JCLP

This is the English translation of the original text in Japanese.

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Position Statement on Japan's Mid-Term Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Target

- JCLP urges the Japanese government to set the emissions reduction target of 50% and above by 2030 to avoid climate crisis and stay competitive -

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced at the Climate Ambition Summit in December 2020 that Japan will submit a revised nationally determined contribution (NDC) by 2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) to be held in November. A review is underway, led by the taskforce set up by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.[1] In order to expediate the process, the government recently appointed Environment Minister Shinjiro Koizumi as Climate Change Minister and set up a new council of advisers.

Japan is currently at a critical juncture where it needs to clearly express to the world its level of commitment to decarbonization. With the aim of supporting Suga administration's leadership in setting a sufficiently ambitious mid-term emissions reduction target, Japan Climate Leaders' Partnership (JCLLP) would like to express our views as follows.

Background:

1. **Climate change threatens security of social infrastructure essential to human and business activities**

Climate change is not only responsible for many deaths and victims of record-setting extreme heat, typhoons, and floods. Climate change is also responsible for shutting down infrastructure, cutting supply chains, and causing economic losses and financial burdens on national and regional governments in Japan.[2] In many different parts of the world, climate change is also causing extreme weather events such as heat, cold waves, torrential rains, and droughts that lead to disasters like wild fires and flooding, as well as the shortage of food and water. Leaders around the world are acknowledging climate change as a security issue and deliberating measures.[3] Climate change threatens social stability profoundly and needs to be tackled as a ''crisis.''

2. **Global warming should be limited to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels to avoid serious and irreversible impacts of climate crisis.**

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), it is likely that damages from global warming of 2°C above pre-industrial levels would be more serious than previously estimated, and that the more the temperature nears the 2°C threshold, the more irreversible the impacts of global warming would become.[4] This is why the world has begun taking actions aiming at the 1.5°C target instead of the 2°C target and many national and local governments as well as companies started announcing targets to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050. Governments around the world are also strengthening science-based policy-making process.[5]

3. **In order to achieve the 1.5°C target, we need to reduce emissions significantly by 2030.**

According to IPCC, in order to achieve the 1.5°C target, global GHG emissions need to be decline by approximately 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.[6] 2050 carbon neutrality alone is not sufficient to stop climate crisis. We must pay our full attention to the pathway to 2050 carbon neutrality and strengthen measures toward 2030.[7]

Proposal: We urge the Japanese government to set a domestic GHG emissions reduction target of 50% and above by 2030 from 2013 levels.

As we mentioned earlier, achieving the 1.5°C target requires approximately 45% reduction of GHG emissions by 2030 from 2010 levels. If 2013 is used as the reference year, as the Japanese government does, about 50% of emission reduction would be needed.[8,9]

In addition, Japan has a responsibility as one developed nations and the largest cumulative emitters.[10] To fulfill this responsibility, we believe that the emission reduction of "50% and above" should be pursued. Furthermore, an ambitious target is key to express its intention to become a global leader in decarbonization.

The Prime Minister's declaration on carbon neutrality by 2050 set off a wave of remarkable changes in the minds and actions of businesses, local governments, and citizens. We are certain that creating a clear vision for 2030 will further accelerate the flow of goods, investments, and human and policy resources toward decarbonization. The vision needs to be as ambitious as "50% and above", if Japan is to stimulate the use of 240 trillion yen of cash on hand and on deposit lying dormant in private companies and attract environmental investment from abroad, which is said to amount to as much as three quadrillion yen, as pledged by the Prime Minister.

If Japan falls behind other countries, the industries that will support decarbonization at home will stagnate and Japan will be dependent on imports from other countries for decarbornization technologies and equipment, as seen in the wind power generation equipment sector. **Furthermore, there are growing concerns among corporations that they may have to shift their operations abroad where they can more easily access means of decarbonization. We must avoid such a situation at all cost as it will be a significant blow to the domestic industry and employment.**

Japan needs to step up now, if the country is to lead the global challenge of decarbonization and achieve green growth. We thus urge the government to take heed of scientific knowledge on climate change and a set a mid-term target aligned with the 1.5°C target. It is with such a goal in place that the world can avert climate crisis and Japan can remain competitive and keep the society stable.

Conclusion:

As a corporate group working on an early realization of decarbonized society, JCLP will further strengthen its efforts to contribute to achieving the 2030 emissions reduction target of 50% and above.

We have been encouraging the Japanese government to increase the share of renewables to 50% in the 2030 power generation mix[11] and working to source more clean energy for our own operations. To push through efforts to reduce emissions, we will henceforth expand the area of our work, for instance, to expanding the use of EV and decarbonizing heating. Keeping in mind that averting climate crisis takes the whole society, we are also determined to strengthen our work with other stakeholders, such as industry groups, local governments, and civic societies.

