

CLAIR

Fact Sheet

Local autonomy in Japan: Examples of advanced policies

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Area	Administrative and financial reform	Prefecture	Gunma Prefecture
Title	Promotion of transfer of authority to municipal governments		
Measure/ Project name	Gunma New Plan for Transfer of Authority		
Details	<p>[Prefecture's basic policy on transfer of authority]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal governments, administrative bodies most closely related to local residents, need to take the initiative in providing administrative services to deliver close-knit services, and create local communities with great individuality that reflect the intent of residents. To promote local administration in such a manner, Gunma Prefecture transfers as much authority as possible to municipalities, serves as their supporter in principle, and enhances partnership with them under the concept of "dialogue and cooperation" toward improvement of services for local residents. <p>[Outline of "Gunma New Plan for Transfer of Authority"]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised the "Gunma New Plan for Transfer of Authority" in May 2011 (to a three-year plan from 2011 to 2013). • The Plan was designed to actively promote transfer of authority with the aim of achieving local administration led by municipalities, enhancing cooperation between the Prefecture and municipalities and delivering higher-quality administration services in the age of decentralization. Based on this perspective, the Plan defines basic concepts and procedures for transfer of authority. <p><Three goals to be achieved through promoting transfer of authority and methods of achievement></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Resident-oriented administrative services [high-priority areas for transfer] 10 administrative works Placed higher priority for transferring authority on administrative works that contributed to improving resident convenience. (2) Further promotion of decentralization reform [comprehensive transfer] (4 lists) Transferred authority depending on the size of municipalities in a comprehensive manner in line with the efforts for decentralization reform. 		

	<p>(3) Support of self-motivated activities by municipalities to boost the regions [custom-made transfer] (211 administrative works stipulated by 127 laws and regulations)</p> <p>Promoted transfer based on voluntary and proactive choices by municipalities.</p>
Contact	Department of General Affairs, General Affairs Division
	soumuka@pref.gunma.lg.jp
Phone number	027-226-2028
Link	http://www.pref.gunma.jp/07/a0710407.html

Area	Administrative and financial reform	Prefecture	Hiroshima Prefecture
Title	Promotion of transfer of authority to municipal governments		
Measure/ Project name	Establishment of a framework for ensuring self-decision by municipalities		
Details	<p>1. Current situation and issues</p> <p>According to the “Decentralization Reform Promotion Plan” (2005-2009) developed in 2004, Hiroshima Prefecture had worked to establish underlying administrative bodies that are engaged in regional development in a comprehensive manner. With this concept, the Prefecture had transferred authority to municipalities regardless of their size, and successfully handed over 1,829 administrative works out of 2,446 to be transferred (74.8%) as of April 2011.</p> <p>After completion of the plan period, the Prefecture evaluated the result, and found some issues including insufficient mastery of the works of municipalities and the need for transfer depending on the circumstances of municipalities, while citizens appreciated the improved convenience.</p> <p>To address these issues, the Prefecture has provided municipalities with support for the administrative works transferred, and promoted further transfer of authority based on voluntary choices by municipalities (1,856 works transferred as of April 2013).</p> <p>2. The ideal state it is desired to achieve</p> <p>By promoting transfer of authority from the Prefecture to municipalities, municipalities and administrative bodies closely related to citizens create a unique local community with a sense of autonomy at their own discretion and under their own responsibility so that citizens can realize the effects of transfer of authority.</p> <p>3. Course of action</p> <p>(1) Provides municipalities with support for the administrative works transferred to improve their mastery of the works, and enhance the effects of transfer.</p> <p>(2) Transfers authority based on voluntary choices by municipalities to address the needs of citizens and regional issues which vary depending on the characteristics of regions.</p>		

