

Reduced EIA Procedures after the Great East Japan Earthquake

Daisuke UESAKO

Environmental Impact Assessment Division
Ministry of the Environment, JAPAN



Great East Japan Earthquake

(March 11, 2011)

Magnitude: 9.0 (M_w)

Casualties: 16,000 deaths / 3,000 missing



Epicenter of the earthquake ^{*1}



Tsunami flooding on the Sendai Airport runway ^{*1}

1. Exemption of EIA Procedure Requirement for On-site Recovery Projects (1/3)



Rolling blackout after the earthquake *1

Electricity shortages as many power plants were damaged

→ Need for immediate recovery of power supply

→ Exemption of EIA procedure requirement applied for the first time

A disaster recovery project is exempt from EIA Procedure (Article 52 of EIA Act)

2. Exemption of EIA Procedure Requirement for On-site Recovery Projects (2/3)

(Exemption of EIA)

Installation of supplementary power generation facilities (SPGFs)

(Requirements of exemption)

- 1) Installed on the premises of existing power plants
- 2) Operations are specified in restoration plans within 1 year and started within approx. 3 years



SPGF installed at Kawasaki Thermal Power Plant *2

2. Exemption of EIA Procedure Requirement for On-site Recovery Projects (3/3)

Installed SPGFs (total):

3,878 MW (at 12 sites in eastern Japan)

Regardless of the exemption, voluntary EIAs were recommended including:

- Consideration to minimize environmental impacts
- Close communications to local governments and citizens
- Announcement of measures for protecting the environment



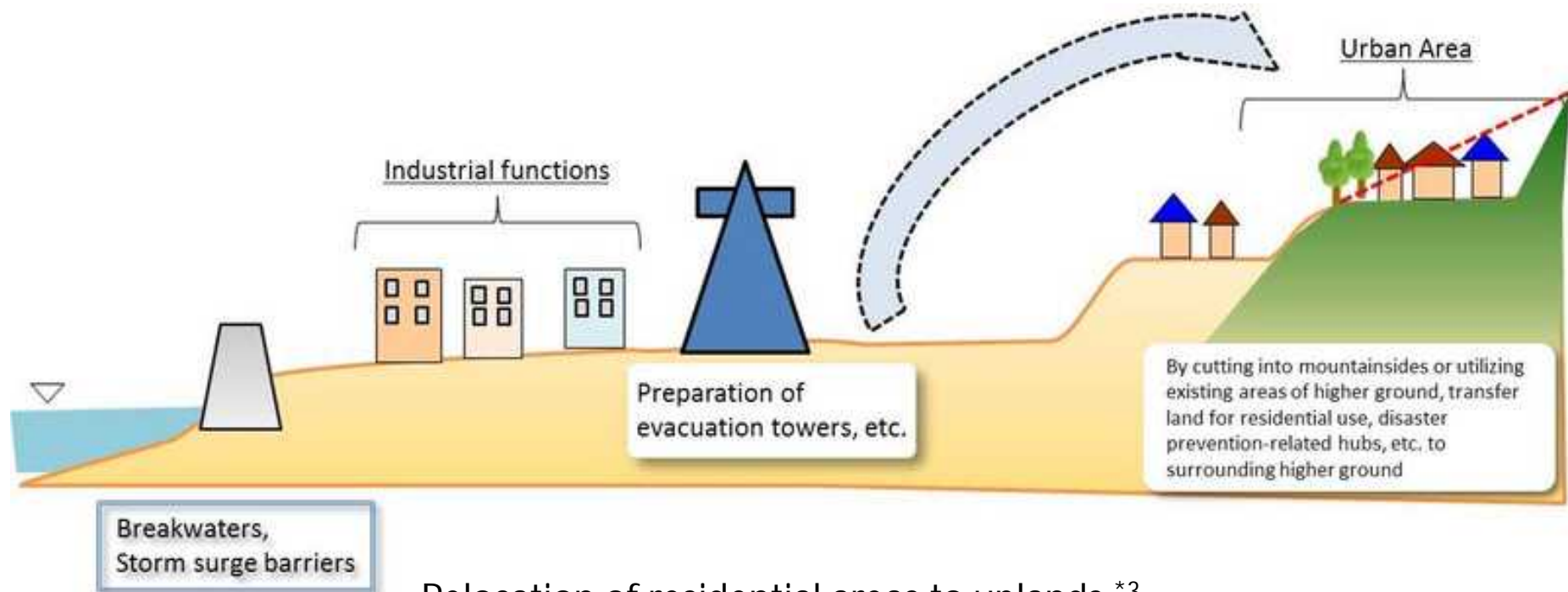
→ Adequate measures to protect the environment were taken.

