

A light blue silhouette map of the island of Hokkaido is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the page, partially overlapping the title text.

# The Hokkaido Comprehensive Development Plan



# Overview of the Hokkaido Comprehensive Development Plan

Planning period: 10 years from FY2016 to FY2025

## Chapter 1 Significance of the plan

### Significance of the new Hokkaido Comprehensive Development Plan

- **Fundamental significance of developing Hokkaido:** To take advantage of Hokkaido's resources and characteristics to resolve issues of Japan.
- A concern lies on rapidly decreasing and aging population in Hokkaido, which would impede the maintenance of the "Production Space," rural regions providing Hokkaido's strengths, i.e., food and nature, and contributing to the whole country.
- The next 10 years would be a critical period about the **survival of communities across Hokkaido.**
- At the same time, the coming years would give the region chances of a breakthrough, since they entail notable events such as the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the opening of Hokkaido Shinkansen (bullet train), and the extension of the highway network to the eastern Hokkaido.

### Today's issues of Japan

Arrival of a society with seriously decreasing and aging population

Further progress in globalization and changes in the international situation

Imminent dangers of large-scale disasters and global environment issues



## Chapter 2 Objectives of the plan

**Motto: Hokkaido with worldwide perspectives**

**Vision: Formation of a creative region that delivers globally appreciated values, in view of 2050**

### The 3 objectives

Regional society where individuals shine

Industries with global perspectives

Resilient and sustainable land

## Chapter 3 Fundamental principles for implementing the plan

### Basic concepts for the measures of the plan

Forming and maintaining a Hokkaido model of regional structures

Fostering a climate of creativity in Hokkaido

### Cross-cutting measures for effective implementation of the plan

Formation of multi-layered/  
theme-specific platforms

Pioneering and proactive  
innovation

Strategic improvement  
of infrastructures

Effective management of  
the plan

## Chapter 4 Primary measures in the plan



Establishment of the regional society where individuals shine

Promotion of industries from global perspectives

Formation of resilient and sustainable land

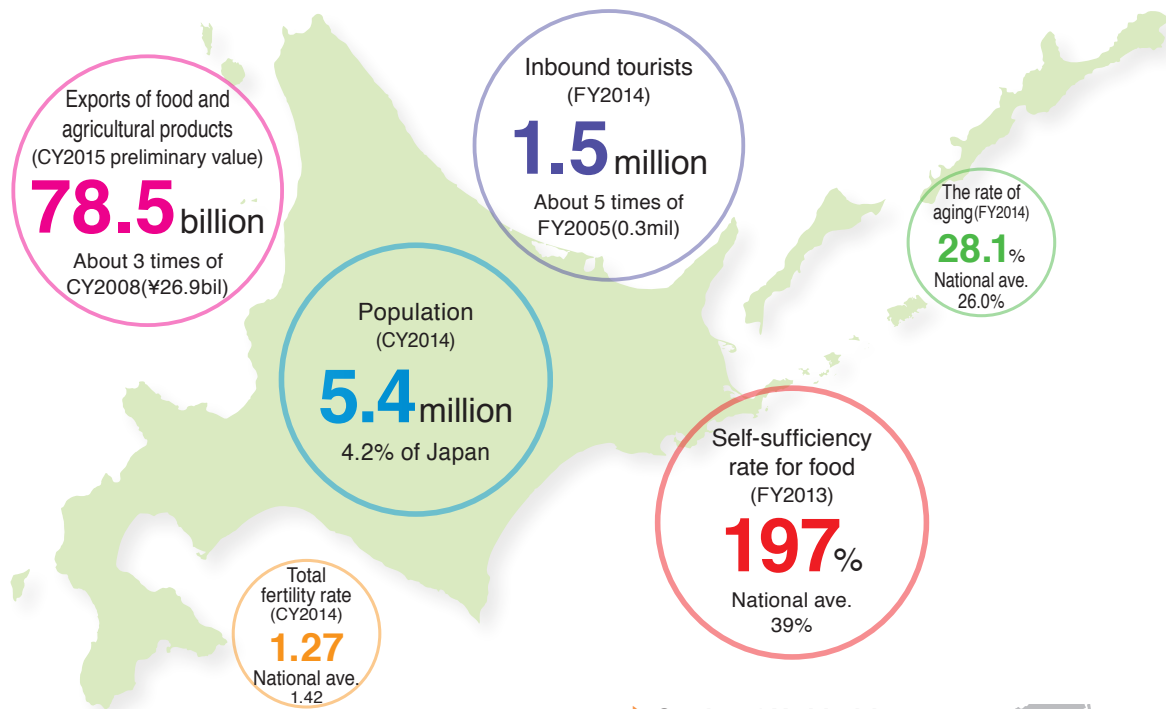
- (1) Maintaining and improving the conditions for long-term living and social interactions towards the formation and maintenance of a Hokkaido model of regional structures
- (2) Securing a diversity and influx of human resources for fostering a climate of creativity in Hokkaido
- (3) Developing the Region neighboring the Northern Territories
- (4) Promoting Ainu culture

