

Shikoku Electric Withdrew from the Coal Project in Sendai

– Sumitomo Corporation, business partner, should follow Shikoku Electric to fully cancel the project

10 April, 2018

Kiko Network

We welcome a decision by Shikoku Electric Power Company (YONDEN) breaking away from the coal-fire power generation project in Sendai. Transition from coal power is essential to realize a decarbonized society.

Sendai-Takamatsu Power Plant (tentative name) is the project to build 11.2MW biomass-coal co-firing power station in Sendai. YONDEN and Sumitomo Corporation announced their project in March, 2017 and began Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures following the city ordinance. In Sendai city, there is another new coal-fired power plant named “Sendai Power Station” owned by Kansai Electric Power (KANDEN) and Itochu Corporation. Although it has already started operation, 124 local residents had brought a lawsuit to stop construction and its operation. They show strong concerns towards the construction of the coal plant considering environmental issues such as huge CO₂ emissions, health impacts caused by air pollution, and influences on local ecosystem. While EIA is processing, close to 400 voices were submitted to the business operator. This unusually large number indicates a high level of consciousness on the plan. In addition to these strong opinions from residents, city government had decided to hold down further permission for new coal-fired power plants in December, 2017. This new policy does not apply to the already planned Sendai-Takamatsu project, however the city’s no-more-coal policy became very clear. These civil movements and new governmental policy might have certain influence on YONDEN’s decision making, though it says a reason for being out of this project is as unforeseeable financial prospect.

On the other hand, the business partner, Sumitomo Corporation, is insisting to carry on this project. However to say, coal-fired generation has significant impact on the environment and contains financial and managerial risks. Thinking of these negative prospective problems, Sumitomo Corporation should promptly cancel this Sendai-Takamatsu Power Plant’s plan. Also, we strongly encourage YONDEN to cancel another coal-fired power plant project, “Saijo New No.1” in Saijo city, Ehime. Saijo project is for a replacement and its EIA is currently on the process (second screening).

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