

Act on the Promotion of Tsunami Countermeasures

(Act No. 77 of June 24, 2011)

As made clear by the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011, tsunamis are disasters that, once they occur, can cause severe damage to the lives, physical wellbeing, and property of people across a wide area, and pose a serious threat to the healthy development of Japan's economy and society. It is deeply regrettable that Japan has suffered immense damage from tsunamis on numerous times in the past, and that a great number of precious lives were lost in the Great East Japan Earthquake. Furthermore, the disaster caused by the nuclear power plant accident during Great East Japan Earthquake has significantly affected the lives of local residents and the economy and society of Japan.

At the same time, the damage to human lives caused by tsunamis can be considerably mitigated in the event of tsunamis, if people take swift and appropriate action. Therefore, it is especially important to deepen people's understanding and interest concerning tsunamis, the nature of the damage caused by tsunamis, and the necessity for tsunami preparedness against tsunamis. This has become increasingly important in the wake of unprecedented disaster of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Japan is located on the crustal boundaries and surrounding areas, and is perpetually at risk of suffering damaged by large-scale earthquakes and the ensuing tsunamis. To prevent reassurance of a catastrophic Great East Japan Earthquake, which claimed numerous lives, it is crucial for the national government to candidly acknowledge that prior tsunami countermeasures may not have been entirely adequate; it is essential to take every possible measures against tsunamis, incorporating the latest knowledge on tsunamis, wisdom and knowledge from our forebears, and other historical lessons.

This Act is hereby enacted to provide a clear understanding of tsunamis and to promote comprehensive and effective tsunami countermeasures.

(Purpose)

Article 1 This Act aims to protect people's lives, physical well-being, and property from the damage caused by tsunamis, elucidates the fundamental understandings for promoting tsunami countermeasures, and also provides for necessary matters to enhance tsunami observation systems, advance research

of tsunamis, implement necessary education and training for tsunami-related disaster prevention, and establish necessary facilities for tsunami countermeasures as well as other matters to effectively and holistically promote tsunami countermeasures, contributing to the maintenance of social order and the assurance of public welfare.

(Basic Understanding for Promoting Tsunami Countermeasures)

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

- (i) once tsunamis occur, they can cause severe damage to the lives, physical wellbeing, and property of people across a wide area, and pose a serious threat to the healthy development of Japan's economy and society.
- (ii) the damage to human lives caused by tsunamis can be considerably mitigated in the event of tsunamis if people take swift and appropriate action. Therefore, it is particularly important to promote the development of facilities for protection against tsunamis, such as seawalls and floodgates; alongside promoting the steady development of tsunami evacuation facilities (robust buildings or structures that serve as temporary evacuation sites in areas expected to be inundated by tsunamis; the same applies below); it is also crucial to encourage the implementation of education and training necessary for tsunami-related disaster prevention, and to further the spread of disaster prevention awareness; thereby deepening people's understanding and interest concerning tsunamis, the nature of the damage caused by tsunamis, and the necessity for preparedness against tsunamis
- (iii) it is crucial to swiftly and accurately predict the scale of tsunamis to prevent or mitigate their damage, and is also important to improve tsunami observation systems, and, promote research studies on past tsunamis, potential future tsunamis, and the damage caused by tsunamis, due to difficulty of making detailed predictions on the damage caused by tsunamis.
- (iv) Considering the nature of tsunamis' tendency to propagate across national borders and affect a wide area, coupled with the high necessity for internationally sharing the results of research studies conducted in each country, it is vital to encourage international cooperation concerning observation and research studies.

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

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

countermeasures, taking into account the purpose and contents of this Act.

- (2) Business operators and people must deepen their understanding and interest concerning the importance of tsunami countermeasures, and endeavor to assist in the tsunami countermeasures implemented by the national and local governments.

(Development of Coordination and Cooperation Systems)

Article 4 To effectively promote tsunami countermeasures, the national government must endeavor to establish a systems of close collaboration and cooperation between the national government, local governments, research institutes such as universities, business operators, and the public.

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

- Article 5 (1) The national government must endeavor to strengthen tsunami observation systems to prevent or mitigate the 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 the damage caused by the tsunamis based on topography, current state of land use, and other regional conditions into consideration, improving facilities to prevent or mitigate the damage caused by tsunamis , collecting tsunami-related records (including records of people's experiences with tsunamis), among other initiatives. The national government must also endeavor to disseminate the results of these efforts.

(Forecast of Potential Damage Caused by Tsunamis in Each Area)

- Article 6 (1) Based on topography, current state of land use, other regional conditions and the latest knowledge on tsunamis, prefectures and municipalities must endeavor to conduct several forecasts for the tsunami inundation zone and depth, as well as other potential damage caused by tsunamis 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 state of land use in areas at risk of tsunami inundation 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 of this in tsunami countermeasures.