- (1) Promoting agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industries and food industries
- (2) Creating world-class tourist destinations
- (3) Fostering industries with utilizing the regions' strengths

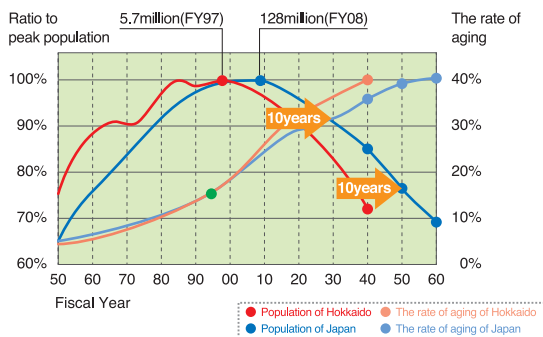
- (1) Establishing a sustainable regional society in harmony with a bountiful nature
- (2) Creating safe and secure infrastructures and contributions to building national resilience

# Facts and Features

- Hokkaido contributes as the largest food supply base of Japan and one of the most popular destinations of Japan among foreign tourists.
- Population in Hokkaido peaked out and is declining a decade ahead of the whole country.



## ► Change of the population and aging rate



## ► Scale of Hokkaido



## Vision of the plan

### ■ Motto: “Hokkaido with worldwide perspectives”

This is a message for people in Hokkaido and others, intended to inspire them to embark upon a new era with worldwide perspectives, competing and contributing globally.

### ■ Vision: “Formation of a creative region that delivers globally appreciated values”

Creativity is the key concept in the coming period. The Plan will foster a climate of creativity by diverse individuals in Hokkaido.

## Strategy of the new Plan

### Hokkaido’s strengths: “food” & “tourism”

Even in the era of shrinking population, these strengths could shine on a global arena, because

- Hokkaido has a potential to compete worldwide in these sectors; and
- Asian and global markets in these sectors are growing.

Maintaining the “Production Space”, we will bring into reality the motto “Hokkaido with worldwide perspectives”.

- Forming and maintaining a Hokkaido-model of regional structures
- Fostering a climate of creativity in Hokkaido



# Forming and maintaining a Hokkaido-model of regional structures

Hokkaido's major strengths, i.e. food, nature, and tourism, depend on resources and people sparsely distributed across the region, especially scattered around very large farm lands.

To acknowledge and emphasize the significance of such areas of a source of the region's strengths, the Plan call them "Production Space."

## Characteristics of the "Production Space" in Hokkaido

### (1) Widely and sparsely distributed population

In a typical farming village in Hokkaido (the left), farm houses are sparsely distributed, surrounding much larger farm lands, compared with the case of Honshu (the right).



