams. To ensure smooth access to the Nagoya metropolitan area, etc., promote the Second Tomei Expressway project. Furthermore, establish high-standard roads in each area. For example, make specific plans for trunk roads connecting the core cities. To reduce congestion at rush hours, enhance the transportation capabilities by building new urban railway services such as the New Joban Line, constructing new monorails or by increasing the tracks of existing railways to four lines. At the same time, prepare housing sites according to the construction of new railways. Besides, establish river boat routes to help reduce the environmental load. For the Tsukuba Research and Academy City, strengthen its functions as a center of study, research and development. As countermeasures against large-scale earthquakes, redevelop urban areas congested with old wooden houses, establish disaster-prevention bases, and strengthen the earthquake resistance of public facilities. At the same time, take countermeasures against natural disasters such as floods and against accidents, and conserve coastal areas. Besides, create attractive urban areas that have sophisticated and creative cultural facilities and unique designs that symbolize the mature culture of Japan. Implement comprehensive measures beyond administrative districts concerning the following: First, as countermeasures against frequent water shortages, improve the stable supply of water and water network. Second, properly dispose of waste. Third, preserve large green zones and plant broad-leaved forests. In addition, promote the introduction of urban systems that impose less load on the environment. For example, save water by recycling water including sewage after treatment and through utilization of rainwater, and promote cogeneration systems.

In the Tokyo ward area, build secondary centers with unique and multiple functions. At the same time, redevelop the centers of the areas and encourage people to live in these centers by creating attractive sights and by providing enough green and open spaces. Thus, promote the conversion to an urban structure that has multiple centers. In the waterfront subcenter, promote multiple, balanced use of business, residential, disaster-prevention, culture and amenities.

In the coastal areas surrounding the Tokyo Bay, preserve and restore the natural environment through consistent efforts. At the same time, improve the urban functions, industries, and environment and make the city more disaster-resistant. Then, develop the coastal areas into strategic bases to create a new Tokyo metropolitan area with various features. To link the strategic bases, establish a network of principal ring roads. Utilize the Tokyo Bay Crossing Road, Tokyo Bay Shore Road, etc. to
strengthen cooperation among the areas surrounding Tokyo Bay including the Keihin, Keiyo and Kazusa districts, and strengthen the business, R&D and international physical distribution functions of the areas. Draw up specific plans for the Second Tokyo Bay Shore Road. For the Tokyo Bay Entrance Road project, conduct surveys while considering technological developments related to long bridges and local activities toward regional exchange and cooperation. In line with the progress of the surveys, examine the influence of the project on the surrounding environment, cost effectiveness and the methods of cost sharing. In the Keihin and Keiyo industrial areas, strengthen the cooperation between industrial, academic and governmental sectors, and encourage venture enterprises to set up to create new industries or revitalize existing industries by using the technologies and human resources in the areas. Review the regulations on land use to encourage the take-up of unused or under-utilized land such as large sites where factories used to be. Thus, convert the land use and improve the urban infrastructures.

To strengthen the gateway function to promote exchanges and cooperation between the Tokyo metropolitan area and other areas both within and outside Japan, complete the second runway at the New Tokyo International Airport. Also, build earthquake-resistant international marine container terminals in the ports of Tokyo Bay to improve the physical distribution facilities of the ports. Furthermore, improve the transportation infrastructures to provide easier access to the airports and ports.

To respond to the increasing demand for domestic air transportation, quickly complete the offshore development project of the Tokyo International Airport and conduct surveys on the construction of new hub airports.

In the north Kanto and inland west areas, develop advanced urban functions as in the Tokyo metropolitan area, and improve the core urban areas to create advanced technological industries based on the expertise and know-how of the local manufacturing industry. At the same time, improve the residential environment and make the urban areas more independent of Tokyo. By developing a regional cooperation corridor that connects Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Nagano, Yamanashi and Shizuoka, promote role-sharing and cooperation between these independent urban areas.

In the north Kanto and Toso areas, upgrade the North Kanto and East Kanto Expressways and the Hitachinaka Port, and establish advanced communications infrastructures to strengthen the cooperation between the areas. At the same time, establish new distribution systems that do not depend on the Tokyo metropolitan area, and strengthen the international interaction functions. By utilizing the industrial infrastructures established in Utsunomiya and the R&D facilities and expertise in the Tsukuba Research and Academy City, develop advanced technological industries and strengthen the R&D functions of the existing manufacturing industries. By developing a regional cooperation corridor between the north Kanto and Niigata or Fukushima, promote links with the Tohoku region. In the inland west areas, improve the industrial infrastructure in Kofu, implement the Chubu Traverse Expressway project and establish advanced communications infrastructure.
To create nature-rich residential areas, for instance, improve facilities in cities to be centers of the areas, improve the living environment. Taking advantage of the short distance to areas of mass consumption, improve the production, processing and distribution infrastructures, and promote value-added agriculture, forestry and fisheries in the areas as supply bases of such products and fresh food. Promote green tourism to increase exchanges between urban and rural communities. Besides, in the Sagami and Tama basins, preserve the water quality based on cooperation between the basin areas, and encourage citizens to participate in activities to protect and improve the rivers and forests. Furthermore, in the mountainous areas and highlands in the north Kanto and inland west areas, in the coastal areas of the Boso Peninsula, and in the islands including the Ogasawara islands, improve the forests and conserve nature in coastal areas. At the same time, in response to demand for recreation, establish more convenient transportation services between these areas and the Tokyo metropolitan area and establish a large sightseeing, sports and recreation zone by utilizing the rich natural environment and tourist attractions of the areas.

4. Chubu
- Region that serves as the world's center of advanced industrial technologies, where diverse interactions are actively made worldwide -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

Demographically, the Chubu region is in the center of Japan. The region is an ideal location for physical distribution and interaction functions nationwide. In the region, advanced industries and technologies such as automobiles, precision machinery, electronic machinery, aerospace and fine ceramics have been developed and agriculture, forestry and fisheries are managed innovatively. It has attractive natural and historical resources that represent Japan, and these resources are in the vicinity of the urban areas.

Based on these characteristics, the Chubu region will likely develop into a region that serves as a world center of advanced industrial technologies, with diverse global interactions. For the Nagoya metropolitan area, based on the existing industrial facilities, strengthen its role as a world-class industrial and technological center. Internationally, develop it into a center for diverse activities; and domestically make it a base for the movement of people and goods across the nation. Through close exchanges with other areas both inside and outside Japan, develop the area into a sphere where new wisdom and values will be created for the 21st century. For the inland and southern areas, develop them into attractive areas with intellectual opportunities, which are composed of nature-rich residential areas and small urban communities that have state-of-art technologies in specific fields. For the eastern areas, develop them into independent areas that are open to the world, where unique industries can develop in the industrially creative climate and interactions through cultural activities related to the local industries can flourish.

For implementing the plans described above, create a wide-area international sphere of interaction covering central Japan. Promote renovation in the Nagoya
metropolitan area, and create nature-rich residential areas in the Chubu mountainous areas, east Kishu and Mikawa Bay that are blessed with a rich natural environment. Furthermore, by establishing regional cooperation corridors both inside and outside the Chubu region, develop independent and vigorous areas. In addition, strengthen countermeasures against the Tokai Earthquake.

By these measures, the following zones will eventually be formed. The Japan Sea Coastal National Axial Zone and the North-Eastern National Axial Zone will be formed in the Chubu mountainous areas and the inland areas. The New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone will be formed extending from east Kishu to the coastal and peripheral areas of Ise Bay, and the Western Japan National Axial Zone will be formed in the Pacific belt and the peripheral areas.

