

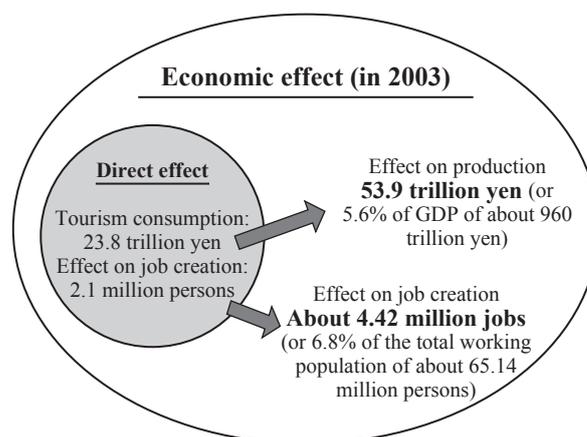
Chapter 2: Making Japan a Tourism-based Country; A beautiful country

[Significance of and developments in Japan Tourism initiative]

Tourism provides a breath of life and comfort, adding color to people's lives. And it has many other important roles: stimulating the national economy, promoting exchanges among people, revitalizing regions and communities by promoting local industries and creating jobs, promoting international friendship, and contributing to world peace.

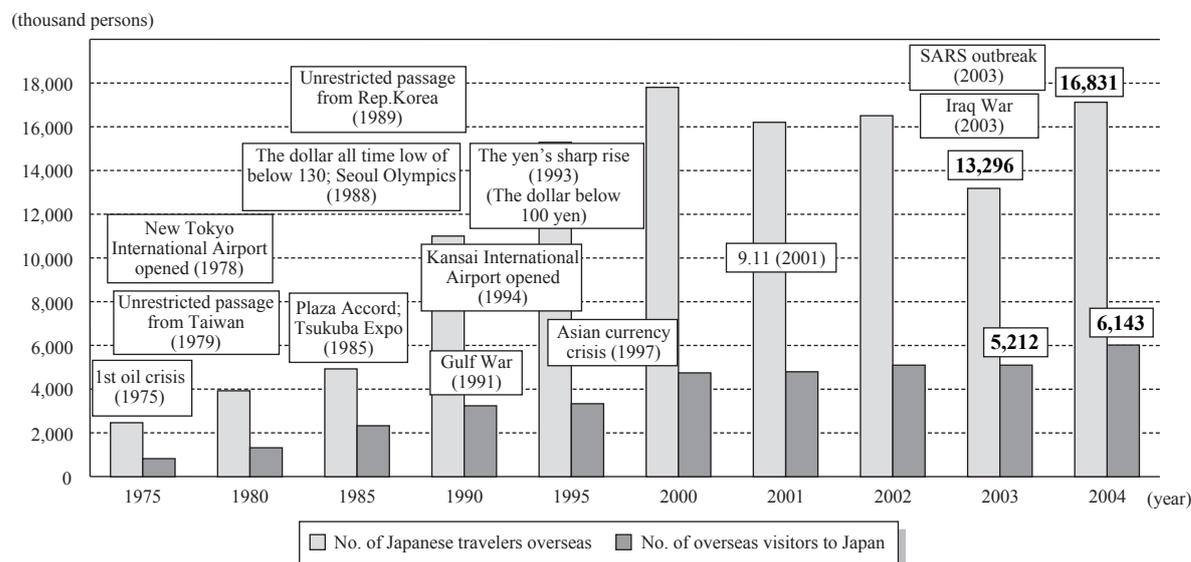
In his general policy speech on the 156th session of the Diet, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced the government target of doubling the annual number of visitors to Japan from other countries up to 10 million by 2010. In April 2003, the Japan Tourism Advisory Council released a report that calls for "nation-building that provides a good living habitat and a good place to visit." This led to the formulation of the Japan Tourism Action Plan in July and the creation of the post of cabinet minister in charge of tourism promotion in September. In May 2004, the Japan Tourism promotion strategy council held the first meeting. This expert council released a report in November.

< Contribution of tourism consumption to Japan's economy (in 2003) >



The year 2004 saw a record number of overseas visitors to Japan, estimated some 6.14 million, or an increase of 17.9% from the previous year. This indicates that the Visit Japan Campaign began to pay off.

< Trend in the number of Japanese travelers overseas and visitor arrivals to Japan >



Notes: 1. "The number of overseas visitors to Japan" represents the number of foreign nationals who entered Japan in the Ministry of Justice's statistics minus that of those residing in Japan plus that of foreign nationals who landed on Japan temporarily.

2. Both "No. of Japanese travelers overseas" and "No. of overseas visitors to Japan" for 2004 are estimates.

Source: Compiled from data from the Ministry of Justice and others.

[Aiming to double the number of overseas visitors]

○Promoting the Visit Japan Campaign, etc.