[Kamishihoro in Hokkaido]



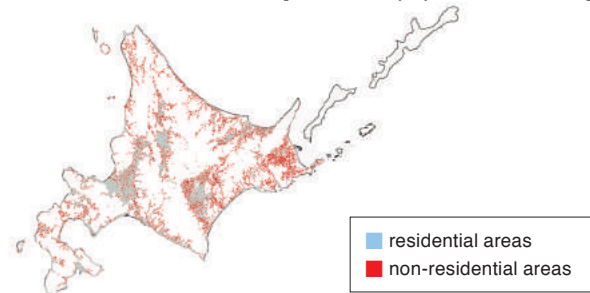
[Tonami in Toyama]

photo by NTT GEOSPACE CORPORATION

### (2) Decreasing population

Almost half of the residential areas as of 2010 is expected to become uninhabited by 2050.

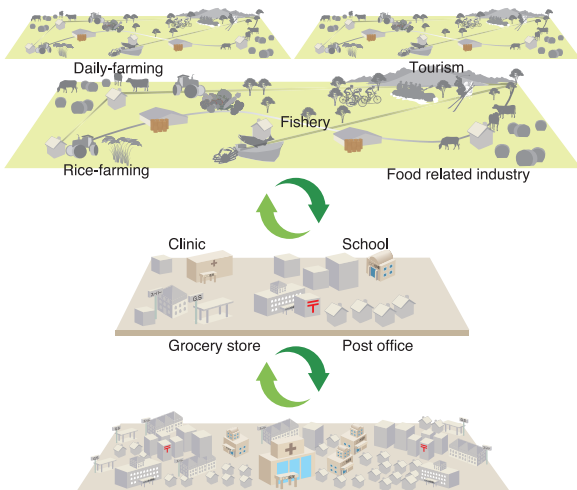
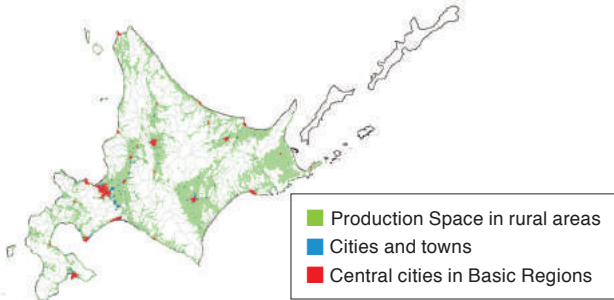
[Estimated population in 2050]



## A Hokkaido-model of regional structures

To secure daily life in rural parts of Hokkaido, we will establish about 20 "Basic Regions" so that each Region would meet basic needs and demands for daily lives of its residents, especially medical services.

Through division and sharing of urban functions and services among three levels of agglomeration, we will make every effort to secure people's livelihood across Hokkaido.



### Production Space in rural areas

Mainly devoted to agricultural and fishery production, and at the same time functions as tourism resources, etc.

### Cities and towns

Assure residents of access to basic services for daily living such as hospitals, shopping facilities, and schools.

### Central cities in Basic Regions

Where High-level urban functions are concentrated, providing opportunities for higher levels of healthcare, welfare, assistance for older people, education, and commerce.

The next 10 years would be a critical period about the survival of communities across Hokkaido. We will take measures:

- 1) To sustain functions that support daily life in rural areas; and
- 2) To improve conditions for social interactions to invigorate communities.