	<p>4. Progress of project</p> <p>(1) Progress of transfer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administrative works to be transferred: 2,446 works (2005-2011) -> 2,393 works* (2012) * Reduced through review such as elimination of works. ○ Total number of administrative works transferred: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 works (2005) ⇔ 402 works (2006) ⇔ 1,075 works (2007) ⇔ 1,621 works (2008) ⇔ 1,766 works (2009) ⇔ 1,808 works (2010) ⇔ 1,829 works (2011) ⇔ 1,854 works (2012) ⇔ 1,856 works (2013) <p>(2) Typical examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishment of welfare offices by towns: Eight towns out of nine in the prefecture established welfare offices in April 2009. ○ Issue of physical disabilities certificates: 19 municipalities out of 21 (except an ordinance-designated city and major cities) since April 2010 ○ Acceptance of installation notices for septic tanks: All municipalities since April 2010 ○ Permission to divert farmland: All municipalities since April 2010 ○ Authority over road management: Transferred to Miyoshi City in October 2007 under the Road Act ○ Authority over management of harbors and fishery ports: Transferred the authority over Akitsu Port to Higashi Hiroshima City in April 2009 (the first case in Japan). Transferred the authority over a harbor and four fishery ports to Etajima City in April 2011. ○ Acceptance of application for and issue of passport: All municipalities since June 2007.
Contact	<p>Regional Policy Bureau, Municipal Administration and Finance Division</p> <p>chishichou@pref.hiroshima.lg.jp</p>
Phone number	082-513-2603
Link	<p>http://www.pref.hiroshima.jp/life/18/35/156/</p>

Area	Health and welfare/Declining birthrate and population aging	Prefecture	Oita Prefecture
Title	Promotion of home medical care programs		
Measure/ Project name	Project for securing and retaining nursing staff who support home medical care		
Details	<p>To support recuperating persons who want to receive medical care in their own town, this project aims to secure home medical care staff such as nurses, and enhance their abilities through training and developing a support scheme.</p> <p>1. Project cost 15,369,000 yen (the initial budget for FY2013)</p> <p>2. Implementing bodies Oita Prefecture, Oita University of Nursing and Health Sciences</p> <p>3. Scope of project</p> <p>(1) Program for training home-visit nurses (commissioned by the Prefecture to Oita Nursing Association) Trains home-visit nurses with high level of practical abilities by use of e-learning courses.</p> <p>a) Subsidizing fees for e-learning courses b) Holding training workshops for home-visit nurses</p> <p>(2) Program for improving retention of nursing staff such as at home-visit nursing stations (implemented by the Prefecture) Dispatching advisors such as certified home-visit nurses, and establishing a support scheme for home-visit nursing stations to improve staff retention.</p> <p>a) Establishing a program promotion review panel b) Implementing a model program for dispatch of advisers c) Holding a report meeting</p> <p>(3) Program for enhancing abilities of home medical care staff (implemented by Oita University of Nursing and Health Sciences) Subsidizes programs designed to enhance the abilities of home medical care staff such as certified home-visit nurses, and nurses working at medical facilities in the region.</p>		

	<p>a) Offering working-level training such as for certified nurses</p> <p>b) Providing simulators</p> <p>c) Preparing and offering DVDs on home medical care</p>
<p>Pictures</p>	<p>在宅医療が進んでいない</p> <p>①訪問看護師等の養成</p> <p>②訪問看護ステーション等看護職員への支援体制の整備</p> <p>③在宅医療従事者の資質向上</p> <p>在宅医療を支える看護職員の確保・定着</p> <p>在宅医療の推進、医療安全の確保</p> <p>病気になっても住み慣れた地域で暮らせる</p> <p>《方法》 アドバイザー派遣による研修や相談の体制整備 *アドバイザー:訪問看護認定看護師 全国333名中県内15名 (全国8位・九州1位)</p> <p>不安解消</p> <p>看護職員の定</p>
<p>Contact</p>	<p>Welfare and Health Department, Medical Policy Section</p> <p>a12620@pref.oita.lg.jp</p>
<p>Phone number</p>	<p>097-506-2654</p>
<p>Link</p>	

