

Act on the Promotion of Tsunami Countermeasures (Tentative translation)

(Act No. 77 of June 24, 2011)

As made clear by the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011, a tsunami is a disaster that, once it occurs, can cause enormous damage to the lives, bodies, and properties of citizens over a wide area and have a serious impact on the sound development of Japan's economy and society. It is a profound regret that Japan has suffered tremendous damage from tsunamis on multiple occasions in the past, and that so many precious lives were lost in the Great East Japan Earthquake. Furthermore, the Great East Japan Earthquake has significantly affected the lives of local residents and the economy and society of Japan due to the disaster caused by the accident at a nuclear power plant.

At the same time, even if a tsunami has occurred, the damage to human lives can be considerably mitigated if citizens take prompt and appropriate action. Therefore, it is particularly important to deepen citizens' understanding of and concern about tsunamis, the characteristics of tsunami damage, and the need to prepare for tsunamis. This has become even more important following the unprecedented catastrophe brought about by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Japan is located on the boundaries of tectonic plates and their vicinities and is constantly exposed to the danger of being damaged by large-scale earthquakes and accompanying tsunamis. In order to keep the devastation caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake, which claimed so many lives, from repeating itself, the national government must frankly reflect on the fact that past tsunami countermeasures were not necessarily sufficient and take all possible measures to counter tsunamis, taking into account the latest knowledge on tsunamis, ancestors' wisdom and actions, and other historical lessons.

This Act is hereby enacted to clarify basic understanding of tsunamis and to comprehensively and effectively promote tsunami countermeasures.

(Purpose)

Article 1 In order to protect the lives, bodies, and properties of citizens from damage caused by tsunamis, this Act clarifies basic understanding in promoting tsunami countermeasures and, at the same time, provides for matters necessary to strengthen tsunami observation systems, promote tsunami-related research studies, implement education and training necessary

for tsunami-related disaster risk reduction, and develop facilities for tsunami countermeasures as well as other matters necessary to promote tsunami countermeasures, thereby comprehensively and effectively promoting tsunami countermeasures and, in doing so, contributing to the maintenance of social order and the securing of public welfare.

(Basic Understanding in Promoting Tsunami Countermeasures)

Article 2 Tsunami countermeasures must be promoted comprehensively and effectively based on the following basic understanding of tsunamis:

- (i) once a tsunami occurs, it can cause enormous damage to the lives, bodies, and properties of citizens over a wide area and have a serious impact on the sound development of Japan's economy and society.
- (ii) the damage to human lives caused by tsunamis can be significantly mitigated if citizens take prompt and appropriate action upon their occurrence. Therefore, it is particularly important to promote the development of facilities for protection against tsunamis, such as seawalls and floodgates; promote the steady development of tsunami evacuation facilities (sturdy buildings or structures to function as temporary evacuation sites in areas presumed to be inundated by tsunamis; the same applies hereinafter); promote the implementation of education and training necessary for tsunami-related disaster risk reduction; and promote the dissemination of thinking on disaster risk reduction, thereby enhancing citizens' understanding and concern about the characteristics of tsunamis, the nature of their impact, and the need for preparedness against them;
- (iii) it is necessary to promptly and appropriately forecast the scale of tsunamis to prevent or mitigate their damage. Detailed forecasts of their damage remain difficult. Therefore, it is important to improve tsunami observation systems, and, promote research studies on tsunamis that occurred in the past, those that are predicted to occur in the future, and the damage caused by them;
- (iv) a tsunami has the characteristic of spreading over a wide area beyond national borders, and it is highly necessary to internationally share the results of research studies in each country. Therefore, it is important to promote international cooperation in observation and research studies.

(Implementation of Tsunami Countermeasures Based on the Purpose and Contents of This Act)

Article 3 (1) In implementing disaster countermeasures based on the Basic Act on Disaster Management (Act No. 223 of 1961), the Special Measures Law on Earthquake Disaster Prevention (Act No. 111 of 1995), and other related laws, the national and local governments must appropriately implement tsunami

countermeasures based on the purpose and contents of this Act.

- (2) Business operators and citizens must deepen their understanding of and concern about the importance of tsunami countermeasures and endeavor to cooperate with tsunami countermeasures conducted by the national and local governments.

(Development of Coordination and Cooperation Systems)

Article 4 In order to effectively promote tsunami countermeasures, the national government must endeavor to develop systems for close coordination and cooperation among the national government, local governments, research institutes such as universities, business operators, and citizens.

(Reinforcement of Tsunami Observation Systems and Promotion of Research Studies)

- Article 5 (1) The national government must endeavor to strengthen tsunami observation systems in order to prevent or mitigate damage caused by tsunamis.
- (2) The national government must promote research studies necessary for the effective implementation of tsunami countermeasures, including the elucidation of the mechanisms behind tsunami generation, improvement of forecast accuracy regarding tsunami scale, detailed forecasting methods for tsunami damage that take topography, current land use conditions, and other regional conditions into consideration, improvement of facilities to prevent or mitigate tsunami damage, collection of tsunami-related records (including records of citizens' experiences with tsunamis), and other efforts. The national government must also endeavor to disseminate the results of these efforts.

