

Progress of Local Adaptation in Japan

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Background

In Japan, the Climate Change Adaptation Act came into effect in December 2018. Based on this, efforts for local adaptation have begun at the prefectural and municipal levels. This fact sheet overviews the progress of local adaptation in Japan after the legislation based on the information in Climate Change Adaptation Information Platform (A-PLAT, <https://adaptation-platform.nies.go.jp/>).

The Act encourages local governments to promote climate change adaptation measures according to the actual needs and conditions of the area. This includes the formulation of local climate change adaptation plans*, establishment of Local Climate Change Adaptation Centers*, and making use of Regional Councils on Climate Change Adaptation. From the numbers of the plans and centers developed, we can monitor a part of progress on local adaptation in Japan.

Local Climate Change Adaptation Plan

Article 12 of the Act encourages the formulation of local climate change adaptation plans at the prefectural and municipal levels based on their natural, social, and economic circumstances. The adaptation plan can be incorporated into existing policies or formulated independently as a new policy.

Local Climate Change Adaptation Center

Article 13 of the Act encourages the establishment of Local Climate Change Adaptation Centers in prefectures and municipalities in order to collect, organize, and analyze information on the impact of climate change and adaptation measures to strengthen the capacity of local adaptation.

Local Climate Change Adaptation Centers can be set up in any appropriate organization according to the specific conditions of each local government. Currently, 61% of the centers are hosted by research institutes, followed by local governments (25%), universities (7%) and others (7%).

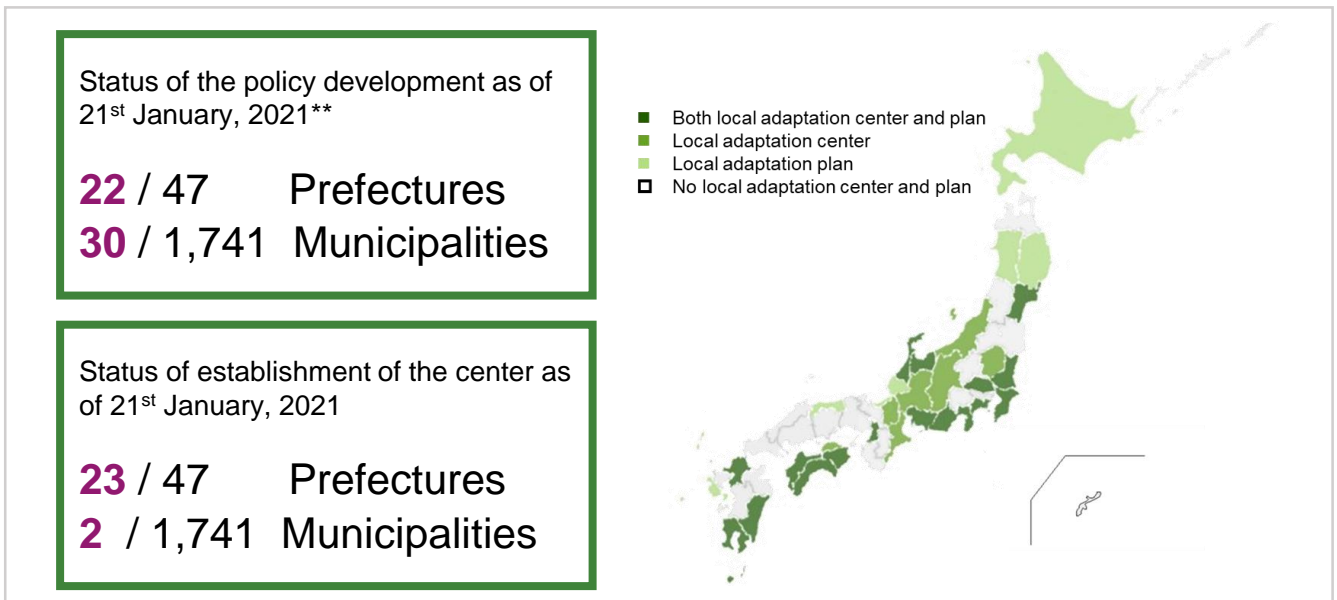


Figure 1. Prefectures with local adaptation center and/or local adaptation plan in Japan.

* The local climate change adaptation plans and centers can be established jointly with other prefectures and municipalities in order to reduce the burden on local governments and improve administrative efficiency. No prefecture or municipality has established a joint plan or joint center yet.

** The number is counted once the adaptation plan is officially declared as the local government policy formulated under the national Act.

Regional Councils on Climate Change Adaptation

Article 14 of the Act stipulates that regional cooperation should be promoted to strengthen adaptation measures among local governments that have similar climate conditions and strong administrative ties. Local stakeholders established Regional Councils on Climate Change Adaptation as a conference body of Regional Adaptation Consortium Project jointly supported by three ministries (Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism), which concluded its efforts after three years (FY2017-FY2019). In this project, the whole country was divided into seven blocks (nationwide, Hokkaido-Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku-Shikoku, and Kyushu-Okinawa), and impacts of climate change and adaptation options were investigated according to the needs of each region. Raising public awareness on climate change impacts to local stakeholders and residents was another outcome of this consortium. While the consortium was not open to the public, the outcome was posted on A-PLAT. From 2020, a new project started as a successor of the Regional Adaptation Consortium Project to develop regional action plans for adaptation.

Public Participatory Approach

The Government of Japan has started a program to collect information related to climate change and adaptation with public participation in 2019 considering Article 6 of the Act. Five prefectures participated in this program in FY2019 and new efforts have begun in FY2020 with additional three prefectures and a city. These efforts are expected to further localize actions for adaptation.

Climate Change Adaptation Information Platform (A-PLAT)

Based on “Adaptation Plan”, a cabinet decision in 2018, the National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) supports local adaptation through A-PLAT, which takes crucial role in Article 11 of the Act. The following services are currently provided online. NIES also provides training and technical advice to individual local governments and other bodies upon request.



A-PLAT

気候変動適応情報プラットフォーム
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION INFORMATION PLATFORM

Table1. NIES's supports for local governments provided through A-PLAT

1. Collect and organize scientific knowledge	2. Create local adaptation plans and measures	3. Raise public awareness and provide information to stakeholders	4. Manage local climate change adaptation centers
Provide the references and information for appropriate access and collection of data such as climate projection data.	Introducing examples of preparatory survey for local adaptation plans conducted by prefectures and municipalities.	Provide materials useful to inform local residents and private sectors on adaptation such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available lectures and formats of presentation • Pictures and illustration 	Providing information required for managing the local adaptation center such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Format of broacher introducing local adaptation centers • Tools to create website • FAQs