Area	Environment	Prefecture	Kanagawa Prefecture
Title	Widespread introduction of solar power generation systems at reasonable cost		
Measure/ Project name	Kanagawa Solar Bank System		
Details	<p>1. Intent and purposes</p> <p>Since 2011, Kanagawa Prefecture has promoted the “Kanagawa Smart Energy Concept” that promotes “energy creation,” “energy-saving” and “energy storage” in a comprehensive manner toward establishing a distributed energy system led by local communities. As part of the efforts for widespread introduction of solar power systems, a key measure for “energy creation,” the Prefecture has been committed to operation of a “Kanagawa Solar Bank System” since December 2011.</p> <p>2. Main features of the system</p> <p>This is the first approach among local governments in Japan that aims to ensure citizens can introduce residential photovoltaic (PV) systems at reasonable cost without any concerns through collaboration between the Prefecture, solar panel manufacturers, distributors and construction contractors.</p> <p>3. Overview of the system</p> <p>(1) Selection of installation plans</p> <p>The Prefecture calls for installation plans for residential PV systems from companies that want to participate in the Kanagawa Solar Bank System. The Prefecture evaluates the plans submitted for sales price, quantity to be offered, service area, sales and construction structure and after-sales support, and selects the plans to be registered in the system.</p> <p>(2) Establishment of “Kanagawa Solar Center”</p> <p>The Prefecture established the “Kanagawa Solar Center,” an organization in charge of replies to general inquiries about solar power systems, handling of inquiries about installation plans selected by the Prefecture, and acceptance of requests for quotes for installation on neutral ground. The Center offers these services under commission from the Prefecture.</p> <p>(3) Process from acceptance of request for quotes to installation of solar PV</p>		

Area	Environment	Prefecture	Osaka Prefecture
Title	Toward a metropolis where people can feel a gentle breeze rustling the leaves of the trees		
Measure/ Project name	Special zones for greenery campaign		
Details	<p>◆ Analysis of issues and goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Osaka needs to create an overwhelmingly attractive urban environment such as lush greenery to attract people, companies and investment, and achieve further growth. ○ But, as often said, “Osaka has little greenery”; the greenery coverage in Osaka ranks the worst in ordinance-designated cities. Osaka also ranks at the bottom in the evaluation of urban greenery conducted by the Mori Memorial Foundation. Furthermore, in a questionnaire targeted at citizens in the prefecture, only 1% of them answered “I see lush greenery in the cities”, and citizens feel there is almost no nature left in the cities. ○ In terms of environment, urban heat-island effects have worsened in Osaka. For example, the average temperature in August 2010 reached 30.8°C, higher than that in Naha, Okinawa, and Osaka was called “the hottest city in Japan.” ○ Osaka is still far from an attractive city in terms of urban dignity and environment. ○ Against such a background, the Prefecture developed a clear concept of “developing greenery to bring a cool, gentle breeze to make Osaka a more attractive city”. With this concept, the Prefecture has promoted efforts to create a “green environment that citizens can realize” in cooperation with companies and local communities in a variety of ways, and through deregulation of urban planning in such a way that citizens can feel benefits, not burdens. (The Prefecture developed various measures shifting from conventional, public-led greenery projects based on the viewpoint of suppliers of greenery services, such as regulation and subsidies including greening obligations for buildings and the subsidy system covering the entire Prefecture, to user-oriented projects led by companies and citizens such as deregulation, encouragement of unique services by companies, and community-wide activities). <p>◆ Details of the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Governor designated some public spaces including major roads and rivers, 		

and private land along them (within 100 m from both sides of the public space), as “special zones for a greenery campaign,” and gave higher priority to creation of a green environment. (The special zones will strive to achieve the Prefecture’s greenery goal three years ahead of the schedule).

○ The special zones were selected from radial roads and beltways forming an urban axis of Osaka, and major rivers based on a comprehensive judgment including low greenery coverage, high-priority areas for measures against urban heat-island effects, and designation as wide-area emergency traffic routes (focused on the disaster prevention function of trees).

○ The special zones are committed to:

(1) Preparing a greenery plan that handles public space such as roads and private land as a unit to promote greenery campaigns in an integrated manner. The special zones have promoted greenery campaigns by utilizing semi-public spaces where roads and private land are adjacent to each other.

⇒ Establishing the “greenery initiative in special zones for a greenery campaign,” a three-year high-priority project that supports planting in communities under the greenery plan. Companies offer trees to be planted, and communities provide support in management of street trees.