(2) Development of measures

In the major core city area mainly comprised of the Nagoya metropolitan area, Shizuoka and Hamamatsu, and in the prefectural hub city centering round Nagano, promote the Chubu International Airport project. Establish highly earthquake-resistant international marine container terminals at the ports in Ise Bay, and improve the facilities of Shimizu Port. In addition, improve the transportation infrastructure to provide easier access to the airport and ports. At the same time, according to the scale and characteristics of each city, establish facilities for international exchanges such as physical distribution bases and convention centers or R&D facilities. Also, utilize the historic, cultural and industrial heritages such as the houses with a steep rafter roof in Shirakawa-go and Gokayama that are registered as world Cultural Heritages and cultural local craft as tourist attractions. Based on the tourist attractions, promote tourism both domestically and internationally, including the invitation of foreign tourists. Furthermore, by holding the World Exposition 2005, Japan, create more opportunities for exchanges. By these measures, form a large-scale international sphere of interaction that spans the Chubu and peripheral areas.

In the Nagoya metropolitan area, improve the residential environment and redevelop the areas where old wooden houses are densely built within Nagoya City. Utilize large tracts of land that is not used at all or not fully utilized and promote the conversion of land use and infrastructure improvements in the built-up areas. Also, improve the water quality of Ise Bay through integrated efforts in the coastal areas. In addition, establish or improve the expressways including the Nagoya No. 2 Ring Road to ease urban traffic. At the same time, improve city railways to reduce congestion at rush-hour to help renovate the area. Link the cities that are sparsely distributed around the central city of Nagoya. Based on cooperation and role-sharing between the cities, strengthen the advanced urban functions of the entire area, including educational cultural and international exchange functions, and establish R&D bases for advanced industrial technologies and designs. To support these efforts, promote the Tokai Ring Expressway project, etc. and to ease traffic flows between large metropolitan areas, promote the Second Tomei Expressway and Second Meishin Expressway projects.

In the core urban areas centering round Shizuoka and Hamamatsu, based on role sharing and cooperation with the Nagoya and Tokyo metropolitan areas, strengthen
urban functions including central management, R&D, information provision and international exchange functions. In addition, help industries to develop by conducting R&D in new fields, etc. based on cooperation between the industrial, academic and governmental sectors in basic and applied research. In the core urban areas centering around Nagano, improve the urban functions including commercial, service, educational and cultural functions by utilizing the easier access to the Tokyo metropolitan area thanks to the high-speed transportation system. In the smaller but important provincial cities that have unique, world-standard technologies in electronics and precision industries, etc., strengthen cooperation with the peripheral areas and other urban areas. Also, construct R&D facilities and improve the conditions as an industrial location, while ensuring harmony with nature.

As countermeasures against large-scale earthquakes such as the Tokai Earthquake, improve the disaster-prevention facilities and strengthen the disaster-prevention systems. To minimize the influence of earthquakes on the transportation systems, promote countermeasures against disasters in the areas in which principal transportation facilities are concentrated, and establish multiple transportation networks.

To help create nature-rich residential areas, develop unique and attractive communities by preserving or utilizing the following: the natural environment of the mountain districts such as the Chubu mountainous areas including the Japan Alps and the areas surrounding Mt. Fuji; the natural marine environment extending from the Sea of Kumano to Sagami Bay; and the precious cultural heritages that have been passed down over the generations as the Chubu region has served as the corridor linking east and west Japan. For this purpose, improve smaller cities as the centers of communities. Improve the local transportation infrastructure and living environments, and provide people with more opportunities to come into contact with nature. Maintain unique rural attractions, create unique local cultures and develop attractive communities with good amenities. Improve the production, processing and distribution infrastructures for agricultural, forestry and marine products, and establish better systems for supplying lumber. Promote management and cultivation of marine resources and conduct plant breeding and develop brands for fruit and vegetables. Add value to agriculture, forestry and fisheries by integrated management of multiple industries. Create sightseeing routes and hold events related to hot springs, etc. to utilize local resources based on cooperation between sightseeing locations. By these measures, boost the leisure industry through interactions between rural communities and cities. In addition, invite industries to set up in the areas, especially those that have freedom of choice regarding the location of their facilities thanks to the progress of information technology. Furthermore, promote cooperation in the basins of the Oi, Abe and Yahagi Rivers to rejuvenate the upstream areas, improve the forests and preserve the natural environment and the water quality. At the same time, implement countermeasures against natural disasters such as floods or landslides and improve the safety of coastal areas.

Develop regional cooperation corridors that include cities that have climate suitable for building new industries and nature-rich areas across a wide range. In east Mikawa,
Enshu, and south Shinshu, revitalize areas through technological and human interactions between different business sectors. At the same time, form the following corridors of regional cooperation:

- Regional cooperation corridor for a new lifestyle by achieving harmony between urban functions and nature
- Regional cooperation corridor that links the international exchange base in the Nagoya metropolitan area with that of the Hokuriku region, taking advantage of the Chubu region's location in the center of Japan
- Regional cooperation corridor that overlaps the regional cooperation corridor connecting Suruga Bay and the Koshin area, surrounding the Tokyo metropolitan area and that extends to the Joetsu area. In this regional cooperation corridor, each area shares international exchange functions and natural blessings and cooperates together to take countermeasures against disasters.
- Regional cooperation corridor that connects Mie, Shiga and Fukui through tourism. The three water areas in this regional cooperation corridor - the Pacific Ocean, Lake Biwa and the Japan Sea will play an active role to promote tourism by taking advantage of the extensive, attractive food culture that has developed thanks to the existence of these water areas and through cooperation in the preservation of the marine environment.

- Regional cooperation corridor starting from Yamanashi and ending at Fukui via the central part of Nagano and Hida. This corridor forms a wide-area sightseeing route based on the rich nature and traditional culture of North Japan Alps and the Japan Sea.
- Regional cooperation corridor that provides more attractive and comfortable places by linking the rich nature of Ise-Shima, Yoshinokumano and Setouchi with the historic heritages passed down from olden times to the present.

For the high-standard principal roads, promote the projects of the Tokai-Hokuriku Expressway that connects the coastal parts with the inland areas, Chubu Longitudinal Expressway, Chubu Traverse Expressway, and the San-en-nan-shin Expressway that connects the coastal parts with the inland areas. At the same time, in the peninsula area, promote the projects of the Kinki Expressway Kise Line Extension and the Izu Longitudinal Expressway. Draw up specific plans for the Komatsu-Shirakawa Connection Road project for establishing high-standard local roads. To strengthen cooperation in the areas connecting Tokai and Nankai extending from the east to the west coast of the Kii Peninsula, examine plans to improve the transportation networks. For the Ise Bay Entrance Road project, conduct surveys in line with technological development related to long, large bridges and with the progress of exchanges and cooperation with the local communities. Then, examine the influence on the peripheral environment and the cost sharing methods, and conduct cost-effect analysis, and implement the project based on the results. For the Hokuriku Shinkansen, based on the results of examination by the governmental committee, implement the project for the Nagano and Joetsu section, construct a new airport in Shizuoka, and establish a high-speed railway, airport, harbor, and advanced communications infrastructures in order to support a wide range of activities.
5. Hokuriku
- Region that leads interregional cooperation and international exchanges between the areas surrounding the Japan Sea -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

The Hokuriku region is blessed with abundant resources including rich nature and large water resources from the heavy snowfall. The region has developed as one of the best residential districts in Japan, based on the growth of agriculture and other industries as well as on the many unique regional cultures. In line with the trend towards more cultural lifestyles in harmony with nature, and growing regional development based on interregional cooperation and international exchanges, the Hokuriku region is expected to develop into a region that leads interregional cooperation and international exchanges between the areas surrounding the Japan Sea. In addition to the advantages of its rich natural and cultural environment, the region has geographical advantages: the prefectural seats are located near to each other. The region is also near to each of the three largest metropolitan areas and has links with the countries across the Japan Sea, and serves as the center of the areas surrounding the Sea.

