1. Public Physical Training Facilities

Physical training and sports facilities in Japan can be categorized into physical education facilities for school educational activities, recreational sports facilities such as facilities for employed workers at places of work, public sports facilities established at local public bodies, private profit-making commercial sports facilities which are designed to earn profits; and private sector non-profit-making sports facilities which are not designed to earn profits but supply community services to the general public. In general, public sports facilities provide outdoor space, while private sector profit-making facilities require comparatively large operating expenses in order to maintain equipment and installations. Both types of facilities play important roles.

Public physical training facilities include a large number of athletic fields which can be utilized for a variety of purposes: baseball grounds, soccer fields, gymnasiums, swimming pools, tennis courts, etc.

In recent years, the need for physical training and sports has increased, resulting in the number of facilities having also risen. This increase is attributed to the increase in leisure time, diversification of life styles, and growing interest in health and wellness. The Legend and Map Compilation

This map shows the number of public physical training facilities in Japan, sports facilities provided by local public bodies for the public, excluding facilities established for school education and facilities adjusting public education facilities in the 30 selected cities based on the survey of public training facilities carried out in 1984 as part of the special educational survey.

2. Distribution of Outdoor Recreation Areas

In recent years, sightseeing as a form of recreation has become increasingly popular and is attributed to the increase in leisure time diversification of lifestyles, increase in income, and so forth. The purposes are not limited to pleasure trips or relaxation, but include accompanying events, improving health, and so on. Reaching this trend, while at the same time taking into consideration the local areas, the government has through a variety of schemes, attempted to introduce the establishment of such areas and has put forth overall measures to provide outdoor recreation facilities and accommodate. The ministries and agencies are charged with the management of recreation areas and the regulatory and planning control of these areas. The map shows the distribution of the outdoor recreation facilities and the recreation facilities of the national government in the 30 cities and towns selected earlier.

In addition, the Inclusive Health Reinforcement Area Development Act (effective since 1985) has been in force since 1985, employing private sector revitalization. The establishment of recreation areas with general functions and the recreation of local area is proceeding. In addition, the national government in the 30 cities and towns selected earlier in the national and quasi-national park areas, "Beyond the Mountains" project protection model areas and others also exist.

3. Natural Parks

Natural parks are parks which have been designated under the provisions of the National Park Law. They are divided into national parks, quasi-national parks, and local natural parks. The number of people visiting natural parks has been increasing recently, reaching a total of 307 million in 1987. This is attributed to, for instance, the growing interest of the people in experiencing nature. As of March 31, 1988, national parks covering an area of 2,486,900 ha, and 35 quasi-national parks covering 1,290,000 ha have been designated. Prefectural natural parks have been designated in all prefectures (except for the three prefectures of Gunma, Okinawa, and Kagoshima), consisting of 839 locations totaling an area of 1,236,600 ha. The total area of three national parks accounts for 14% of the total area of Japan. Special protection areas, special areas, ordinary areas, and sub-protective park areas are established for national and quasi-national natural parks across Japan. In the category of provincial parks, special areas and ordinary areas are established. In addition, special group facilities are established within national parks in order to improve the facilities for visitors as a whole.

Environmental degradation in natural areas is caused by a variety of development activities and, in many cases, by the concentration of visitors. In order to tackle these problems, national parks must be established in order to ensure the public and the government to maintain rural areas.

Finally, in order to preserve the natural environment in Japan, districts such as national, natural, recreation, and local natural park areas, national recreation reserves, and national park areas are designated according the National Park Law. The Ministry of International, Trade, and Industry, in order to control economic activities, has designated 30 cities and towns as national, natural, recreation, and local natural park areas in accordance with the National Park Law.