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

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 people to know how to take swift and appropriate action in the event of a tsunami by acquiring the latest knowledge on tsunamis, understand potential damage caused by tsunamis in their areas, and, utilizing effective methods such as the use of videos in school education and other various opportunities; the national and local governments must also work towards providing people with education and training necessary for tsunami-related disaster prevention and promoting the spread of disaster prevention awareness.

(Dissemination of Information on Potential Damage Caused by Tsunamis in Specific 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 Act 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 allowing residents view images of the estimated damage.
- (2) If there are underground shopping malls or other facilities in underground areas within the expected tsunami inundation zone that are used by a significant number of unspecified people, or facilities primarily used by the elderly, persons with disabilities, infants, or others who particularly need consideration for disaster prevention, and it is determined necessary to ensure swift and appropriate evacuation in the event of a tsunami, prefectures and municipalities must pay special attention 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) apply mutatis mutandis to the dissemination of information by prefectures and municipalities prescribed in paragraph (1).

(Measures to Ensure Quick 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 swiftly transmitting tsunami forecasts or warnings and evacuation recommendations or directives, to ensure that the maximum number of people can evacuate

quickly and smoothly.

- (2) Prefectures and municipalities must endeavor to develop and publicly disclose plans concerning evacuation sites, evacuation routes, and other matters necessary to ensure swift 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 establishing 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) 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 related to 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 necessary to prevent destruction from seismic motions and soil liquefaction);
 - (iv) improvement to sluice gates on coastlines and rivers where tsunami run-up is expected, to facilitate their automatic or remote-controlled closure before the arrival of tsunamis;
 - (v) promotion of the designation of tsunami evacuation facilities;
 - (vi) promotion of the development of tsunami evacuation facilities and evacuation routes to them, in accordance with the characteristics of the region.
- (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 at risk of tsunami inundation, they must ensure these facilities are equipped with functions for temporary evacuation and other tsunami-related disaster prevention measures in these areas.

(Promotion of City Planning Considering Tsunami Countermeasures)

Article 11 Prefectures and municipalities must endeavor to promote city planning, taking into consideration tsunami countermeasures ; this includes : 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 maintaining balance with industries.

(Considerations for Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction)

Article 13 (1) The national systems concerning disaster recovery must adequately consider recovery from the damage caused by tsunamis.
(2) When restoring and reconstructing areas affected by tsunamis, the national and local governments must endeavor to consider the unique nature 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 Communication Technology for Tsunami Countermeasures)

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

(Promotion of International Cooperation on Tsunami Countermeasures)

Article 14 Considering the nature of tsunamis' tendency to propagate national borders and affect a wide area, coupled with the high necessity for internationally sharing the results of research studies conducted 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 aspects regarding the promotion of international cooperation to prevent or mitigate the 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 people's understanding of and concern regarding tsunami countermeasures, Tsunami Disaster Prevention Day is established.

(2) Tsunami Disaster Prevention Day is designated as November 5th.

(3) Also considering the resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly on December 22, 2015, declaring November 5th as World Tsunami Awareness Day, the national and local governments are to endeavor to annually organize suitable events on Tsunami u Day, while also taking into account the promotion of international cooperation on tsunami countermeasures.

(Financial Measures)

Article 16 (1) The national government is to endeavor to take necessary financial or tax-related measures, along with other measures necessary to implement policies for promoting tsunami countermeasures.

(2) When prefectures or municipalities conduct multiple predictions about the tsunami inundation zone depth, as well as potential damage caused by tsunamis in their areas, considering factors such as topography, current state of land use, other regional conditions, and the latest knowledge about tsunamis, or when they create videos to help residents visualize these predictions, the national government is to provide the necessary financial assistance; this takes into account varying scales of tsunamis and the preparedness of their facilities for tsunami countermeasures

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.

(Review)

Article 2 (1) To more effectively utilize the functions of tsunami evacuation facilities as temporary evacuation sites in areas presumed to be inundated by tsunamis, the national government is to promptly evaluate necessary actions, taking into account those facilities' appropriate placement, structure, size, and operational methods as well as measures needed to ensure quick and smooth relocation to the facilities. Following this, the national government is to consider necessary financial and tax-related measures for promoting the improvement of these facilities, the evacuation routes leading to them, and the equipment used for directing evacuees, and is to take necessary actions based on these results.

(2) In addition to the matters prescribed in the preceding paragraph, within three years after the enforcement of this Act, the national government is to review the approach to tsunami countermeasures, taking into account the findings from the Great East Japan Earthquake, and take necessary measures based on these 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.