Based on the characteristics and roles of the region, preserve the affluent natural and cultural assets based on wide-area cooperation between areas in the region, and develop communities that are in harmony with these assets and in which the residents can take pride. Convert the industrial structure to suit the needs of the new age, and create large-scale nature-rich residential areas. In addition, for advanced urban functions such as central management and international exchange that remain inadequate, promote such functions based on cooperation and role-sharing between cities in the area, taking advantage of the fact that the core cities of the region are located near to each other. Through these efforts, create a wide-area international sphere of interaction that serves as the core for exchanges among the Japan Sea coastal areas and the areas across the Sea. Furthermore, develop a large-scale regional cooperation corridor with the adjacent regions. This corridor will allow greater use of natural advantages, and urban functions will develop further. The mutually supplemental relationship with the large metropolitan areas on the Pacific Ocean side as well as cooperation with the Japan Sea coastal areas will be strengthened. Eventually, the Japan Sea Coastal National Axial Zone will be formed.

(2) Development of measures

To create nature-rich residential areas, develop attractive communities based on unique local characteristics, including historic and cultural heritages such as the houses with steep rafter roofs in Shirakawa-go and Gokayama that are registered as world Cultural Heritages, Hakusan and Tateyama that are religious mountains, traditional crafts such as Wajimanuri and Kutaniyaki, and the rich marine resources of the Japan Sea. To achieve such development, improve the local environment including the natural environment, sights of the streets, and living environment. Improve the smaller cities as the centers of the nature-rich residential areas, and
establish better transportation infrastructures and advanced communications infrastructures. At the same time, implement the following measures. Promote local brands, establish sightseeing routes and their bases, promote artistic activities and exchanges between the urban and rural communities, and create new industries by using advanced communications systems. In the piedmont areas that extend from eastern to southern Hokuriku, expand the transportation infrastructures to strengthen the links within the areas and with the adjacent areas such as the Chushin and Hida areas that are difficult to access from the piedmont areas because of the geographical conditions. Support efforts to develop sightseeing based on the rich natural environment in the Tateyama area and the Hakusan-Okuetsu-kogen area. In the Noto area, implement measures to activate the area. For example, improve the transportation infrastructure including the construction of the new Noto Airport, and introduce new industries. In the coastal area of Wakasa Bay, improve the areas taking advantage of the nuclear power plants, and promote the Kinki Expressway Tsuruga Line project to activate the area based on links with the resort network of the northern Kinki area. Furthermore, support exchanges between the basin areas such as the basin of the Kuzuryu, and strengthen safety against natural disasters and accidents such as floods, heavy snow and landslides in each of the areas, and improve the safety of coastal areas. For agriculture, forestry and fisheries, establish local brands, promote multiple management, strengthen competitiveness and add more value by improving the production, processing and distribution infrastructures. In the process, upgrade the production infrastructure by expanding the scale of production, especially that of rice growing. Also, promote industries based on local characteristics such as woodworking or by cultivating deep sea marine resources.

In the cities of Kanazawa, Toyama and Fukui in the Hokuriku region, implement the following through role-sharing and common use of facilities. Activate the central districts by using land that is not now utilized at all or not fully utilized such as the sites where railways or universities used to be. Improve the R&D functions, create central business areas and international exchange bases, establish advanced educational facilities, cultural halls and museums, and increase electronic information resources. Based on broad cooperation centering around the urban hubs, improve the urban functions including the international exchange functions. Promote traditional cultures by developing traditional crafts and maintaining the repair technologies. At the same time, invite state-of-art companies to relocate to the region, and support corporate activities. Implement welfare measures to create barrier-free communities, and develop new urban areas that are cultural and comfortable surrounded by nature-rich residential areas. Based on cooperation between the urban areas and other areas in the region, establish a system for accepting foreign students and trainees, and improve the infrastructure for international conferences and international tourism. In this way, create a large international center for interaction and exchanges (cultural exchanges, cooperation on environmental issues and international distribution) among the areas surrounding the Japan Sea. Enhance the international transportation functions mainly in the urban hubs, and promote role-sharing within and outside of the region, and improve the physical distribution facilities and transportation
infrastructures to improve access to the airports and harbors that will serves as the bases for international exchanges such as Fushiki-Toyama Port.

Based on cooperation within the nature-rich residential areas and the urban hubs within the region, and cooperation between the region and cities on the Pacific Ocean side or the inland areas, develop new communities in diverse fields including industry, culture, sports, health, medicine, welfare and sightseeing. For this, establish the following regional cooperation corridors.
- A regional cooperation corridor that traverses the central part of Japan from the Noto Peninsula to the Nagoya metropolitan area
- A regional cooperation corridor that traverses the Chubu mountainous area from Fukui (east) to Yamanashi (west)
- A regional cooperation corridor that connects Fukui, Shiga and Mie

Based on the cooperation and exchange activities, improve the transportation infrastructures including roads, railways, airports and harbors and establish advanced communications networks by building substitute routes for land and marine routes. In this process, the Hokuriku region should play an integral role in the national infrastructure for physical distribution, communications and industries. Also, implement measures to activate diverse exchange activities. For high-standard principal roads, promote the projects of the Tokai-Hokuriku, Chubu Longitudinal, and Naoetsu Expressways, and establish or improve local high-standard roads. For example, draw up specific plans for the road connecting Komatsu and Shirakawa as the center of the local transportation network. For the Hokuriku Shinkansen project, based on the results of the examination by the governmental committee, implement the project for the Itoigawa-Uozu, Isurugi-Kanazawa, and Nagano-Joetsu sections, and do the required works for the other sections.

6. Kinki
- Cultural and creative hub that makes Japan attractive to the world -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

The Kinki region is comprised of the Kansai metropolitan area that has been long playing a central role in Japanese politics, economy, culture and international exchanges with its advanced urban functions, and its surrounding areas with the Japan Sea, Pacific Ocean, lakes and forests. Although the Kinki region has been decreasing in importance as Japan's population and functions have concentrated in Tokyo, it is still a center of Japan's economic and social activities.

The Kinki region will play an important role in Japan's development in the 21st century, and will develop as a highly cultural and creative hub that makes Japan attractive to the world. In the entire region, therefore, improve the local environment to enable people to lead safe and comfortable lives by utilizing its historic and cultural assets and the rich natural environment, while developing regional cooperation corridors. At the same time, establish an environment that is open to the world by forming a large-scale international sphere of interaction.
The Kansai metropolitan area will serve as the center for the development of the Kinki region. It will function as the center of cooperation between regions on a national scale, and become a region that represents Japan in the fields of culture, science and R&D in the global age. It will also become a more powerful center of exchange between Japan and the world, especially the Asia Pacific region that is rapidly growing. To meet the expectations, implement diverse measures to renovate the metropolitan area, paying special attention to recovery from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. In the Harima and Biwako areas, pursue proper role-sharing and cooperation with the Kansai metropolitan area, and establish a close network in the fields of economy, culture, science, R&D and tourism. The promotion of independent development of each area will contribute to the formation of the Western Japan National Axial Zone. The northern Kinki and the Kii Peninsula areas will contribute respectively to the formation of the Japan Sea Coastal National Axial Zone and the New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone eventually. Help create nature-rich residential areas in both areas, promote cooperation with the Kansai metropolitan area, and implement new measures to strengthen exchanges with the adjacent areas including the Hokuriku, Sanin, Ise Bay and Shikoku areas.