# Fostering a climate of creativity in Hokkaido

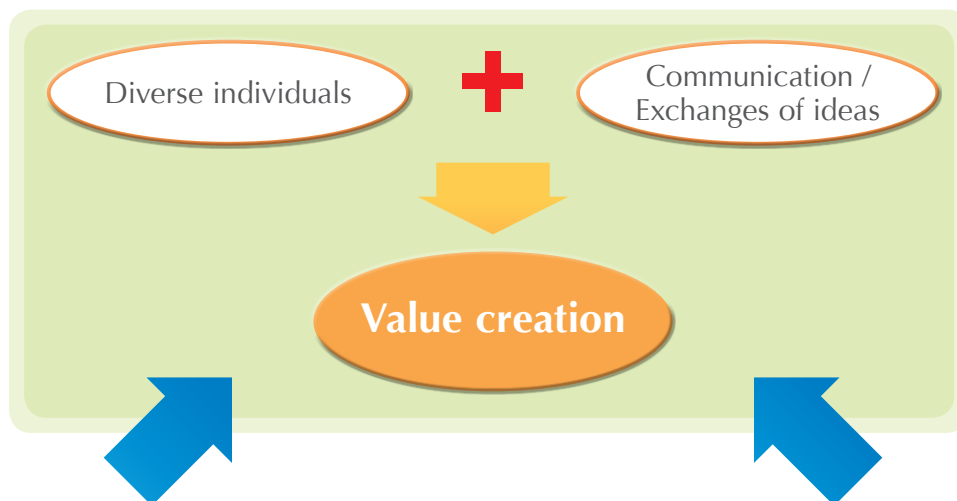
- Human resources are among the most important resources in the era of shrinking population.
- Foster a climate of creativity throughout the region by attracting diverse individuals and by focusing on human resources development.

## Concept

**Creativity is the key concept to the coming period, paving the way for:**

- Producing innovative products and/or industries and bringing about income to the region;
- Inventing a new solution for problems that the society faces; and
- Introducing a new lifestyle and changing the way of life, etc.

**Communication and exchanges of ideas among diverse individuals are the key to value creation.**



To address the issue of declining and aging population, increase a “cooperative population,” those who voluntarily contribute to each region.

To make up for the weakness of low density of population, promote frequent communication and utilize ICT.

**Creation of a variety of opportunities to attract diverse individuals**

**Enhance collaboration of individuals with those within and out of Hokkaido**

## Focus on measures

- Finding and training human resources for enhancing community development; and
- Formation of multi-layered/theme-specific platforms through collaboration of academic, industry, finance, private, and public sectors.

# Maintaining and improving the conditions for long-term living and social interactions towards the formation and maintenance of a Hokkaido model of regional structures

## Production Space in areas

In rural Hokkaido, villages are widely and sparsely distributed, whose core industry is agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industries. Particularly, villages with farming as their core industry tend to consist of houses scattered around very large farm lands. Due to their decreasing and aging population, these villages have been facing difficulty in providing even day-to-day necessities.

## Cities and towns

To sustain functions that support daily life in rural regions, we will secure transportation networks that will allow residents to access basic services for daily living such as hospitals, shopping facilities, and schools. We will also facilitate the forming of “hubs” in local cities and towns, where such basic services are concentrated within small areas.

## Central cities in Basic Regions

In addition, at the central cities of “Basic Regions” (regional units proposed by the plan, where basic needs and demands for people’s daily lives are to be met), we will concentrate high-level urban functions providing opportunities for higher levels of healthcare, welfare, assistance for older people, education, and commerce. Furthermore, we will create locations for people to come together and enjoy and relax themselves, and build appealing streetscapes. And even further, we will improve wide-area transportation networks including arterial high-standard highways that will reduce travel time between cities.

## Sapporo city

One-third of Hokkaido’s population lives in Sapporo city. It bears the highest-level urban functions in Hokkaido such as research, cultural, and artistic activities, in addition to central management functions for all of Hokkaido in the areas of public and business administration. We will take measures so that Sapporo continues to lead and contribute to all of Hokkaido.



# Securing a diversity and influx of human resources for fostering a climate of creativity in Hokkaido

## Making the stage for creative human resources in Hokkaido

In the ongoing era of seriously decreasing population, there are concerns that many regions would have difficulty in sustaining their economy and communities only with their residential population.

