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## Japan to reinforce IP framework by 2003

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The creation of a reinforced intellectual property system in Japan is expected by 2003 following proposals by a government panel led by prime minister Junichiro Koizumi.

A stronger IP system would enhance Japan's industrial competitiveness, the Strategic Council on Intellectual Property said during its fifth meeting on July 3, when it presented its outline for an intellectual property strategy to Koizumi.

The panel's strategy focuses on key points, including the creation, protection and exploitation of IP rights.

Yukuzo Yamasaki, from the Yamasaki Law & Patent Office, said the main purpose of the panel's IP strategy was to provide the government with a body that reviews the country's IP system and looks at ways to revise existing laws.

Hiroyuki Abe, chairman of the Strategic Council, outlined the importance of creating clear IP legislation by 2003 to secure the country's economy and boost the creation of new businesses.

Mitsuko Wada, from Tokyo-based IP law firm Ryuka, said a new basic IP law would not replace the present patent law, but would reinforce the country's IP framework and act as an umbrella over existing IP laws.

Koizumi has announced his plans to create a preparatory office on July 5 that would work towards the government's plans to establish an IP platform for Japan.

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