2. Special EIA Procedure for Relocation Projects (1/3)

Relocation of residential areas to uplands planned

→ Need for relocation of railway tracks (Exemption NOT applicable)

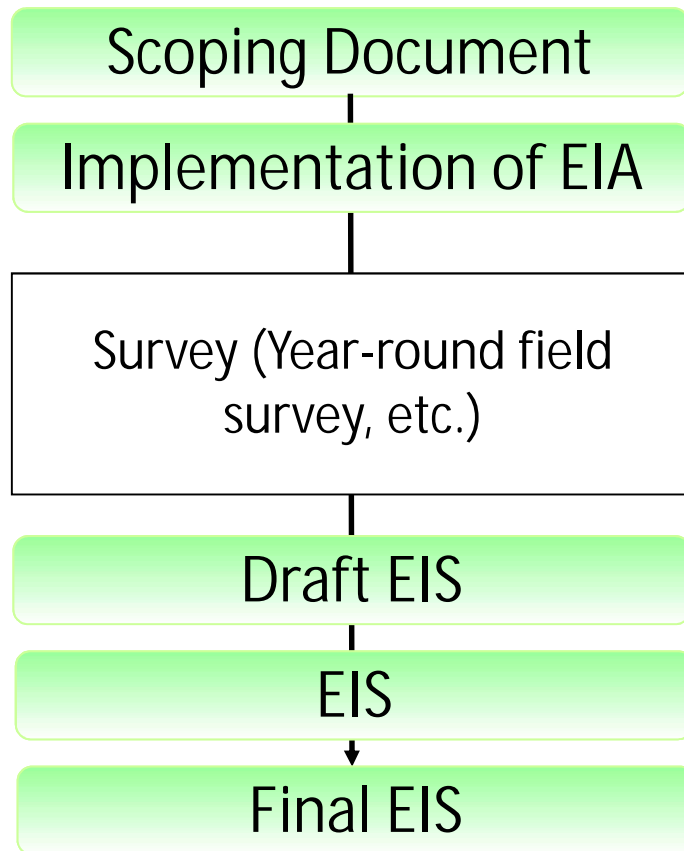
→ Special EIA procedure was developed anew



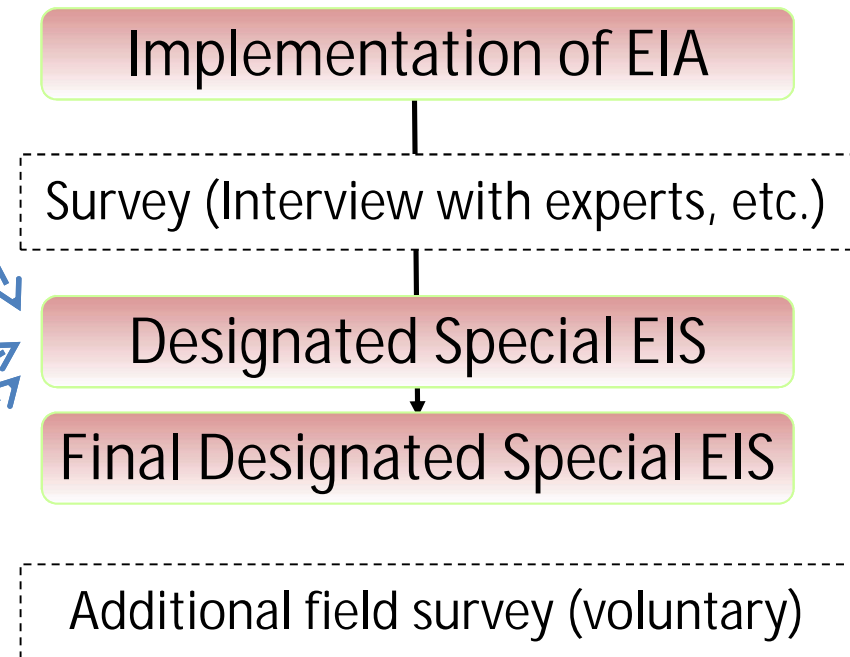
Relocation of residential areas to uplands *3

2. Special EIA Procedure for Relocation Projects (2/3)

Normal EIA Procedure
(Conducted by proponents)



Special EIA Procedure
(Conducted by municipalities)



2. Special EIA Procedure for Relocation Projects (3/3)

Joban Rail Line relocation project

- Relocation of stations and railway track
- “Designated Special EIS” published in January 2013 (“Final Designated Special EIS” in March 2013)
- Additional four-season survey will be conducted



3. Conclusion

We have developed the reduced EIA procedures for disaster reconstruction projects, such as:

- By skipping or integrating the steps required in the normal EIA procedure
- By simplifying the methods of survey

Speedy reconstruction in harmony with environmental conservation is expected.

These systems are accompanied by increased uncertainty about the prediction of environmental impacts.

→ Follow-up surveys and monitoring, as well as consideration of additional protection measures, are important.

Thank you for your attention!



Images from:

- Wikipedia (*1)
- Tokyo Electric Power Company website (*2)
- Prime Minister KAN's Blog (*3)
- Reconstruction Agency website (Above)