Hence we will take measures not only for maintaining and increasing the population of long-term residents but for growing a “cooperative population,” those who contribute to the regions although they may live out of the regions. Furthermore, we will prepare an environment that promotes community involvement in activities by such groups as young and older persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

In addition, we will pursue the “Hokkaido Value Creation Partnership Activities,” which will serve as a platform where community organizers both in and outside of Hokkaido will come together, and promote and appreciate outstanding community-based projects.

## Region neighboring Japan’s Northern Territories

The Nemuro Region neighboring Japan’s Northern Territories (the Islands of Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan, and Habomai) were once formed a single socioeconomic region united with the Northern Territories; however, the Northern Territories issue has yet to be resolved, and the Region’s economic development has been severely hampered. We will promote comprehensive measures to revitalize the Region’s local economy.

## Promoting Ainu culture

The Ainu people are an indigenous people who have lived around the northern part of the Japanese Archipelago, especially in Hokkaido, with a unique language as well as religious and cultural distinctiveness. We will continue measures to promote Ainu culture, foster public understanding of the history and culture of the Ainu, and improve living standards of Ainu people. In particular, we will develop the “Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony,” a national center for revitalizing Ainu culture, in Shiraoi, Hokkaido.

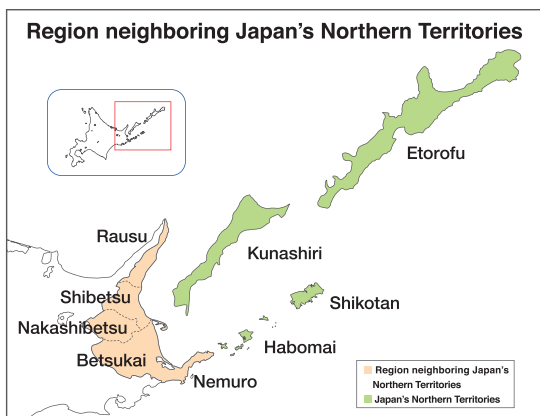


photo by Ainu Museum



# Promoting agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industries and food industries

Hokkaido contributes as the largest food supply base of Japan, as is shown in the fact that Hokkaido's self-sufficiency rate for food is about 200% whereas that of the whole country is just 39%.

In particular, in rural regions of Hokkaido, their core industry is agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries, which brings about income and jobs in these regions, as do the food industries.

## Promoting agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industries via innovation

To address the issues of aging workers and laborers shortage in the agricultural, forestry, and fisheries industries, we will promote Smart Agriculture that utilizes ICT and robotics.

In the agricultural areas, we will promote measures to improve agricultural production infrastructures, such as consolidation of farmland and construction of irrigation facilities for paddy and dry fields.

In the forestry and lumber industries, we will promote and broaden the development of products with high added value such as CLT (Cross Laminated Timber). Furthermore, we will promote effective forest management and conservation so that forests perform multiple functions such as land conservation and mitigation of global warming.

In the fisheries areas, we will promote more projects to manage and recover fishery resources around Hokkaido, and grow aquafarming industries.





## Creating high-value added food products

In Hokkaido, the value of food manufacturing products accounts for about 30% of that of all manufactured goods in the region, a higher proportion than any other region in Japan. However, the ratio of the added value on food products to their sales is ranked lower as compared with other regions.

To increase the added value ratio and retain profits in the region, we will facilitate the improvement of food safety and branding, as well as coordination with other industries and startup of businesses.

## Appealing the food of Hokkaido to foreign markets

Utilizing Hokkaido's strong brand as a tourist destination surrounded by nature, we will foster more exports its high quality food and products from their agriculture, forests, and fisheries, concurrently promoting the appeal of its food culture.

To this end, we will encourage food manufacturers to prepare facilities meeting the standards of hygiene and sanitation, and to receive certification from food authorities. Furthermore, we will support publicity activities through antenna shops (outposts) in foreign markets, and facilitate complimentary cooperation with local companies.

