

Partial Revision of the Basic Plan on Water Cycle

The secretariat of the Headquarters for Water-Cycle
Policy, Cabinet Secretariat

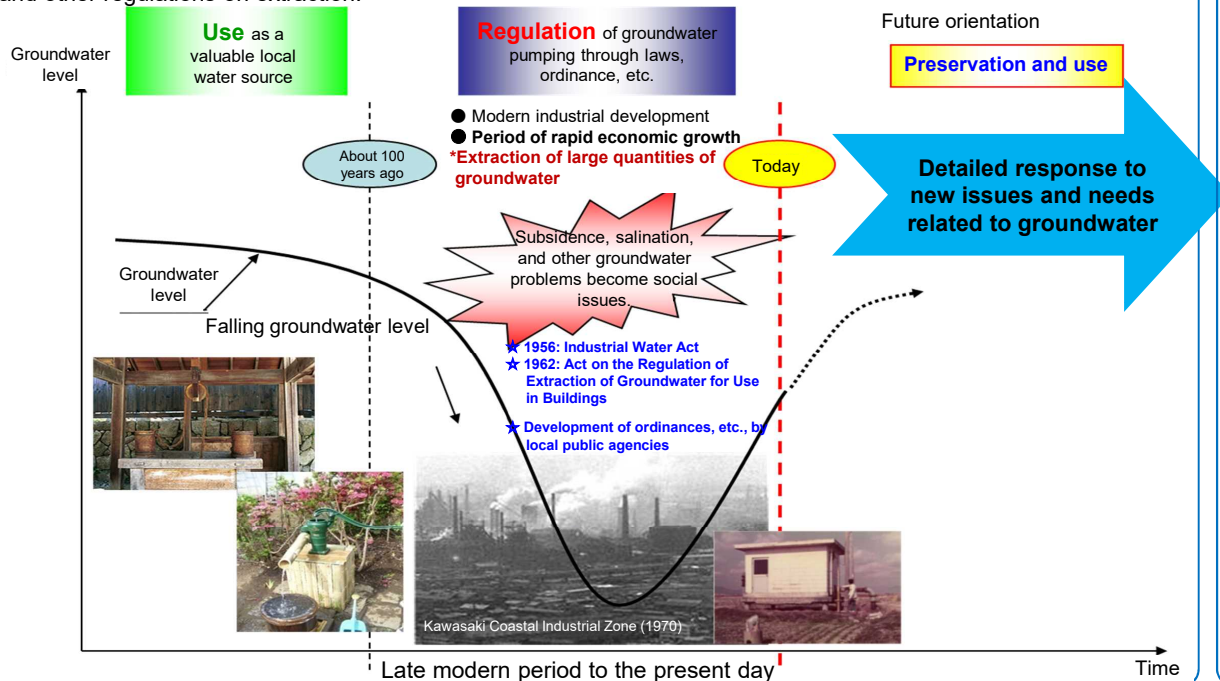


Water Cycle Logo

Background (Amendment of the Basic Act on Water Cycle)

Chronology of groundwater issues

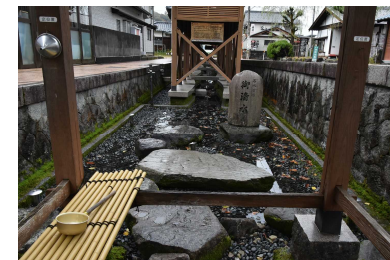
Large-scale land subsidence caused by excessive extraction of groundwater slows as a result of laws, ordinances, and other regulations on extraction.



New groundwater trends

Continuing issues

Although widespread subsidence and groundwater depletion have slowed, excessive use, contamination, and other groundwater-related issues continue to occur.



Drying up of spring water
Source: Ono City

Maintenance/restoration of groundwater (tourist areas, specialty products)

Maintenance/restoration of groundwater in areas where water is a tourism resource



Bottles, logo, and store display of "Hadano Meisui" water

Source: Website of Ono City Tourist Association

Challenges facing local public agencies

1. Clarifying the behavior of groundwater and understanding the water balance—which are fundamental factors to consider when establishing or strengthening restrictions—are difficult.
2. Even when local public agencies want to establish a groundwater council for consensus building or to enact or revise an ordinance, they lack the necessary information and know-how, which hinders consensus building and rulemaking in the community.

<Main amendment points>

○ Establishment of regulations concerning responsibilities

Clarification that "measures for proper groundwater preservation and use" are included in the responsibilities of the national and local public agencies, and that cooperation with those measures is a responsibility of businesses and the public

○ Addition of stipulations concerning the "proper groundwater preservation and use" in basic measures

Addition of stipulations requiring the national government and local public agencies to make efforts to implement the following measures (1) to (3) and other necessary measures to promote groundwater management*

- (1) Collection, organization, analysis, announcement, and preservation of information concerning groundwater
- (2) Establishment of councils concerning groundwater preservation and use
- (3) Restrictions on extraction of groundwater

A resolution that included the following was attached during deliberations on the amended act by the Committee on Land and Transport of both the House of Representatives and House of Councilors.

The necessity of revising the Basic Plan on Water Cycle will be studied based on the amended act.

*Efforts to ascertain, analyze, and visualize the actual states of groundwater use and behavior, and to form and implement agreements in the community with respect to the preservation of water volumes and water quality, recharge, extraction, and other factors.

Partial Revision of the Basic Plan on Water Cycle (Main Points and Outline)

Main Revisions

- ❑ The revision is a partial revision taking effect within the period of the current plan (2020-2024).
- ❑ It establishes and arranges items for groundwater-related matters contained in the current plan in line with the intent of the Basic Act on Water Cycle's June 2021 amendment and presents them as a comprehensive plan for groundwater.
- ❑ It also includes information on initiatives that have progressed following the current plan's formulation.

