

National Statement of Commitment for the Sport for Sustainable Development Summit (25 July 2024) Japan

Japan is committed to working on the following policies within Japan and in collaboration with the international community in accordance with Japan's Basic Act on Sport and the Sport Basic Plan, supporting the important role that sport plays in realizing a sustainable society.

Sport, education and employment

[Development of children's exercise habits and physical fitness]

- Since the exercise habits formed from early childhood to junior high school are very important factors that establish the foundation for lifelong physical fitness and athletic ability, it is vital to promote efforts to incorporate these habits in one's daily life. With that recognition, Japanese government is promoting the following efforts to ensure that children have opportunities for physical activities at school, the home, and community to help develop children's exercise habits and physical fitness: 1) strengthening efforts to develop good exercise habits from early childhood, 2) preparing diverse sport environments that meet the needs of children, 3) increasing children's motivation to exercise in school physical education classes, 4) increasing the time children spend for physical activities outside of school, and 5) providing opportunities for them to exercise at home.
- Japan's National Curriculum Standards aim at fostering in a well-balanced way three qualities and abilities — “knowledge and skills,” “thinking, judgment, and expression,” and “motivation to learn and humanity” — through the systemization and clarification of teaching content from elementary school to high school. In regards to physical education and health education, we are aiming to develop children's qualities and abilities to maintain and improve their physical and mental health throughout their lives and to enjoy a rich sporting life.
- In addition, we are seeking to develop processes of learning that link various ways of engaging with sport such as through “doing, watching, supporting, and learning” sport according to the individual's aptitude, with reducing the risk of illness, improving the quality of life, and creating an environment that promotes health. In order to enhance physical education and health education classes, schools are taking various measures, such as inviting athletes to physical education classes, conducting practical research into teaching various martial arts in junior high school, conducting practical research on teaching methods for allowing children with and without disabilities to learn together.

[International cooperation]

- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has been dispatching physical education and sport volunteers to developing countries as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) since 1965. As of the end of March 2024, a cumulative number of JOCVs for physical education in schools is more than 1,500 in 79 countries, and in the case to include those for sport of 28 events, it is nearly 5,000 in 90 countries. JICA will contribute to the human development of the next generation, who will play important roles for the advancement of developing countries, not only by improving physical fitness and health but also by fostering self-affirmation, initiative, and cooperation.
- Based on the Chiang Mai Declaration on Strengthening ASEAN-Japan Cooperation on Sport towards 2030 (Hereafter “Chiang Mai Declaration”), Japan is prioritizing as areas of cooperation the capacity building of physical education teachers, support for sport for people with disabilities, and promotion of gender equality in sport, as detailed below, working with the ASEAN Secretariat towards the realization of the Chiang Mai Declaration towards 2030. In order to provide inclusive and high-quality physical education in ASEAN, we believe it is important to formulate policies that are tailored to the circumstances of each country while taking into account global trends. Japan is holding workshops and other events targeting policy makers in charge of physical education teacher training and sport for people with disabilities in ASEAN countries. We are also working to follow up on the Action Plans formulated by each country and to form Professional Learning Communities.

Sport, health and nutrition

[Sport in Life: from high performance to life performance]

- In order to promote health through sport, it is necessary to encourage the participation of the entire nation in sport and to create an environment in which all people can enjoy sport, regardless of age, gender or disability.
- Comprehensive community sport clubs are community-based sport clubs that are independently run by local community residents, and which engage in everyday activities at nearby schools, public facilities and other venues. As well as contributing to the realization of a lifelong sport society, they are also expected to have various impacts on revitalization of the local communities, such as providing a place for local children to participate in sport activities, family interaction, the healthy development of young people through intergenerational exchange, and maintaining and improving the health of local residents.
- The Third Sport Basic Plan sets a target of increasing the rate of adults participating in sport at least once a week to around 70%, and also aims to increase the proportion of people who exercise for at least 30 minutes, breaking a light sweat, at least twice a week, and have continued to do so for at least one year.

- With the aim of realizing “Sport in Life” (making sport a natural part of everyday life), we are promoting efforts to encourage people to participate in sport. In particular, under the concept of “From high performance to life performance”, we believe that utilizing the scientific knowledge in the field of high performance gained through the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games for the general public will improve the quality of exercise and sport and contribute to improving the health and well-being of the nation.
- At the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, various sport medicine specialists, including doctors, dentists, nurses, and physiotherapists, worked seamlessly together to provide advanced support at the polyclinic and fitness center in the Athletes’ Village, resulting in a wealth of scientific knowledge that will contribute to improving athletes’ motor skills. After the Games, in order to apply this knowledge to improving the health of the general public, empirical research was carried out to verify the effectiveness of motor control exercises, and it was confirmed that this reduced lower back pain and improved motor skills and quality of life.
- Japan will host the World Masters Games 2027 Kansai. By hosting the ultimate global lifelong sporting event, we aim to promote health and improve well-being through sport.