(2) Relaxing the standards for floor-area ratio and building-to-land ratio for buildings that have a certain level of “visibility” of greenery to facilitate greening in cities. The relaxation is applied to house owners who voluntarily select to meet the visibility criteria (the first approach in Japan).

(3) Granting preferential treatment unique to companies (preferential loans for houses with rich greenery, discount of greening materials and landscaping works, provision of trees to be planted in semi-public space free of charge, etc).

(4) Implementing measures against urban heat-island effects in cooperation with companies, for example, thermal barrier coating and rainwater storage tanks for sprinkling water.

(5) Promoting new greening programs with funding from the private sector (a demonstration project of turf parking lots conducted at the expense of the private sector, development of greenery facilities by raising funds through selling the naming-rights, etc.)

◆ Achievements of the project

○ Areas designated as special zones for greenery campaign: Approx. 200 km along 12 roads (as of May 2011)

⇒ Selected in consultation with 17 relevant municipalities.

⇒ Since 2011, August is designated as “Greenery and Breeze Month” to foster the

momentum of communities in greenery campaigns, and enhance the effects of designation as special zones. The Prefecture has started new projects such as events in which 700,000 citizens participated, the ownership system for street trees (“My trees system”), and “Medical checkup of towns,” a study on urban temperature in collaboration with a university.

- Tree-planting and maintenance projects based on greenery plans led by local communities: 41 areas (2011), 42 areas (2012)
- Review of zoning and development of district plans under the City Planning Act required for relaxing the standards for floor-area ratio and building-to-land ratio: Conducted in six cities.
 - * The criteria of greenery visibility are not compulsory. House owners who want to apply the relaxed standards select to meet them voluntarily.
 - * The relaxation of building-to-land ratio is applied to high-density residential areas. This is expected to encourage rebuilding of existing inadequate housing with a building-to-land ratio higher than the legal limit. The Prefecture also sets standards for fire resistance to enhance disaster prevention capabilities of houses through greenery and exterior wall material.
- Corporate sponsors: 155 companies (and organizations)
 - * The Prefecture has introduced a registration system for corporate sponsors of the greenery campaign since March 2012, and held events such as the “Greenery and Breeze Festival.”
- New greening programs with funding from the private sector: Constructed “Welcome Garden Shin Osaka (*Osaka Hana Byoubu*),” a public green space in front of JR Shin Osaka Station, by raising funds through selling naming rights to private companies without the use of public funds. The companies that participated in the construction project were selected through a voting open to station users, not a screening panel that is usually held in public works. Welcome Garden Shin Osaka has been open to the public since July 31, 2012.

Pictures




	Toward a metropolis where people can feel a gentle breeze rustling the leaves of the trees
Contact	Department of Environment, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, General Affairs Section, Policy Promotion Group
	FujimotoH@mbox.pref.osaka.lg.jp
Phone number	06-6210-9543
Link	http://www.pref.osaka.jp/kannosomu/midorinokazesokusin/index.html
	http://www.pref.osaka.jp/kannosomu/welcomegarden/index.html

Area	Environment	Prefecture	Fukuoka Prefecture
Title	Promotion of rare metals recycling		
Measure/ Project name	Rare metals recycling project		
Details	<p>[Objectives]</p> <p>This project aims to establish a cluster of the recycling industry, accumulate the seeds of research on rare metals extraction, and commercialize a recycling system with the purpose of utilizing the potential of rare metals, promoting progress of the recycling industry in Fukuoka, and establishing a recycling-oriented society.</p> <p>[Project outline]</p> <p>Toward commercialization of a rare metals recycling system, Fukuoka Prefecture has carried out a project to promote development of technologies for recycling rare metals from used products, and establishment of a collection system for small household appliances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Hosting an industry-government-academia liaison meeting <p>Since July 2008, Fukuoka Prefecture hosts a meeting where interested parties from industry, government and academia exchange opinions and information to work towards commercialization of rare metals recycling.</p> 2 Promoting joint research projects such as on rare metals extraction technologies <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Research on separation and extraction of tantalum and other rare metals from waste electronic equipment (from 2009 to 2010, a project funded by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, METI) (2) Joint research between industry, government and academia on rare earths recycling from waste fluorescent lamps (from 2010 to 2012) 3 Implementing model projects for collection of small household appliances <p>Considering that a stable and efficient collection system is needed to turn rare metals recycling into a successful business, Fukuoka Prefecture has implemented model projects since 2008. In addition, since 2011, the Prefecture has expanded the collection area for small appliances to other</p> 		