Japan continued to mount the Visit Japan Campaign, a joint strategic drive among the central and local governments and the private sector to lure tourists from abroad. A number of measures were taken during 2004, with priority given to Rep.Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the U.S., the U.K., Germany and France. Among such measures were: promotion by the prime minister himself; public relations through foreign media; the appointment of “tourism promotion ambassadors”; and the launch of an intensive promotion campaign at home and abroad (“YOKOSO JAPAN WEEKS” [February 5-20, 2005]).

To further promote tourism exchanges with other countries, Japan holds bilateral consultations with countries that have close relationships with Japan in the tourism sector.

○Improving the domestic environment for overseas visitors to Japan

A number of arrangements were made to welcome tourists from abroad. Among them are: developing “International Tourism Theme Areas”; numbering train stations and taking other steps to improve access to train and bus services; promoting oceangoing cruise; improving interpreter-guide services that communicate the charms of Japan more accurately and appropriately; providing tourist information in several languages with the help of IT; developing guidelines on how to and what to post information on signposts, including the use of foreign languages. In addition, efforts have been made to reduce costs of traveling Japan.

[Improving the tourism environment for the people]

MLIT implements measures to ensure safe and comfortable traveling. Such measures include encouraging the public to take more holidays, especially in off-seasons, to promote extended-stay tours.

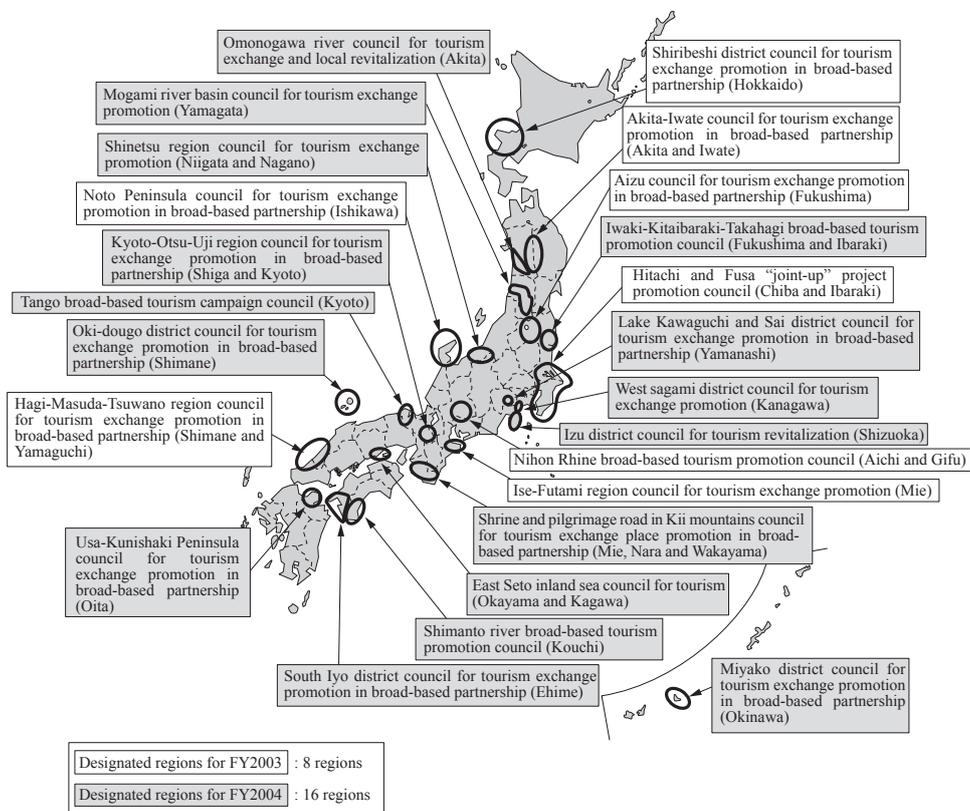
[Developing attractive tourism and exchange zones]

○Enhancing the charms of tourist resorts

MLIT is pushing ahead with the model project for the formation of Tourism Exchange Areas. This project is designed to provide integrated support to selected local initiatives aimed at promoting tourism that builds on local characteristics. Such support addresses both physical and non-physical aspects. For FY2004, MLIT selected 16 regions and communities. In addition, the ministry drafted a bill designed to promote the development of internationally competitive tourist resorts. The bill was submitted to the Diet.

MLIT also opened “tourism charisma school” to develop human resources that can play a pivotal role in revitalizing resort areas.

<Map of designated regions of the model project for the formation of Tourism Exchange Areas for FY 2003 and 2004>



○Development of tourism resources that capitalizes on the natural environment

MLIT is taking the initiative to promote: cycle tourism that makes it possible to enjoy the local charms while cycling at a comfortable pace; the development of value-added walking trails; the utilization of waterfront resources; and river tourism.