## Revitalizing rural villages by utilizing local resources

To secure opportunities for stable income and employment in farming, forestry, and fisheries villages, we will enhance economic and technological support for these regions as well as training programs for new farmers. Furthermore, to revitalize local communities, we will increase the exchanges between cities and rural villages through farm restaurants and farming tourism.



## Creating world-class tourist destinations

### Becoming world-class tourist destinations

Hokkaido has an abundance of natural environment, blessed with beautiful nature and farmlands. Hokkaido also has very one of a kind and appealing tourism resources even amongst Asian countries, such as its unique history and cultures as well as safe and high quality agricultural products. These characteristics make the region enjoy great popularity among tourists.

Toward world-class tourist destinations, in addition to bringing out more of Hokkaido's characteristics, we will promote the formation of wide-area round-trip routes, each of which has its own theme and/or story. This will smooth the variations in seasonal travel demands, and spread the economic benefits of in-bound tourism across Hokkaido.

### Improving the environment to receive foreign tourists

To enhance the satisfaction of foreign tourists visiting Hokkaido and increase their numbers, we will improve infrastructures so that foreigners can move and stay in Hokkaido without added stress.

To this end, we will work on better gateway functions, such as improvements of CIQ (Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine) systems, utilization of airports in Hokkaido, and improvements of ports and waterfront sites to receive cruise ships. To improve transportation, we will promote improvement and construction of high-speed transportation networks, and enhance the convenience of public transportation and rental cars.

In addition, we will increase multi-lingual signage and facilitate training of staffs to manage several languages.



## Toward a new era of inbound tourism

With the economic growth of emerging economies, inbound tourists visiting Hokkaido have been rising sharply. Over the coming years, there are more events that could trigger a further increase in foreign tourists visiting Hokkaido, including the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the opening of Hokkaido Shinkansen (bullet train) to Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto station (March 2016) and to Sapporo (end of fiscal 2030). We will continue our strategic efforts and engagements to have Hokkaido be received as a world-class tourist destination that attracts people globally.

## MICE

Via attracting and hosting MICE (Meetings, Incentive travels, Convention, and Exhibitions/Events), we will work actively on bringing business visitors from overseas to Hokkaido, and showcase the attractiveness of Hokkaido as a center for global business and innovation, as well as that as a tourist destination. Thereby we will promote global companies to conduct business in Hokkaido, and to bring foreign direct investments to the region.





## Fostering industries with utilizing the regions' strengths

### Encouraging further growth in industrial clusters

The Eastern Tomakomai Area is near Tomakomai Port and New Chitose Airport, and is a region with high development potential, surrounded much by nature. In recent years, automotive related industries have built factories on the area, and we expect a growth in processing and assembly plant industries. Recycling industries and energy industries have also concentrated their sites here. In Ishikari Bay New Port, we see development of energy industries, including LNG stations. We will facilitate the attraction of companies to the industrial parks located at various locations in Hokkaido.

In response to changes in the social structure and people's lifestyles, such as aging population and health conscious living, we will address shortages in human resources in transportation industries and services including healthcare, welfare, and care businesses.

### Improving transportation infrastructures

Fulfilling the potential of the resources and attractive elements that are spread over Hokkaido requires transportation networks that enable convenient, efficient, and sustainable transportation of people and goods.

To this end, we will promote improvement and construction of ports, airports, and arterial high-standard highways. Furthermore, we will accelerate the construction of the Hokkaido Shinkansen (bullet train) between Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto and Sapporo.