	<p>municipalities throughout the Kyushu region to conduct a regional model project. Through these projects, the Prefecture has studied the feasibility of waste collection across a wide area, the costs for collection, and legal issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A model project for collection of used small household appliances (a project funded by the Ministry of Environment, MOE, and METI) (from 2008 to 2010) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of boxes for collection: Omuta City (since January 2008) • Introduction of separate collection: Chikugo City (since September 2009), Oki Town (since August 2009) • Collection at event sites: Fukuoka City (in collaboration with home appliances retailers, etc.) (from 2009 to 2010) ○ A model project for wide-area collection of used small household appliances (a project funded by MOE) (from 2011) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection area: 30 municipalities (including 17 in Fukuoka) in the Kyushu region and others (as of March 2013)
<p>Pictures</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p>Opening event of the demonstration project on collection of used small household appliances</p>
<p>Contact</p>	<p>Department of Environmental Affairs, Recycling Society Promotion Section</p> <p>recycle@pref.fukuoka.lg.jp</p>
<p>Phone number</p>	<p>092-643-3381</p>
<p>Link</p>	<p></p>


Area	Environment	Prefecture	Kumamoto Prefecture
Title	Effective use of biomass		
Measure/ Project name	Promotion of the use of biomass		
Details	<p>1. Objectives Promoting the use of biomass is expected to bring about a variety of benefits including creating a recycling-oriented society, preventing global warming, creating new industries in harmony with the environment and thereby job opportunities, and invigorating the agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry and villages. In light of this, Kumamoto Prefecture actively promotes the use of biomass by taking advantage of the thriving agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry and abundant biomass resources in the prefecture.</p> <p>2. Outline According to the “Kumamoto Biomass Utilization Promotion Program” developed in 2011, Kumamoto Prefecture supports efforts for information dissemination and awareness-building about the use of biomass, technological development, and commercialization in partnership with relevant sections in the Prefecture, municipalities, companies and universities:</p> <p>(1) Scheme to promote the project “Biomass Utilization Promotion Committee” is established in the Prefecture to promote measures for effective use of biomass in a comprehensive and smooth manner.</p> <p>(2) Scope of project</p> <p>1) Research Workshops are held in which municipalities, companies and NPOs participate to promote understanding and efforts of relevant parties.</p> <p>2) Support for commercialization An advisor is dispatched who provides technical expertise and instructions on the use of biomass in response to requests from municipalities and companies.</p>		

Pictures	 <p data-bbox="370 689 794 728">Biomass Center in Yamaga City</p>
Contact	Environmental Policy Promotion Division kankyourikken@pref.kumamoto.lg.jp
Phone number	096-333-2264
Link	http://www.pref.kumamoto.jp/site/bio-index/

Area	Disaster preparedness and crisis management	Prefecture	Aomori Prefecture
Title	River levels information delivery system by use of mobile messaging services		
Measure/ Project name	Advance warning of flood and evacuation (commonly called “ <i>oshirase</i> mail”)		
Details	<p>Aomori Prefecture had provided citizens with information on rainfall and river levels via the Internet and the mobile website. However, recently, more people have suffered from disasters because of a delay in receiving disaster information and evacuation advice. Accordingly, the Prefecture developed a system that sends an e-mail to users automatically via mobile phones when river levels reach the alarm level, and started operation of the service in June 2006.</p> <p>Users who receive a message can get ready and be prepared for evacuation in sufficient time. This allows them to evacuate promptly in the event that an evacuation advisory is issued.</p> <p>This service is helpful particularly for the elderly and children who take time for evacuation, families with people with disabilities who need support in the event of disasters, and operators of nursing care homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of rivers and observatories covered by the messaging service: 79 rivers, 112 observatories 		
Pictures	 <p>The image contains two parts. On the left is a colorful flowchart titled '洪水情報をキャッチ!!' (Catch flood information!!) with the subtitle 'おしらせメールで早めの避難準備' (Early evacuation preparation with oshirase mail). It shows a process from '観測所から水位データが送信される' (Water level data is transmitted from the observatory) to 'メール配信システムが自動的にメールを送信' (The mail distribution system automatically sends mail) and finally '住民が避難準備を完了' (Residents complete evacuation preparation). On the right is a map of Aomori Prefecture with numerous points indicating river levels and observatories.</p> <p>Conceptual drawing of the system</p>		