<Canoe touring along Teshio River in Hokkaido>



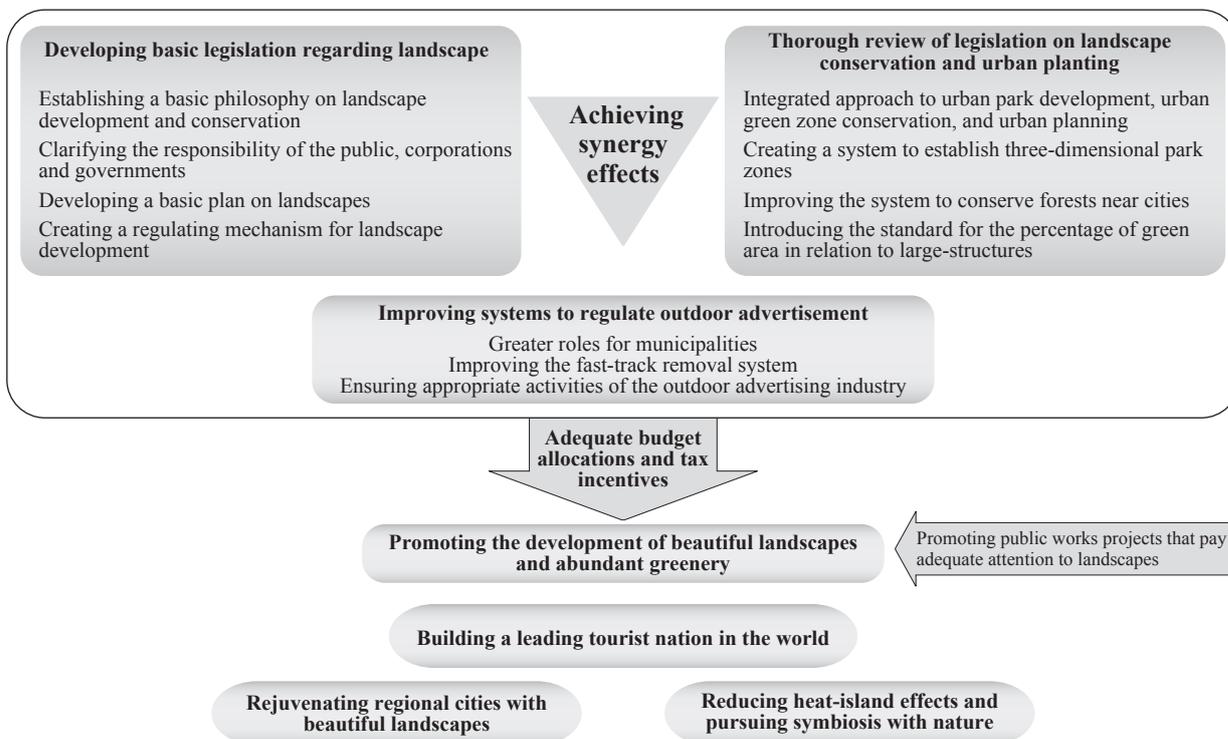
[A beautiful country]

○Framework for developing good landscapes

In December 2004, the “Three Laws on Landscape and Greenery”—a set of three laws related to landscape conservation and urban planting—were partly put in force. These three laws are designed to support the development of good landscapes nationwide in an integrated and systematic manner. Of the three, the Landscape Law is the nation’s first comprehensive law on landscapes.

To promote infrastructure development that pays adequate attention to landscapes, MLIT is piloting a landscape assessment system for some of the projects under the ministry’s direct jurisdiction or management.

<Development of the “Three Laws on Landscape and Greenery” designed to realize beautiful landscapes and abundant greenery>

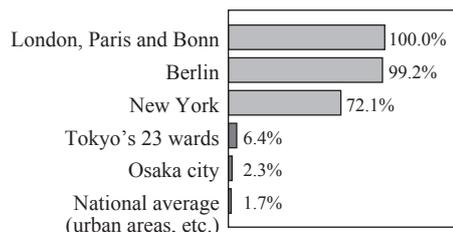


○Development of attractive landscapes the public can be proud of

As a matter of principle, MLIT ensures that projects under its jurisdiction contribute to landscape development. During 2004, the ministry formulated and announced landscape development guidelines for projects for construction of government buildings and those for navigation aids.

MLIT is also implementing the plan to dispense with power poles for 2004-2008, which was drawn up in April 2004.

< **Percentage of underground power cables in major cities—international comparison** >



Notes: 1. The percentages for the cities in other countries are as of 1977 (on a cable length basis; data from the Federation of Electric Power Companies)

2. The percentages for Japan are as of March 2004 (on a road length basis; data from MLIT)

Source: MLIT