

Overview of the Natural Resources of Japan

Japan has always been described as a country with virtually no major natural resources such as natural gas, oil, gold, coal, copper, and iron. The country depends on imported raw material and energy. In fact, Japan is the largest importer of liquefied natural gas and coal, and the second-largest importer of oil in the world. Following the shutdown of the nuclear reactors in 2011 following a series of earthquakes and tsunamis, the industrial sector of Japan has even become more reliant on imported fossil fuel. However, the government is planning to restart the nuclear plant. Of late, Japan has proven that it has two huge potential areas rich in natural resources but the two areas have remained largely untapped. These areas are the forest that covers a large portion of the land and the ocean which surrounds the archipelago. Japan has negligible mineral resources, especially under the seabed.

Limited Natural Resources

Japan's most important natural resource is fish, caught in the Pacific Ocean and Sea of Japan. The country's fishing industry is one of the largest in the world. The seas are also essential to trade, which is vital to Japan's economy.

Because Japan has only small quantities of mineral resources, the country must import raw materials such as iron ore and lead. Japan also imports most of its energy resources, including petroleum and coal. Japan uses these imports in its industries and then exports finished products, such as automobiles and electronics.