(Forecast of Potential Tsunami Damage in Each Area)

- Article 6 (1) Based on topography, current land use conditions, and other regional conditions as well as the latest knowledge on tsunamis, prefectures and municipalities must endeavor to conduct multiple forecasts for the tsunami inundation zone and depth and other potential tsunami damage in each area and utilize the results in tsunami countermeasures. These forecasts must be made for each tsunami scale, taking into account the status of facilities for countering tsunamis.
- (2) Prefectures and municipalities must endeavor to appropriately review the contents of the forecasts prescribed in the preceding paragraph, taking into account changes in current land use conditions in areas that may be inundated by tsunamis and the latest knowledge on tsunamis.
 - (3) The national government must endeavor to provide information, technical advice, and other necessary support to prefectures and municipalities so that

they can properly conduct the forecasts prescribed in paragraph (1) and utilize the results thereof in tsunami countermeasures.

(Implementation of Education and Training Necessary for Tsunami-related Disaster Risk Reduction)

Article 7 Taking into account the results of the research studies prescribed in Article 5, paragraph (2), the national and local governments must endeavor to enable citizens to acquire the latest knowledge on tsunamis, understand potential tsunami damage in their areas, and know how to take prompt and appropriate action in the event of a tsunami, utilizing effective methods, including the use of video images in school education and other various opportunities, to provide citizens with education and training necessary for tsunami-related disaster risk reduction and promote the dissemination of thinking on disaster risk reduction.

(Dissemination of Information regarding Potential Tsunami Damage in Each Area)

- Article 8 (1) In disseminating information to residents on the tsunami inundation zone and depth pursuant to Article 14, paragraphs (1) and (2) of the Special Measures Law on Earthquake Disaster Prevention, prefectures and municipalities must utilize the results of the forecasts prescribed in Article 6, paragraph (1) and endeavor to do so more effectively by distributing printed materials and having residents view images of projected damage.
- (2) If there are underground shopping malls or other facilities in underground areas within the presumed tsunami inundation zone that are used by a large number of unspecified individuals, or, facilities that are used primarily by the elderly, persons with disabilities, infants, or others requiring particular consideration in terms of disaster risk reduction and it is deemed necessary to ensure their prompt and appropriate evacuation in case of a tsunami, prefectures and municipalities shall give special consideration to disseminating the information prescribed in the preceding paragraph to the owners or administrators of those facilities.
- (3) The provisions of Article 6, paragraph (3) shall apply mutatis mutandis to the dissemination of information by prefectures and municipalities prescribed in paragraph (1).

(Measures to Ensure Prompt and Smooth Evacuation from Tsunamis)

Article 9 (1) The national and local governments must endeavor to establish systems and take other measures necessary to accurately and promptly communicate tsunami forecasts or warnings and evacuation recommendations or instructions so that as many people as possible can evacuate quickly and

smoothly.

- (2) Prefectures and municipalities must endeavor to develop and publicly announce their plans regarding evacuation sites, evacuation routes, and other matters necessary to ensure prompt and smooth evacuation of residents in the event of a tsunami occurring or likely to occur.
- (3) When taking the measures provided for in paragraph (1) and developing the plans prescribed in the preceding paragraph, attention must be paid to evacuation of the elderly, persons with disabilities, infants, travelers, persons who cannot understand Japanese, and other persons who require special consideration for evacuation from the tsunami.
- (4) The provisions of Article 6, paragraph (3) shall apply mutatis mutandis to the development of plans by prefectures and municipalities prescribed in paragraph (2).

(Development of Facilities for Tsunami Countermeasures)

Article 10 (1) In developing facilities for tsunami countermeasures, the national and local governments must endeavor to give special consideration to the following:

- (i) promotion of facility development based on the latest knowledge;
 - (ii) maintenance and improvement of existing facilities;
 - (iii) ensuring and improvement of the performance of embankments along coastlines and rivers where tsunami run-up is expected (including performance required to prevent destruction due to seismic motions and ground liquefaction);
 - (iv) improvement of sluice gates at beaches and rivers where tsunami run-up is expected to enable their automatic closure or remotely controlled closure before a tsunami arrives;
 - (v) promotion of the designation of tsunami evacuation facilities;
 - (vi) promotion of the development of tsunami evacuation facilities and evacuation routes to them according to area characteristics.
- (2) When the national and local governments intend to construct public facilities (excluding those constructed for the direct purpose of protection against tsunamis) in areas that may be inundated by tsunamis, they must give due consideration to providing them with a temporary evacuation site function and other tsunami-related disaster risk reduction functions in those areas.