(2) Development of measures

In the Kansai metropolitan area, establish a good residential environment centering around the coastal area of Osaka Bay, while maintaining the advanced urban functions such as the central management and international exchange that are required as a world-class city. Redevelop the urban areas where old wooden buildings are densely built, and improve urban safety by preserving or improving the green zones near to the urban areas. Also, encourage the conversion of land use and improve the infrastructures in built-up areas by using land that is not used at all or not fully utilized such as the sites where large-scale factories used to be. Preserve and recover the coastal environment and create the river areas with clean water and greenery. By implementing these measures, renovate the metropolitan area and enable people to live in style and an attractive environment in the cities, where work places, residences and recreational facilities are located near to each other. In addition, promote the Second Meishin Expressway and Second Keihan Expressway projects, and strengthen the functions of the Hanshin Expressway by promoting the Osaka Bay Shore Road project. At the same time, by improving the urban railways and constructing the Kobe Airport, reduce congestion during rush-hour and traffic jams, and strengthen the transportation networks within the region as well as between the region and other regions. Furthermore, implement countermeasures against natural disasters such as large-scale earthquake and floods, improve coastal safety, and establish large waste disposal plants. Centering around the Kansai Science City, establish more science and R&D centers to promote culture, communications, a good environment and health in the northern Osaka and Harima areas. Build a network of such bases and develop them into world-class cultural, scientific and R&D centers. Based on these centers, create or strengthen state-of-art industries such as communications and design, and develop industries that attract visitors such as tourism and conferences. Also, activate
the traditional craft industries such as textiles and ceramics to create new industries and convert the industrial structure.

To create nature-rich residential areas, enhance urban functions including business management, information, educational and cultural functions in the cities that serve as the centers for the living areas, and ensure attractive employment opportunities based on the accumulation of industrial and technological assets. At the same time, implement comprehensive measures to improve the residential environment based on the characteristics of each area so that the residents can lead safe and comfortable lives. Preserve and recover the versatile and rich natural environment and improve rural communities by using their wonderful natural resources so that the residents can take pride in their communities, and promote exchanges between the rural and urban communities. Furthermore, activate the local industries by the following measures. Improve the local transportation, production, processing and distribution infrastructures. Promote the production of various high-quality items by using new technologies such as biotechnology. Activate agriculture, forestry and fisheries by utilizing the rich forest resources accumulated from old times, and develop value-added industries based on local resources such as historical and cultural resources or traditional technologies. In the northern Kinki area, establish a resort in the Tango area based on its rich natural and cultural assets, and promote the development based on afforestation in the Tamba area. In the Kii Peninsula area, based on cooperation with the adjacent Pacific Ocean coastal areas, establish wide-area forest resorts and marine resorts, cultivate marine resources and encourage the multiple use of local resources. In the Awaji Island, create a "park island open to the world" in harmony with natural environment, which has good living areas and various exchange areas.

To make more exchanges with the world, especially with the Asia Pacific region to which Japan has close relationships both geographically and historically based on cultural, scientific and R&D achievements, form an international spheres of interaction on a large scale. For this, mainly in the Kansai metropolitan area, promote the second project of the Kansai International Airport, establish highly earthquake-resistant international marine container terminals in the ports of Osaka Bay, and improve the transportation infrastructure for providing better access to the facilities. Establish or improve international centers where international conferences can be held and international business conducted, including the guest palace in Kyoto, and strengthen international cultural, sports and sightseeing functions. Also, strengthen cooperation with the businesses in the surrounding areas that are also trying to develop. In addition, in the northern Kinki area, based on cooperation with the adjacent Japan Sea coastal areas, make exchanges with the areas across the Japan Sea in numerous fields including culture, science, economy and the environment as part of the exchanges among the areas surrounding the Japan Sea.

To develop attractive and vigorous communities by utilizing urban functions in a wide area and by creating high-quality living and cultural areas, develop the following regional cooperation corridors to promote exchanges and cooperation of people, things and information between the regions that have different history and cultures.
- A regional cooperation corridor that connects Kyoto, Hyogo, Tokushima and Kochi, extending from the Japan Sea coastal area to the Pacific Ocean coastal area
- A regional cooperation corridor that connects Fukui, Shiga and Mie
- A regional cooperation corridor that connects Iseshima, Yoshinokumano and Setouchi
- A wide-area sphere of interaction covering Kyoto, Shiga, Nara and Mie.

Furthermore, to recognize again the value of existing cultural resources and to create new cultures by strengthening interregional cooperation, promote the historic route project to develop areas by using numerous historical and cultural resources including those that are registered as World Heritage assets. To support the project and regional exchanges, promote the projects for building high-standard principal roads including the Kyoto Longitudinal Expressway, Keinawa Expressway, North Kinki Toyooka Expressway, and the Kinki Expressway Kise Line. Also, promote the projects for building regional high-standard roads such as the Tottori-Toyooka-Miyazu Expressway, improve the airport, harbors and railways, and establish advanced communications infrastructure. For the Hokuriku Shinkansen, implement the work based on the results of the examination by the governmental committee. Besides, examine how to strengthen the transportation systems to promote cooperation in the areas extending from the east to west coasts of the Kii Peninsula and connecting Tokai and Nankai. From a long-term view, examine the transportation systems to promote wide-area cooperation with the Shikoku region. For the project to construct a road connecting Kii and Awaji, develop technology related to long and large bridges and for promoting local exchanges and cooperation, and conduct surveys. Then, examine the influence of the project on the surrounding environment, analyze the cost effectiveness and consider how to share the costs. Implement the project based on the results of the examinations.

For the basins of Biwako and Yodo, unify the efforts of the areas and implement comprehensive measures. For example, preserve the water quality, cultivate water resources and protect the natural environment. At the same time, implement disaster-prevention measures against water shortage, floods or landslides.

In the areas affected by the Hanshin-Awaji earthquake, urgently solve the basic problems that still affect daily lives, restore the economy and build safe communities. Also, implement special projects to restore the devastated areas as proposed by the Committee for Reconstruction of the Hanshin-Awaji Area.

7. Chugoku
- Region that leads multiaxial, distributed development for global exchanges based on the participation and cooperation of diverse entities -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

The Chugoku region contains small and large cities having diverse functions that are well spaced apart from each other, in a rich natural environment. Each of the areas in the region has been making exchanges with the areas surrounding the Seto Inland Sea and with the countries across the Japan Sea, while promoting mutual relations
within the region. Thus the region has long played an important role in marine and land transportation in the Japan Sea areas. In recent years, the areas such as Hiroshima and Okayama have become involved in international activities and sports exchanges with other countries, especially with East Asia, for peace, medical care, environmental protection and human aid. The Chugoku region is a leading international center. The activities of volunteer organizations have built the basis for regional development and the region has steadily developed through the participation of citizens.

In the future, the region is expected to develop as a region that leads multiaxial, distributed development for global exchanges based on the participation and cooperation of diverse entities. This will be achieved by increased participation of citizens in regional development and by using the know-how and expertise of volunteer organizations. The cities and surrounding rural areas should cooperate with each other based on their own characteristics in the safe and favorable residential environment, while enjoying the rich blessings of nature.

For this, encourage the exchange of people, things and information, share diverse resources in multiple areas, and promote mutual supplement and cooperation towards the development of regional cooperation corridors both within and outside the region. By role-sharing and cooperation with the Shikoku region, pursue unified development and create a large-scale international sphere of interaction. In addition, it is important to create attractive nature-rich residential areas full of amenities by using the local resources such as the terraced fields in the rural areas including the hilly and mountainous areas centering around the Chugoku-sanchi as well as by the initiatives of each area.

The Japan Sea Coastal National Axial Zone and the Western Japan National Axial Zone will thus eventually be formed.