[International cooperation]

- We believe that physical activity for children in the ASEAN countries is essential, and we are supporting the introduction of the Active Child Program, an exercise and play program developed in Japan, to Thailand and Malaysia. This program was developed by the Japan Sport Association with a focus on children’s growth and development as well as intrinsic motivation, and is a teaching method for children to enjoy physical activity. The Japan Sport Association is working to popularize and develop human resources as teachers and sport instructors in each country, with the aim of building a foundation for lifelong sport in the ASEAN region.

Sport, equality and inclusion

[Sport and inclusion]

- Japan is striving to spread and promote sport for people with disabilities and prepare environments for them. For the sustainable promotion of sport for people with disabilities, Japan has established “Sport Centers for the Disabled” as comprehensive regional bases staffed by personnel with a wide range of capabilities and high levels of expertise that are promoting sport for the disabled throughout each region.
- In addition, by utilizing open spaces such as in parks and commercial facilities, we are working to create environments where people regardless of whether they have or do not have disabilities can enjoy walking football or sit-skiing. We are also creating environments where people can experience sport such as canoeing in nearby places using digital technology through collaboration between sport

organizations and private companies, with the aim of eliminating barriers preventing people with disabilities from accessing sport.

- Japan is the host country for many major sport events for people with disabilities. As the host country of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, Japan welcomed a record number 4,403 Paralympic athletes, greatly spreading the appeal of parasport to the world. The World Para Athletics Championships, the world's premier para-athletics competition, was held in Kobe 2024. The Deaflympics will be held in Tokyo in 2025, which will again showcase the value of deaf sport and serve to further connect people to society. The Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Para Games will also be held in Japan, and under the concept of "Imagine One Heart," we will contribute to the realization of an inclusive society and lead the way for sport for people with disabilities in Asia.
- In addition to providing training to teachers for inclusive and high-quality physical education in schools in ASEAN countries, we believe it is important to grasp the current situation of parasport in ASEAN, and we are conducting research that will contribute to identifying priority issues that each country should address.

[Sport, integrity and gender equality]

- Regarding women's participation in sport, various challenges need to be considered, such as the low rates of participation in sport by young women and the low proportion of female coaches and executives in sport organizations. The government has drawn up the "Sport Organizations Governance Code," which encourages sporting organizations to prevent all forms of violence and harassment against women. The government is also encouraging sporting organizations to increase the proportion of female managements, providing medical and scientific support to improve Japanese athletes' international competitiveness, and conducting training programs for elite female coaches.
- In terms of international cooperation, Japan is supporting the promotion of gender equality in sport in ASEAN. Japan is conducting workshops for policy makers in the ASEAN countries. Participants select two priority areas among the six target areas of the Sport for Generation Equality Framework, and conduct follow-ups on the progress in these areas, with the aim gender mainstreaming. Moreover, we are also investigating what women in each country value when they participate in sport, as well as the obstacles preventing women from participating in sport, as part of our efforts to assist the policy-making in each country.
- In order to ensure the transparency and fairness in the management of future major sport events, in March 2023, Japan formulated its "Guidelines on the Governance of the Organizing Committees of Major International and Domestic Sport Events," and widely circulated the guidelines among the relevant parties. In the future, we will continue to create and utilize teaching materials and good practices on hosting sport events in line with the guidelines. We will work to further ensure the effectiveness of the guidelines and to secure and train human resources who can play core roles in the management of major sport events.

Sport, financing and impact measurement

- Japan believes it is important to enhance “investment in people through sport” by making clear that investment in sport contributes to regional revitalization and problem-solving, and can enrich people’s lives and spirits. This in turn generates higher expectations and support from the public, creating a virtuous cycle that leads to the securing of further financial resources.
- The government allocated approximately 35.9 billion yen to the Japan Sport Agency for its sport-related budget for fiscal year 2023. Meanwhile, the Sport Promotion Lottery provides subsidies for sport promotion activities that are difficult to be supported by government funding, and functions as a complementary source of funding for sport promotion. Targeting soccer and basketball games, the Lottery is seeking to expand their revenues, and it distributed approximately 17.4 billion yen to local governments and sport organizations in fiscal year 2023.
- The government is also incorporating Evidence-Based Project Management into the field of sport administration and promoting appropriate impact measurement.

Sport, sustainability and legacy

[Tokyo 2020 Games]

- The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games adopted the sustainability concept of “Be better, together”, selected five key themes relating to sustainability, including climate change, established a management structure, compiled specific goals and measures to achieve them, and moved forward with the initiatives.
- In the area of climate change, the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee signed the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework and set the goal of “Towards Zero Carbon”. After monitoring the current situation by precisely calculating the carbon footprint in line with international standards, measures were implemented to reduce emissions and save energy, as well as a shift to renewable energy sources, including the use of hydrogen, at every stage from construction to operation, and any unavoidable emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases were offset to ensure a zero-carbon event.

[Collaboration with sporting organizations]

- In Japan, the Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) signed the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework this year. In addition, two professional sport clubs also signed the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework, and various professional sport clubs are working towards climate change and decarbonization under the concept of “One Earth, One Team”. Climate change measures will also be taken at the Japan Games, Japan’s biggest comprehensive sporting event. The government will also continue to work with sport organizations to advance climate change measures.