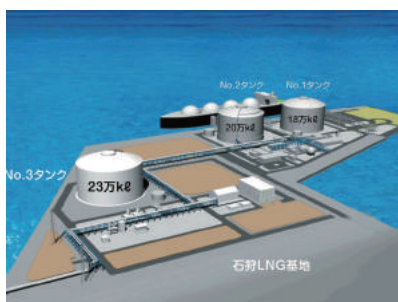


photo by Hokkaido Railway Company



# Establishing a sustainable regional society in harmony with a bountiful nature

## Formation of a society in harmony with nature

Hokkaido abounds with an irreplaceable natural environment valuable both to Japan and the world, from Shiretoko which is recorded as a World Natural Heritage Site, to Kushiro wetlands which is a registered wetland under the Ramsar Convention. We will conserve, restore, and utilize these natural environments in such a way that we can leave them for our next generations.

## Creating a sound material-cycle society

Japan has been transforming more into a sound material-cycle society. More efforts will be focused on “2Rs” (Reducing waste and Reusing resources and products), which have been underdeveloped as compared to recycling, and on collecting useable resources out from waste and such.

## Creating a low-carbon society

Per capita greenhouse gas emissions in Hokkaido are higher than in other parts of Japan, and among them, emissions from households and transportation sectors are relatively high. We will increase usage of renewable energy resources, facilitate green innovation such as the introduction of hydrogen technologies, and promote usage of public transportation.

## Establishing environmentally friendly energy systems

Hokkaido has abundant renewable energy resources including wind, geothermal, solar, hydropower, and biomass resources; among which wind and geothermal power potentials in the region account for about 30% of those countrywide. We will promote the introduction of distributed energy systems in which local energy resources are fully utilized for energy consumption in the same area.



## Creating safe and secure infrastructures and contributions to building national resilience

### Responding to intensifying natural disasters

In recent years, localized, focused, and heavy rain and extraordinary snowfalls have been recorded in Hokkaido. There are also concerns about natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions.

To address these issues, the national and local governments, together with other relevant organizations, will enforce the system of coordination at times of natural disasters. Specifically, the national government will support local governments by sending liaison officers and Technical Emergency Control Force (TEC-FORCE), lending equipment and resources for natural disasters, and supporting field studies.

To minimize socio-economic impacts due to natural disasters, we will promote anti-seismic measures in our infrastructures, and construct alternative roadways as well as flood and soil control facilities. Furthermore, we will create hazard maps and do better sharing of disaster prevention information, using GIS.



## Preparing for post-event support in the event of a national level disaster

Hokkaido is situated at a great distance from the Tokyo Metropolitan Area, and thus it is less likely that a large-scale disaster hit both areas at the same time. We will enhance preparations for post-event support in the event of a national level disaster, such as the accepting of evacuees and emergency aid transportation.

## Establishing safe and secure infrastructures

Most of the infrastructures in Hokkaido were built after the period of Japan's high rate of economic growth. These infrastructures are expected to become aging and deficient very soon, and the cost required to upgrade and sustain them would rise significantly without any measure.

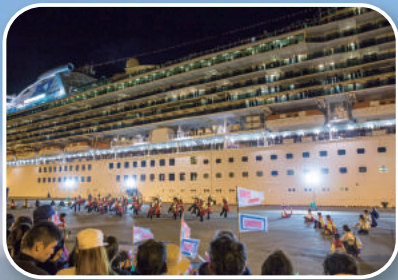
In particular, because infrastructures in Hokkaido exist under the severe weather conditions of a snowy cold region, we face technical issues that are different from other regions in Japan, such as deterioration due to freezing and/or salting damages, and subsidence of peaty soft grounds.

To address these issues, the managers of these infrastructures will reduce total costs and smooth annual costs, based on the concept of preventive maintenance, by performing appropriate upgrades and management at the right time. Furthermore, research institutions will engage in technology development such as more efficient inspection and diagnosis technologies customized for cold regions, and then spread them to both other parts of Japan and overseas.

In addition, traffic data and accidents data will be analyzed to introduce efficient and effective measures against traffic incidents. Specifically, because casualty events increase in winter months, we will enhance the provision of road traffic information and enforce snow removal systems.







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