(2) Development of measures
Towards the development of the Chugoku region that has versatile characteristics and extends from the Japan Sea to the Seto Inland Sea via the Chugoku-sanchi (mountainous district), promote exchanges and cooperation between the areas in the region that have different history, cultures and urban functions while preserving the identities of each area and creating new cultures. For this, in the industrial areas such as Hiroshima and Okayama, establish advanced R&D bases, activate R&D and develop creative human resources. Establish more networks between companies and industries based on the accumulated technologies in the automobile or shipbuilding industries and reform the industrial structure. In addition, according to the characteristics of each city, strengthen the international exchange, cultural and medical functions, and establish multiple inter-city networks that connect the hub cities, prefectural hub cities, and provincial center cities both within and inside the region and thus form regional cooperation corridors. In the Chugoku region, form the following regional cooperation corridors.
- A regional cooperation corridor traversing from the north to the south that connects Shimane, Tottori, Okayama, Kagawa, Tokushima and Kochi, extending from the...
Japan Sea to the Pacific Ocean via the Seto Inland Sea for wide-area cooperation of the covered areas
- A regional cooperation corridor that connects Shimane, Hiroshima, Ehime and Kochi
- A regional cooperation corridor along the coast of the Japan Sea, which includes some of the bases for international exchanges between the areas surrounding the Japan Sea such as Shimonoseki, Hamada, Masuda, Matsue, Yonago, Izumo and Tottori

Furthermore in the coastal areas of the Seto Inland Sea, develop water resources, preserve and restore the rich natural environment, and promote industry as well as high living standards. To promote exchanges and cooperation with the Shikoku and Kyushu regions, form a sphere of interaction in the Seto Inland Sea area. Especially in the west Seto area, while promoting international exchanges with the neighboring East Asian countries, create diverse networks in industries and tourism via the Seto Inland Sea. For this, promote the high-standard principal road projects of the Sanin Expressway, Chugoku Traverse Expressway (Himeji-Tottori Line and Onomichi-Matsue Line) and Higashi Hiroshima-Kure Expressway. Also, establish and improve the local high-standard roads including the Tottori-Toyooka-Miyazu Expressway and the Kofu-Miyoshi Expressway that connect with the principal roads. Furthermore, to promote exchanges within the areas in the region as well as with the areas outside the region, establish or improve the airports, harbors, railways, commuter airline networks and advanced communications infrastructures. For the project to construct a road across the Straits of Kanmon, develop technology related to long and large bridges, promote local exchanges and cooperation, and conduct surveys. Then, examine the influence of the project on the surrounding environment, analyze the cost effectiveness and consider how to share the costs. Implement the project based on the results of the examinations. Also, examine how to strengthen the cooperation between the urban hubs of Hiroshima and Matsuyama, and how to establish transportation systems to utilize these urban functions over a wide area. The examination should be made based on a long-term view in line with progress of the plan, to form a sphere of interaction in the West Seto area.

In line with the formation of the regional cooperation corridors, comprehensively develop the Chugoku region through role-sharing and cooperation with the Shikoku region, while cooperating with the Kinki and Kyushu regions to create a large-scale international sphere of interaction centering around the urban hubs mainly comprised of Hiroshima and Okayama. For this, improve Hiroshima Airport and Hiroshima Port as the bases for international exchanges, and also improve the Sakai Port, etc. located on the Japan Sea side. Through these efforts, strengthen the gateway functions targeting the Asia Pacific region, etc., and improve the transportation infrastructure and access to the functions. Also, by utilizing the experience of Hiroshima City in organizing events for exchanges with Asian countries, world peace and cultural or sports events, improve the city functions including the capacity to host international conferences. Furthermore, to develop internationally attractive sightseeing areas, improve the environment of the central areas and establish support systems, based on
the local historic and cultural heritages including the dome that was destroyed by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and the Itsukushima Shrine that are registered as World Cultural Heritage Sites, as well as based on tourist attractions such as the traditional cultures in the attractive, convenient nature-rich residential areas.

To create nature-rich residential areas, the attractive natural environment and traditional cultures such as the "tatara-seitetsu" of the Chugoku region that have been passed down have been further developed. It is proposed to make a "cultural corridor" that links the local history, literature, arts, and so forth. The following activities have also been conducted: prefectural "border summits" to develop the hilly and mountainous areas, efforts to preserve and recover forests in the Chugoku-sanchi (hilly district in Chugoku), promotion of green tourism in local areas, and exchanges and cooperation between the urban and rural communities including through the new tele-working lifestyle. In addition, in the basins of the Ota and Gonokawa, unified efforts are being made to preserve the water quality and ensure safety. Based on the progress of cooperation and exchanges, improve the smaller cities that serve as the centers of each area, and improve the local transportation and advanced communications infrastructures. Also, improve the living environment and welfare to enable people to lead safe and comfortable lives. Promote the synthetic use of the Seto Inland Sea and the Japan Sea resources, and improve the environment so that people can come into closer contact with fields, forests and watersides. At the same time, make areas more resistant to disasters such as floods and landslides and improve the safety of coastal areas. In addition, improve the production, processing and distribution infrastructures of agriculture, forestry and fisheries and make full use of the following: easier access to the markets within the region, in the Kansai metropolitan area and in the Kyushu area by using the Chugoku Longitudinal Expressway; local environment including the sand dunes on the Japan Sea side, the warm climate of the Seto Inland Sea, and gently-sloping mountain in Chugoku-sanchi; and the local resources such as traditional crafts. Besides, promote management and marketing using advanced communications methods, and promote multiple management by creative workers based on local initiatives.

8. Shikoku
- Region that leads development through extensive cooperation both within and outside Japan -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

In the Shikoku region, the Shikoku-sanchi (mountainous areas) traverses the central part from east to west. The region faces diverse sea such as the Seto Inland Sea to the north and the Pacific Ocean to the south. In addition to these geographical conditions, the region is blessed with a rich natural environment and warm climate. The region has good-sized cities that are accumulating appropriate urban functions. Since olden times, the region has actively interacted with other regions via the Seto Inland Sea and the Pacific Ocean and has developed unique cultures. Furthermore, in recent years, conditions of exchanges with other regions within Japan as well as with regions in
other countries have been dramatically being improved. All three bridge routes connecting Honshu and Shikoku are now almost completed, and the airports and harbors in each of the core urban areas are getting better.

In accordance with the expanding exchanges, and with the remarkable potential for independent regional development, the region will become the "region that leads development through extensive cooperation both within and outside Japan." In the process, diverse cooperation with other regions will be promoted and the rich natural blessings and unique culture of the region will be utilized.

To achieve the goal, strengthen cooperation between each area of the Shikoku region, and form diverse regional cooperation corridors by utilizing the three bridge routes connecting Honshu and Shikoku. Encourage exchanges with foreign countries and make the region open to the world, especially to the Asia Pacific region. For this purpose, form a large-scale international sphere of interaction based on comprehensive development with the Chugoku region through role-sharing and cooperation. At the same time, strengthen the functions of each city and create nature-rich residential areas in smaller cities and in the rural areas including the hilly and mountainous areas. Based on these measures, the basis for establishing the New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone that extends from Okinawa to the coast of Ise Bay via Kyushu, Shikoku and Kii Peninsula will be formed.