End

References

[1] This refers to the following joint taskforce between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (There is no official English name): 中央環境審議会地球環境部会 中長期の気候変動対策検討小委員会 産業構造審議会産業技術環境分科会 地球環境小委員会地球温暖化対策検討ワーキンググループ 合同会合

[2] Please refer to JCLP's policy proposal on the review of 2030 energy mix (power generation mix), which lists a number of examples and their references:
- https://japan-clp.jp/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/7098c11edc0488955e1b41bc8762e890.pdf

[3] Some of the examples of climate change regarded as a security issue include recent meetings of the Security Council of the United Nations and the Munich Security Conference:
- The UN Security Council：https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sc14445.doc.htm
- The Munich Security Conference：
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ow8NOR4CfJE (panel discussion on climate change and security)
  https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/02/19/remarks-by-president-biden-at-the-2021-virtual-munich-security-conference/（speech by US President Biden）
  https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_21_706（speech by EU president von der Leyen）

[4] According to IPCC's "Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5 °C", the risks of irreversible melting of Greenland ice sheet as well as irreversible loss of many marine and coastal ecosystems increase with global warming to 2°C. In addition, apart from this IPCC's report, some scientists warn about a ''Hothouse Earth'' scenario. According to this scenario, warming of 4-5°C may be triggered by a series of tipping point phenomenon, and the likelihood of this scenario is believed to increase with global warming of 2°C.
- IPCC Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°C Chapter 3：https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/chapter-3/
- Hothouse Earth paper： https://www.pnas.org/content/115/33/8252

[5] U.S. President Biden on January 20 signed ''Executive Order on Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis'' clarifying the position that the government must be guided by the best science. The EU climate bill stipulates the establishment of a European Climate Change Council (ECCC) as an independent scientific body to assess whether policy is consistent and monitor progress. The U.K. has already set up a similar monitoring body called the Committee on Climate Change (CCC)

[6] IPCC indicates that in order to achieve the 1.5 °C target, CO_2 emissions must be reduced by 45% from the 2010 level by 2030. Also, with regard to GHG emissions, IPCC states that a reduction by 39-51% from 2010 levels by 2030 is required (No or limited overshoot, Interquartile range).
- IPCC Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°C：https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15

[7] There is an inverse relationship between a rise in temperature and cumulative emissions. ''Carbon budget'' refers to how much additional emissions can be allowed to limit the total emissions. If we fail to reduce enough emissions along the way, the carbon budget to achieve the 1.5°C target will have been exhausted earlier.

[8] Japan's GHG emissions were 1.35 billion tons in 2010 and 1.41 billion tons in 2013.
- The Ministry of Environment ''Greenhouse gas emissions in Fiscal 2018''
  https://www.env.go.jp/earth/ondanka/ghg-mrv/emissions/results/material/kakuhou_gaiyo_2018.pdf

[9] There is also an analysis which indicates that Japan needs 62% GHG emissions reduction from 2013 levels to align with the 1.5 °C target:
- Climate Action Tracker "1.5°C-consistent benchmarks for enhancing Japan's 2030 climate target"
  https://climateactiontracker.org/documents/841/2021_03_CAT_1.5C-consistent_benchmarks_Japan_NDC.pdf

[10] This refers to the principle of ''common but differentiated responsibilities'' that acknowledges the differing responsibilities (historical emissions) and capabilities (economic power). Developed nations such as Japan with historical contribution to climate change and economic power are to assume stricter responsibilities to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

[11] JCLP's policy proposals on the review of 2030 energy mix (power generation mix):
https://japan-clp.jp/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/7098c11edc0488955e1b41bc8762e890.pdf

Japan Climate Leaders' Partnership (JCLP) is a coalition of businesses (174 companies as of April 2021) that aims to create a carbon neutral society, built on the idea that decarbonisation is essential to economic development.

The group's total sales are 137 trillion JPY (US$1.3 trillion) and electricity demand together amounts to 57 TWh representing close to 8% of the electricity demand of the industries in Japan. It was set up in 2009 to encourage the business sector to develop a sound sense of urgency on climate action.

The members share a common goal and proactively communicate with policy makers, business peers and the civil society. JCLP remains unique in Japan in that a key focus is policy engagement around actions for decarbonisation, aimed at both local and central governments in the country. Since April 2017, JCLP has been the Climate Group's Regional Delivery Partner on RE100, EP100 and EV100 initiatives in Japan.

In October 2020, JCLP issued "the Proposals for the Review of the Long-Term Energy Supply and Demand Outlook (Energy Mix)", calling on the government to set a target of 50% renewable electricity by 2030 to help achieve the 2050 net zero emissions goal.

https://japan-clp.jp/en