(Promotion of City Planning with Consideration to Tsunami Countermeasures)

Article 11 Prefectures and municipalities must endeavor to promote city planning while taking into consideration the following: the designation of use districts under Article 8, paragraph (1), item (i) of the City Planning Act (Act No. 100 of 1968) that considers tsunami countermeasures, restrictions on

building houses in areas with a high risk of damage from tsunamis by designating them as disaster risk areas under Article 39 of the Building Standards Act (Act No. 201 of 1950), the establishment of mechanisms to mitigate the ingress of tsunamis and drifting objects into inland areas by utilizing sturdy architectures along the coast in anticipation of tsunamis, and the promotion of other tsunami countermeasures.

(Ensuring the Safety of Facilities Handling Hazardous Materials from Tsunamis)

Article 12 The national and local governments must endeavor to ensure the safety of facilities that handle large quantities of petroleum, explosives, high-pressure gases, nuclear fuel materials provided for in the Atomic Energy Basic Act (Act No. 186 of 1955), and other hazardous materials from tsunamis while considering harmony with industries.

(Considerations for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction)

Article 13 (1) National systems for post-disaster recovery must have due consideration given to recovery from tsunami damage.
(2) When restoring and reconstructing areas affected by tsunamis, the national and local governments must endeavor to take into consideration the characteristics of the damage caused by tsunamis and endeavor to give special consideration to the reconstruction of industries and the securing of employment in the affected areas.

(Utilization of Information and Telecommunications Technology in Tsunami Countermeasures)

Article 13-2 The national and local governments must endeavor to utilize information and telecommunications technology to more effectively implement education and training necessary for tsunami-related disaster risk reduction, ensure prompt and smooth evacuation from tsunamis, and promote other tsunami countermeasures.

(Promotion of International Cooperation for Tsunami Countermeasures)

Article 14 Given the characteristic of tsunamis spreading beyond the national border over wide areas, the high necessity of internationally sharing research study results obtained in each country, and the high international recognition of Japan's accumulated knowledge on tsunamis, the national government must endeavor to give special consideration to the following with respect to promoting international cooperation for preventing or mitigating damage caused by tsunamis:

(i) development of systems for international observation and notification;

- (ii) dispatch of researchers abroad;
- (iii) acceptance of foreign researchers and students, and, continuous exchange and collaboration with them after their return to their home countries;
- (iv) provision of knowledge, technologies, records, and other resources accumulated in Japan to overseas;
- (v) implementation of appropriate and prompt assistance to overseas disaster-affected areas.

(Tsunami Disaster Prevention Day)

- Article 15 (1) To deepen citizens' understanding of and concern about tsunami countermeasures, Tsunami Disaster Prevention Day shall be established.
- (2) Tsunami Disaster Prevention Day shall be designated as November 5th.
- (3) Also taking into account that a resolution designating November 5th as World Tsunami Awareness Day was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 22, 2015, the national and local governments shall endeavor to annually organize appropriate events on Tsunami Disaster Prevention Day with due consideration to promoting international cooperation in tsunami countermeasures.

(Financial Measures)

- Article 16 (1) The national government shall endeavor to take necessary financial or tax-related measures and other measures necessary to implement policies for promoting tsunami countermeasures.
- (2) When prefectures or municipalities conduct multiple forecasts regarding the tsunami inundation zone and depth and potential tsunami damage in their areas while taking into account factors such as topography, current land use conditions and other regional conditions and the latest knowledge on tsunamis and assuming different scales of tsunamis and the preparedness of their facilities for tsunami countermeasures, or when they create videos for residents to visualize those forecasts, the national government shall provide necessary financial assistance.

Supplementary Provisions

(Effective Date)

- Article 1 (1) This Act comes into effect as of the date of promulgation.
- (2) The provisions of Article 16, paragraph (2) ceases to be effective as of March 31, 2027.

(Consideration)

- Article 2 (1) In order to effectively enhance the functions of tsunami evacuation

facilities as temporary evacuation sites in areas presumed to be inundated by tsunamis, the national government shall promptly consider necessary measures, taking into account those facilities' appropriate placement, structure, scale, and operational methods and measures to ensure swift and smooth movement to the facilities. Based on these, the national government shall consider necessary financial and tax-related measures for promoting the development of the facilities, evacuation routes to them, and facilities for guiding evacuees, and shall take necessary measures according to the results.

(2) In addition to the matters prescribed in the preceding paragraph, within three years after this Act takes effect, the national government shall consider the ideal form of tsunami countermeasures based on verification of the Great East Japan Earthquake and take necessary measures based on the results.

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 12 of March 31, 2017]

This Act comes into effect as of the date of promulgation.

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 3 of March 31, 2022]

This Act comes into effect as of the date of promulgation.