(2) Development of measures

To improve and strengthen the urban functions and to activate the rural communities, create the following regional cooperation corridors among the areas located between the Japan Sea and the Pacific Ocean.
- A regional cooperation corridor that connects Kyoto, Hyogo, Tokushima and Kochi for cooperation
- A regional cooperation corridor that connects Shimane, Tottori, Okayama, Kagawa, Tokushima and Kochi
- A regional cooperation corridor that connects Shimane, Hiroshima, Ehime and Kochi

As the basis for forming these corridors, establish or improve the high-standard principal roads including the Shikoku Longitudinal, Shikoku Traverse, Imabari-Komatsu and East Kochi Expressways. Also, improve the local high-standard roads including the Anan-Aki Expressway. And improve the Tokushima Airport and the harbors, speed up the principal railways, and establish advanced communications systems. In creating the regional cooperation corridors, especially for tourism and recreation, give priority to the following measures. Establish a large sightseeing route that connects the Pacific Ocean, the Seto Inland Sea and the Japan Sea and that utilizes the cultural assets such as the "henro-michi (pilgrim route)" or the natural environment including the Shikoku-sanchi. Then, build streets that reflect history and culture, and establish facilities where people can stay and relax. To promote exchanges and cooperation with the Chugoku and Kyushu regions, create a sphere of interaction in the Seto Inland Sea area. Especially in the west Seto area, establish numerous networks via the Sea for tourism and other industries. Furthermore, based
on a long-term view, examine the transportation systems for cooperation between Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. For the project to construct the road over the Hoyo Straits, develop technology related to long and large bridges and for promoting local exchanges and cooperation, and conduct surveys. Then, examine the influence of the project on the surrounding environment, analyze the cost effectiveness and consider how to share the costs. Implement the project based on the results of the examinations. Also, examine how to strengthen the cooperation between the urban hubs of Hiroshima and Matsuyama, and how to establish transportation systems to utilize the urban functions of the hubs over a wide range. The examination should be made based on a long-term view, paying attention to the progress of the plan to form a sphere of interaction in the west Seto area.

To promote independent international exchange activities with the Asia Pacific region, establish international exchange bases including the Kochi New Port and improve the transportation infrastructure to provide better access to the bases, while sharing roles and cooperating with the urban hubs in the Chugoku region. At the same time, improve the infrastructures for hosting international conferences as well as for R&D, and create a large-scale international sphere of interaction. Besides, to provide more advanced international exchange functions, improve access to the Kansai International Airport.

While creating the large-scale international sphere of interaction, strengthen the advanced urban functions including business management, R&D, advanced education, culture and information provision in the urban hubs and core urban areas centering around Matsuyama, Takamatsu, Kochi and Tokushima, based on cooperation between the cities. Also, improve the urban infrastructures that support the urban functions, activate the urban centers, and establish the basis for regional development. In the coastal areas of the Seto Inland Sea, to respond to the recent changes in industrial structure, upgrade the existing industries and invite state-of-art technology industries and advanced service industries that have high growth potential to relocate to the coastal areas. Furthermore, for human and technology development, establish or improve advanced educational institutions and research institutes, and promote R&D and technological exchanges between different businesses based on cooperation between the industrial, academic and governmental sectors.

For the creation of nature-rich residential areas, strengthen the functions of small cities that serve as the centers of the areas, and establish advanced communications infrastructures and improve the transportation and living infrastructures. Provide better medical and welfare services to meet the needs of the aging society. Develop industries that have more freedom to choose their location, and activate industries by utilizing local resources such as the terraced paddy fields. For this, promote local activation by using advanced communications technologies and local development by using rich agricultural, forestry and marine products and the natural environment in the southwestern area of the Shikoku region. Also, promote exchanges among foreign students and the creation of industries by using the deep-sea water in the eastern area of the Shikoku region. In the basins of the Yoshino and Shimanto, promote afforestation through exchanges between urban and rural areas, and develop the areas
while preserving the limpid streams. Then, improve the forest conditions in the riverhead areas, preserve the water quality, and make rivers much natural, based on the participation and cooperation of diverse entities. Furthermore, conserve and recover the natural environment in the Seto Inland Sea and the Ashizuri-Uwa Sea, and establish spaces where people can have contact with nature. To boost agriculture, forestry and fisheries, strengthen the functions of the region as a production center of fresh food, taking advantage of the reduced time to travel between the region and the Kansai metropolitan area. Establish a system for supplying lumber, improve forests by thinning, and promote fisheries cultivation. At the same time, improve and sophisticate the production, processing and distribution bases and add more value to agricultural, forestry and marine products by establishing special brands, etc. On the other hand, to enable people to lead safe and comfortable lives, strengthen countermeasures against disasters such as floods and landslides and improve the safety of coastal areas. In response to the frequent water shortages mainly in the coastal areas of the Seto Inland Sea, create a water-saving society and develop water resources according to the characteristics of the areas.

9. Kyushu
- Kyushu that develops together with the Asian region -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

The Kyushu region is in close proximity to other Asian countries both geographically and culturally and has played an important role in the exchanges between Japan and Asia. The region, therefore, serves as an ideal gateway to Asia and is expected to grow in the 21st century. However, the Kyushu region is facing severe regional competition with neighboring countries in various fields such as industry, agriculture, fisheries and tourism. The region has good-sized cities spread at appropriate distances, and there are also nature-rich isolated island, peninsula and mountainous areas. Thus the region provides both urban convenience and a rich natural environment. The region has been leading regional development and in recent years has implemented new projects based on regional cooperation.

Based on these conditions and characteristics, the region will evolve into "Kyushu that develops together with the Asian region," and will go beyond simply serving as Japan's gateway to Asia.

For this, form a large-scale international sphere of interaction together with the adjacent regions, especially targeting Asia, and promote wide exchanges and cooperation with Asia in economy, culture, etc. While developing the region in a comprehensive manner, create nature-rich residential areas that play important roles as Japan's bases to supply food and lumber, and develop unique and attractive urban communities. At the same time, develop regional cooperation corridors for diverse exchanges and cooperation, and expand the areas where the residents can enjoy both urban conveniences and nature. By these measures, the New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone that widely covers the Kyushu region will eventually be formed. With the Kyushu region as the staging point of the west side, the Japan Sea Coastal
National Axial Zone and the Western Japan National Axial Zone will also be formed, and the region will become the node of the Zones in the west Japan.

(2) Development of measures

Establish safe and comfortable urban environments in the major core city area and prefectural hub cities including Fukuoka and Kita-Kyushu, Kumamoto, Kagoshima, Nagasaki, Oita, etc. Enhance the advanced urban functions including the central management, R&D, advanced education and culture according to the scales and characteristics of each urban area, and promote role-sharing and cooperation between the areas.

To create a large-scale international sphere of interaction based on the geographical and historical characteristics, establish international cultural bases, convention halls and other exchange facilities, and promote unique international exchange activities in the region. Furthermore, to respond to the increasing number of international passengers and rising demand for physical distribution, examine measures to strengthen the international airport functions as the gateway of the region. At the same time, strengthen the infrastructures for international exchanges and physical distribution by establishing earthquake-resistant international marine container terminals at the ports in north Kyushu and improve Shibushi Port, etc. In addition, improve the transportation infrastructures to provide better access to the facilities.

Based on exchanges with foreign countries including Asian countries, sophisticate and diversify economic and cultural activities. Create new industries and improve the international competitiveness of the existing industries. To strengthen the functions as the bases for R&D and technical training in Asia, promote cooperation between the industrial, academic and governmental sectors by using the accumulated know-how and expertise of the existing electronics and machinery industries, for example. Improve the educational institutions and experiment and research institutes, and strengthen the R&D functions by networking among them. In addition, in line with international specialization especially in Asia, improve the environment of the Kyushu region as an industrial location, and invite foreign firms to relocate to the region. Furthermore, support technological cooperation projects including the transfer of advanced environmental technologies, establish systems for accepting foreign students and trainees, and hold international conferences and athletic meetings to promote exchanges. Especially, in response to the recent increase of visitors from neighboring Asian countries, improve the environment as an international sightseeing destination. Establish a large, round-trip sightseeing route that utilizes the attractive natural environment including Yakushima island that is registered as a world Natural Heritage, a number of hot springs, as well as tangible and intangible cultural assets. Through tourism, promote exchanges with foreigners including Asian people.

In the areas that are isolated from the urban functions including the mountainous areas in the center of Kyushu, create nature-rich residential areas by promoting agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism, and strengthen cooperation within and outside the area by improving the transportation infrastructures, etc. At the same time, improve the living infrastructure, establish advanced communications infrastructures,
and enhance the urban functions of the smaller cities to stimulate the areas. Although these areas have a rich natural environment, they are subject to natural disasters such as floods, landslides and volcanic activity from Unzen and Sakurajima, so develop communities that are resistant to disasters and improve the safety of coastal areas. Besides, improve the medical and welfare services to enable people to lead safe and comfortable lives. Furthermore, for proper land management, improve the safety of forests and the production thereof by thinning.