Contact	Department of Land and Infrastructure, River and Landslide Control Section
	kasensabo@pref.aomori.lg.jp
Phone number	017-734-9662
Link	http://www.pref.aomori.lg.jp/life/bosai/osirase-mail.html

Area	Disaster preparedness and crisis management	Prefecture	Shiga Prefecture
Title	Protection of people and regions from flood		
Measure/ Project name	Flood control measures in Shiga Prefecture		
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Current situation and issues In addition to a growing number of floods nationwide, there is a concern about the possibility that floods may cause more devastating damage in the near future with climate change. Furthermore, a problem of a decline in regional capabilities to prevent disasters due to lifestyle changes has surfaced. Against such a background, there is an urgent need to enhance flood control measures taken by different bodies in different fields. ● Flood control in Shiga Prefecture To protect people’s lives and minimize devastating damage from any floods, the Prefecture promotes damage mitigation measures that combine stormwater retention (“storage”) in basins in residential areas (floodplains), measures on floodplains (“prevention”), and enhancement of regional capabilities to prevent disasters (“preparation”), in addition to existing measures such as flood control facilities and basin development. The entire local community including the administration and citizens needs to make a concerted effort to promote these measures in the form of cooperative flood control. Such efforts require both public support based on a partnership between the Prefecture and municipalities, and mutual/self-support by citizens through their participation in tangible and intangible ways. ● Prefecture’s policy on flood control (1) Presenting a “Flood Map” illustrating the results of flood simulation of the entire prefecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assesses the risk of flood damage based on safety at individual locations where people live (safety in residential areas, meaning floodplains), not on that at flood control facilities (rivers, etc). • Indicates safety in residential areas by “a degree of damage and a probability of occurrence” of individual locations in floodplains. Specifically, the assessment is based on a simulation not only of flood in large rivers, but also of that in small-and-medium sized rivers. • Shares information on “safety in residential areas” with citizens to promote 		

	<p>flood control measures that integrate public, mutual and self-support.</p> <p>(2) Drawing up a “plan to develop flood-resistant regions”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divides the prefecture into six regions, and individually establishes an organization where administrative bodies, local citizens and relevant parties discuss regional issues (“Committee on Development of Flood-Resistant Region”). • For regions with a low level of safety in residential areas, the Committee develops a regional development plan to prevent flood damage. <p>(3) Developing regions in consideration of flood risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes enactment of ordinances on land use and buildings for areas where houses may be submerged or washed away by flood, resulting in damage to people, or for those where inundation above floor level occurs frequently. <p>(4) Enhancing the abilities of citizens to prevent disasters in regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding symposiums and forums, • Offering lectures in areas at high risk of floods, • Offering lectures at elementary schools located in areas at high risk of floods, • Holding evacuation workshops such as by use of the River Disaster Imagination Game (R-DIG), and, • Collecting literature on past floods, organizing tacit knowledge obtained from a field hearing from victims into a database, and posting such information on the Prefecture website.
<p>Pictures</p>	 <p>A hazard map prepared in a lecture offered at an elementary school</p>
<p>Contact</p>	<p>Shiga Prefecture, Department of Public Works and Transportation, Land and Infrastructure, Flood Management Office</p> <p>ryuiki@pref.shiga.lg.jp</p>

Phone number	077-528-4290
Link	http://www.pref.shiga.lg.jp/h/ryuiki/