

# Project Study on the Effective Countermeasures against Earthquake and Tsunami Disasters

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## *Reconstruction Design Council Recommends Means of Rebuilding Northeastern Japan Areas Hit by Disasters*

The Reconstruction Design Council, an advisory panel to Prime Minister Naoto Kan, submitted a report on a set of recommendations on June 25 blueprinting how to rebuild areas in northeastern Japan devastated by the March 11 earthquake and tsunami.



Following is a summary of the briefing held for foreign press. (\*1)

### 1. Overview of Recommendations

The Council was set up under a cabinet decision on April 11, and met 12 times during the 75-day period that followed.



The Council obtained a firm legal base on June 24, as the basic act on Great East Japan Earthquake Reconstruction passed the National Diet.

Japan received assistance on an unprecedented scale from around the world. Members of the Council, who are very appreciative of the global assistance, had intended to write a report envisioning reconstruction both responsive to the goodwill of the world and open to global participation.



### 2. Key Points of Report (\*2)

#### *(1) Concept of "Disaster Reduction" (See (2) of Chapter 1 of the Reference)*

The Council introduced the idea of "disaster reduction," which calls for a fundamental change in the disaster-related policymaking in Japan which had been based on the concept of disaster prevention. The new policy is designed to prevent ordinary disasters and further to take new measures for extraordinary disasters too big to prevent. The recommendations also include controlled use of land to avoid living in areas vulnerable to tsunami.

**(2) Municipality-led reconstruction (See (6) of Chapter 1 of the Reference)**

The report defines the basic concept of having cities, towns and villages take initiatives in reconstruction.

**(3) Legal Framework to Address Tsunami Disaster (See (7) of Chapter 1 of the Reference)**

The report calls for the introduction of a new legal framework to deal with the last tsunami disaster as well as tsunami anticipated in future. Moreover, it proposes that administrative procedures be simplified and made into a one-stop process at the time of disaster.

**(4) Rehabilitation of Agriculture & Fisheries (See (5) of Chapter 2 of the Reference)**

The report recommends measures to rehabilitate agriculture and fisheries as new competitive industries provided that local communities agree to accept the measures.

**(5) Renewable Energy (See (6) of Chapter 2 of the Reference)**

The report urges rigorous promotion of the use of renewable energy by experimentally introducing a framework for the efficient and prompt installation of new energy systems.

**(6) Stabilization of Electric Power Supply (See (2) of Chapter 4 of the Reference)**

The report urges the stabilization of Japan's power supply by next year at the latest.

**(7) Towards Recovery from Nuclear Disaster (See Chapter 3 of the Reference)**

Dr. Ikoibe, the chairman of the Council emphasized that this part of the report is of a special nature, and what is important is the manifestation of strong resolve to continue supporting reconstruction there

**(8) Open Reconstruction (See Chapter 4 of the Reference)**

The report calls for post-disaster reconstruction that is open to the world, welcoming the foreign countries to join in the reconstruction.

### 3. Funding for Reconstruction

Dr. Iokibe explained his views on funding for reconstruction and the usage of relief money as follows: government bonds for the private sector to purchase which will be paid back, through taxation; raising donations; and investment.

### 4. Time Frame for Implementing Recommendations

According to Dr. Iio, the Chairman of the study group, upon receiving the report the Government will come up with its basic policy by the end of July. Basic work on a full-scale supplementary budget and necessary legislation is expected to be completed by this autumn and put into place. Rubble will be removed in parallel with reconstruction work and expected to be finished in two years. Temporary residential houses still have some difficult problems, but they will be resolved as much as possible in three years. It is the Council's fundamental thinking to finish basic reconstruction in five to six years, including restoration of the industrial infrastructure.

#### References:

\*1: This document is summarized based on the announcement made on July 12th 2011 by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in its website. For more detail, please refer to the following website:

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/jfpu/2011/7/0712.html>

\*2: This section is summed up according to a report to a Prime Minister of the Reconstruction Council, titled "Towards Reconstruction -Hope beyond the Disaster" The document will be found in the following website:

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/jfpu/2011/7/pdfs/0712.pdf>