Promote new development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and encourage people to take up farming based on versatile agricultural production under the favorable natural conditions, and on the rich and mature forest and marine resources. In order for the region to serve as a center of production of food and lumber, improve the productivity, reduce the costs and raise the international competitiveness by improving the production, processing and distribution infrastructures. Also, promote cooperation to share know-how including production technologies, and promote exchanges between the nature-rich residential areas and the urban areas through green tourism and farm experience.

Based on mutual cooperation between the areas, develop regional cooperation corridors both in the horizontal and vertical directions to enable each area to share the rich resources and develop into vigorous communities.

In the northern area of Kyushu, while promoting comprehensive measures concerning water resources by linking the dams, promote international exchange. To achieve this, create exchange bases with Asia in the fields of culture, science and research including establishing research and academic cities or of "historic corridors" and thus form an integrated international sphere. In the east Kyushu area, overcome the remoteness between the urban areas, industrial areas and tourist attractions and develop the area by fully utilizing the potential. Establish better transportation systems and distribution bases, and create attractive industrial and cultural zones. In the west Seto area, to promote exchanges and cooperation with the Chugoku and Shikoku areas, establish numerous networks via the sea in the fields of tourism and other industries.

In the central area of Kyushu where cities are aligned in a vertical direction, promote exchanges and cooperation to enable the cities to share facilities and strengthen industrial cooperation between the cities. In the central Kyushu area, establish transportation systems, improve the sightseeing routes by using nature, and create diverse exchange and cooperation corridors within the area including the cooperation among the basins of the Kikuchi, the Ono, etc. In the coastal areas of the Ariake Sea and the Yatsushiro Sea, implement countermeasures against disasters, establish a network that connects the bases in the coastal areas, and strengthen the functions of the exchange and distribution bases targeting the Asian region. Through these efforts, pursue comprehensive development of these areas. For the areas facing the East China Sea, develop fisheries, tourism, etc. taking advantage of the short distance to Asia, the rich natural environment and the marine resources. For this purpose, create a cooperation corridor that connects the bases on the west coast of
Kyushu, and promote exchanges and cooperation. For example, promote inter-city cooperation between the cities on the northwest coast.

In the south Kyushu area, create value-added agricultural areas as an important food supply base, and form an attractive sphere of interaction and establish a sightseeing route to enable people to stay and enjoy the rich natural environment. In the area that extends from south Kyushu to the southern ocean, promote exchanges and cooperation via the Sea in tourism and other industries.

To support regional cooperation, build or improve the high-standard principal roads and promote the projects of Kyushu Traverse, East Kyushu, West Kyushu and South Kyushu West Bound Expressways. Also, establish or improve the local high-standard roads including the Ariake Sea Bay Shore Road and the Central Kyushu Traverse Road. Besides, speed up the existing railways and establish or improve airports and harbors including the New North Kyushu Airport. For the Kyushu Shinkansen Kagoshima Route project, implement the Funakoya-Nishikagoshima section project based on the results of the examination by the governmental committee. For the other sections of the Kyushu Shinkansen Kagoshima Route and for the Kyushu Shinkansen Nagasaki Route, conduct the required works. Besides, examine the transportation system that traverses the Kyushu region from north to south via the central part for strengthening the regional exchanges and cooperation, including how to utilize the existing facilities. Furthermore, from a long-term view, examine the transportation system for broad cooperation with the Shikoku region. For the project to construct a road over the Straits of Hoyo and a road over the Straits of Kanmon as well as for the plan for the Shimabara-Amakusa-Nagashima bridge, develop technology related to long and large bridges, promote local exchanges and cooperation, and conduct surveys. Then, examine the influence of the project on the surrounding environment, analyze the cost effectiveness and consider how to share the costs. Implement the project based on the results of the examinations. In addition to improving the transportation infrastructures, establish advanced communications infrastructures and develop software measures to promote exchanges and cooperation.

10. Okinawa
- Base for peaceful exchanges on the Pacific Ocean (Pacific crossroad) -

(1) Basic direction of improvement

The Okinawa region is located where Japan meets the tropical and subtropical zones including Southeast Asia. The region is comprised of islands and is surrounded by vast seas. It is the only region that has a subtropical oceanic climate in Japan. In this unique natural and geographical environment, and through trade with East Asia and Southeast Asia since olden times, the Ryukyu culture has developed in the region. Since the end of World War II, the region has been influenced by American culture, and has developed very unique, international culture and lifestyles.

The Okinawa region will become a special frontier region in the 21st century or a "base for peaceful exchanges on the Pacific Ocean (Pacific crossroad)" that will contribute to independent regional development and to the development of
socioeconomic culture of Japan and the Asia-Pacific region. To achieve this goal, the region will aggressively utilize its geographical and natural characteristics, local resources including cultural assets, and its international sense of accepting diversity and spirit of mutual assistance that have developed.

Develop and strengthen the region's function as the core of the Asia-Pacific region, and promote multiple exchanges in the fields of economy, science and culture, including international contribution such as peaceful exchanges and technological cooperation. Through these efforts, create a large-scale international sphere of interaction that contributes to the world. Also, promote economic independence and ensure employment to build an independent region that contributes to international peace as an integral part of the global community. This will lead to the formation of the oceanic New Pacific Ocean Coastal Zone.

(2) Development of measures

Create in the Ryukyu zone a large-scale international sphere of interaction for the exchanges of people, things and information in the Asia-Pacific region, centering around the main island of Okinawa and also including the Amami islands. Improve the urban functions including the central management and international exchanges mainly in Naha, establish new central urban areas in Naha, etc., and develop communities based on the unique historical and cultural background for establishing characteristic urban hubs. Besides, utilize the characteristics of each area to establish exchange bases for international contribution, economic, scientific and cultural activities, and link the bases. To strengthen the gateway function for exchanges with the Asia-Pacific region, improve the Naha Airport and Naha Port, and establish better transportation infrastructures to provide easier access to the facilities. Also, aggressively establish advanced communications infrastructures. Furthermore, promote the Naha Airport Expressway project, establish or improve the local high-standard roads including the Okinawa West Coast Road, and promote the construction of the Okinawa urban monorail. In addition, improve the higher educational and training institutions for human development, especially for the younger generation, to train people who can respond to internationalization and socioeconomic changes.

By implementing these measures, promote international cooperation including the following: exchanges for international peace; technological transfer for the development of tropical and subtropical areas including debugging technology; and acceptance of trainees and students from overseas, especially from Asia. Promote diverse exchanges and distribution of information from the region including international studies on subtropical characteristics such as research on coral reefs, cultural exchanges for continuing and developing the Ryukyu culture, and exchanges concerning tourism and sports.

In the economic field, strengthen the area as a free trade area and establish a new special free trade area. Use tax and financing systems to promote international distribution and transit processing bases. Also, support joint R&D among the industrial, academic and governmental sectors, as well as venture companies to
promote R&D related to health, medical care, the environment, food and communications industries.

On the other hand, preserve and utilize the subtropical, oceanic versatile natural environment and the unique culture as national assets. In the northern area and in the areas of Miyako, Yaeyama, etc., create attractive nature-rich residential areas where the residents can lead safe and comfortable lives and make unique exchanges. For this, preserve and recover the habitats of precious subtropical creatures in Yanbaru and Iriomotejima, and the beautiful beach and coral reef sea areas in each area. Also, implement countermeasures to prevent outflows of red clay. In addition, preserve the historic streets and remains, as well as the traditional arts. Create international, year-round sightseeing and resort areas targeting long-stay visitors based on the local resources, and promote supporting industries. For the agriculture, forestry and fisheries that enjoy the advantages of the subtropical climate, improve the production, distribution and processing infrastructures, and consider market needs in implementing multiple measures including cooperation with other local industries. Furthermore, to cope with natural disasters such as typhoons and water shortages, implement comprehensive disaster-prevention measures and construct multi-purpose dams, and develop a water-saving society that utilizes rainfall and recycles sewage after treatment.