Revision Outline

Introduction and Part 1 (Basic policies)

- Additions and revisions to groundwater-related notations in relevant sections.
- Positioning of “proper groundwater preservation and use” as a priority within river basin management to further promote groundwater management.

Part 2 (Water-cycle-related measures to be taken comprehensively and systematically by the Japanese government)

- Establishment of “Proper groundwater preservation and use” as a new item.
- Description of measures in line with the Act's provisions.

The composition of “proper groundwater preservation and use”

Introduction → Establishment of a groundwater management promotion platform, etc.

(1) Collection, organization, analysis, announcement, and preservation of information concerning groundwater

→ Development of a groundwater database, etc.

(2) Use of councils, etc., concerning proper groundwater preservation and use

(3) Restrictions on extraction of groundwater and other necessary measures

Part 3 (What is needed to promote water-cycle-related measures comprehensively and systematically)

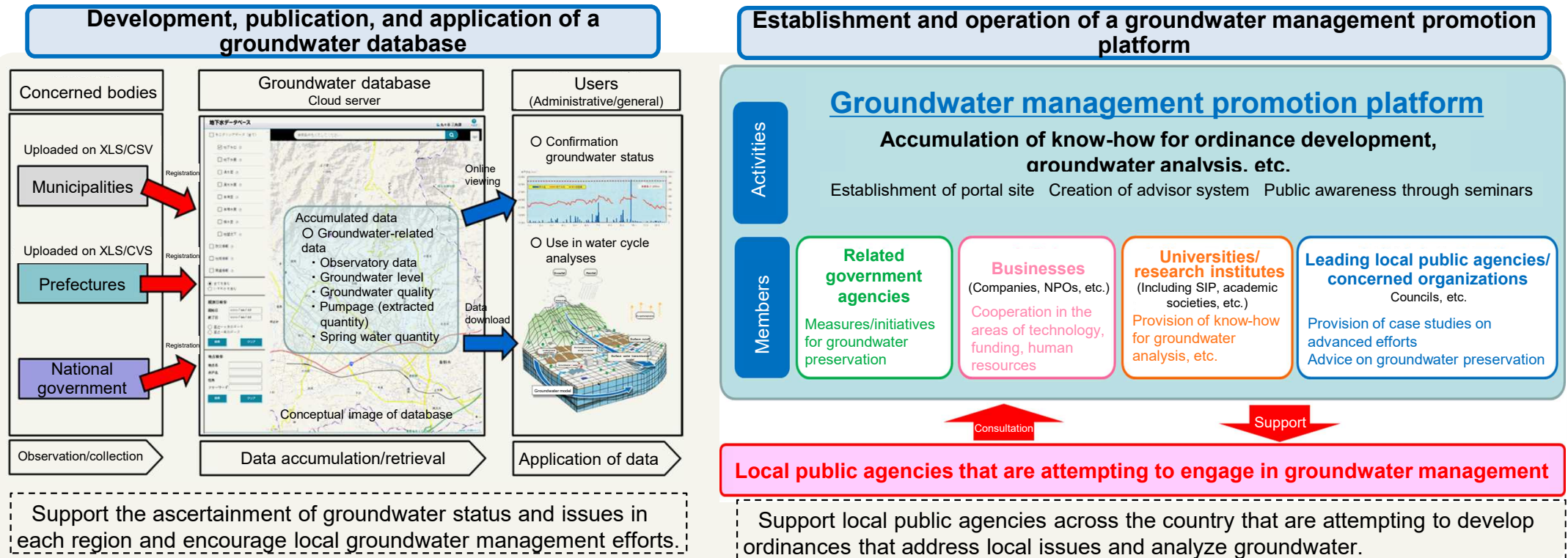
- Additions and revisions to the descriptions of responsibilities of the national government, local public agencies, businesses, and members of the public based on the amended Act.

Progress made by actions following the current plan's formulation (renewable energy and river basin flood control)

- Addition/revision of notations concerning the following actions that progressed since the Basic Plan on Water Cycle's previous revision:
 1. Promotion of the introduction of renewable energy in water cycle policies based on Japan's aim to achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050
 2. Promotion of initiatives based on the full enforcement of the Acts related to Disaster Resilience and Sustainability by All (November 2021)

Partial Revision of the Basic Plan on Water Cycle: Main Content

1. Main initiatives for further promoting groundwater management (actions newly incorporated into the plan)



- Promotion of research on clarification of the actual groundwater status through the use of emergency groundwater usage systems and other means
- Mutual cooperation with parties concerned with land use, etc., in the operation of the groundwater councils
- Provision information effective in the preparation of ordinances
- Publicity/awareness raising concerning groundwater
- Promotion of initiatives to reduce nitrogen burdens in areas where groundwater contamination by nitrate nitrogen, etc., has occurred
- Promotion of use of geothermal heat (use of groundwater heat) that contributes to decarbonization, etc.

- Resolutions concerning the proposed partial amendment of the Basic Act on the Water Cycle*
- Promote the development of a groundwater database for the consolidation and mutual use of observation data from local public agencies to promote groundwater management.
- Provide necessary advice and other support to local public agencies for the preparation of ordinances, etc.

*Overview of relevant sections

2. Main details of revisions on initiatives in progress

<Promotion of the introduction of renewable energy in water cycle measures>

Promotion of the introduction of various forms of renewable energy associated with the water cycle based on the Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures, etc.

<River basin flood control>

Appropriate adaptation of notations based on the intent of the Acts related to Disaster Resilience and Sustainability by All, which brought into full enforcement in November 2021, and the fact that River Basin Disaster Resilience and Sustainability by All is a part of water cycle policies