In developing these measures, it is important to promote the Okinawa region as a whole. Especially for the northern area, because it will play an important role for the entire development of the main island of Okinawa, it is significant to promote the area by utilizing its characteristics.

For the facilities and districts of the U.S. forces that seriously restrict land use in the Okinawa region, implement the plans described in the final report of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO), including the return of the Futenma airfield and the scaling-down of the facilities and districts by about 21% (5002 hectares). Based on the results, make plans for using the returned land.

11. Snowy areas, remote islands and peninsula areas

The snowy areas, remote islands and peninsula areas are important for conserving the land and natural environment. They also provide opportunities for new lifestyles in the 21st century in response to the diversification of people's values, based on their historical and cultural resources. It is therefore important to develop a good national land structure by implementing the following measures. Solve the problems involved in creating safe and attractive land, provide more options for residences, activate local industries, and promote exchanges and cooperation within the areas as well as with other areas.

(1) Snowy areas

In the snowy areas, which account for about half of the country, improve measures against disadvantages due to snow and develop communities that can withstand snow damage. Promote industries and activate the areas by using the snow and local
cultures. It is also important to promote exchanges and cooperation with other areas both within and outside Japan by utilizing the characteristics of the snowy areas.

To ensure safe, comfortable mobility in winter, improve the system for removing snow properly and timely from transportation facilities including high-speed transportation links such as the high-standard principal roads, high-speed railways and airports as well as the sidewalks. Besides, establish or improve snow-prevention and snow-melting facilities, and implement maintenance and management measures. Furthermore, take countermeasures for frozen road surfaces in response to the regulation on the use of studded tires, improve the performance of tires and vehicles for winter driving, and establish transportation infrastructures that can withstand snow damage. Besides, to provide information about weather, traffic and events, etc., to improve the convenience in daily living and to promote industries, establish advanced information and communications infrastructures. Furthermore, while conserving the rich natural environment and beautiful sights in the snowy areas, improve the living environment and encourage people to enjoy snowy weather and to have more contact with snow to create a new "snow culture". In addition, provide more opportunities to learn and experience the rich natural blessings and traditional lifestyles in snowy areas, and thus promote interregional or international exchanges.

Furthermore, support local snow removing efforts and build more houses that are resistant to snow for the elderly, etc., and establish sports and health facilities and parks, giving special considerations to their use in winter. In the rural communities, construct facilities for lodging in winter, and give more support to the aging communities. In cities, improve the snow melting facilities, bury electric wires underground, and build snow-resistant apartments. Provide rivers and sewage systems with more powerful snow-removing capabilities, and secure the places to dispose of the removed snow in public spaces to develop urban communities that are resistant to snow damage. Besides, implement measures against disasters caused by snow including avalanches, snowstorms, landslides in the spring when the snow thaws, and damages caused by large earthquakes in the snowy season. Also, promote agriculture, forestry and fisheries based on the characteristics of the snowy areas, and develop industries by using technologies to store agricultural products etc. in icehouses. Create snow resorts by utilizing the local natural environment and culture, and develop snow-related products. Furthermore, strengthen the system to monitor snowfall, use machines for disposing of snow, and promote the research and development of technologies to overcome or utilize snow including the use of its cooling energy.

(2) Remote islands

Remote islands are important bases for conserving and managing the land including exclusive economic zones. While considering the roles and different conditions of each island, establish a safe and comfortable living environment and implement diverse measures to improve the infrastructures to activate island areas. It is also important to promote industries by using the versatile and characteristic resources and cultures of the areas.
Based on these views, establish or improve the transportation facilities including ports, airports, roads and bridges over the sea. Introduce high-speed passenger ships and jet planes, provide easier access, and establish transportation networks that connect remote islands or remote islands with Japan proper or with foreign countries in order to expand the sphere of interaction. In addition, establish advanced information and communications infrastructures for transmitting and receiving a wide range of information concerning daily lives, etc. Besides, improve the infrastructures including fishing ports, fishing grounds, farmland, farm roads and forestry roads, as well as the processing and distribution systems. Based on the improvement and through cooperation with related companies, promote the production of specialties of remote islands. Especially, promote fisheries as the basic local industry. Furthermore, provide more tourist attractions by establishing health resorts ("island-therapy") or through "blue tourism" taking advantage of the wonderful natural environment including the oceanic climate.

For the living environment, implement measures against water shortages including the improvement of the dams, conveyance of water from other areas and desalination of seawater. Also, establish and improve the sewage treatment or waste disposal plants and parks, and improve the medical and welfare systems including the provision of emergency medical services. Besides, introduce educational or medical care systems that utilize satellite communications for providing people with equal opportunities to receive education and medical care. Furthermore, establish and improve the land conservation facilities for ensuring land safety including those for flood control, forest conservation and coastal conservation. Besides, implement comprehensive disaster-prevention measures including the establishment of a communication system in case of disaster. In addition, conserve the natural environment, protect the beautiful sights of the communities, and develop the traditional cultures.

Especially for the Amami islands located in the ocean, strengthen cooperation with the Okinawa region and give it new importance in the Asia-Pacific region. For the Ogasawara islands, pursue development by utilizing the peculiar natural environment of the area including the subtropical climate and geographical characteristics of the islands' location in the far south of the country, while strengthening the cooperation with the Tokyo metropolitan area.

(3) Peninsula areas

For the Peninsula areas, it is important to promote exchanges and cooperation with the peripheral areas, to maintain and increase the vigor of each area by utilizing its potential. This should be conducted based on the independent and comprehensive efforts of the areas, in view of the importance of land management and conservation.

Specifically, to strengthen cooperation within the peninsula areas and between the areas and peripheral areas, improve the principal transportation infrastructures including roads such as peninsula ring roads and ports, keeping in mind the geographical conditions peculiar to peninsula areas. Together with this, improve the local transportation infrastructures and establish advanced information and
communications infrastructures. Besides, establish and improve the land conservation facilities for forest conservation, flood control and coast conservation, and develop water resources by establishing dams, etc. Furthermore, establish sewage treatment and waste disposal plants and parks to improve the local living environment. In addition, by properly providing the elderly and children with welfare services, improve the standard of living.

In addition, promote the development of new industries by improving the production infrastructures and the processing and distribution systems of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, by developing local industries, and by inviting companies and R&D institutes that need to locate in the rich natural environment. Besides, by promoting cooperation with the coastal areas including the adjoining peninsula areas and remote islands as well as conserving and utilizing the tourist attractions including the natural environment and traditional cultures, create attractive, extensive sightseeing routes. Especially, support the development of unique communities in each area based on the culture peculiar to peninsulas, and create a new "peninsula culture" through cultural exchanges and cooperation both within and outside Japan.

The regional blocks are comprised of the following prefectures.

Hokkaido: Hokkaido
Tohoku: Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Akita, Yamagata, Fukushima and Niigata
Kanto: Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Yamanashi
Chubu: Nagano, Gifu, Shizuoka, Aichi, Mie
Hokuriku: Toyama, Ishikawa, Fukui
Kinki: Shiga, Kyoto, Osaka, Hyogo, Nara, Wakayama
Chugoku: Tottori, Shimane, Okayama, Hiroshima and Yamaguchi
Shikoku: Tokushima, Kagawa, Ehime, Kochi
Kyushu: Fukuoka, Saga, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Oita, Miyazaki and Kagoshima
Okinawa: Okinawa

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