

Press Release

Japan to amend Act on the Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures: Kiko Network urges government to legislate 2050 net zero target and include a process to raise ambition

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Kiko Network
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The Japanese government plans to amend the Act on the Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures during the current ordinary session of the Diet that began on January 18, 2021. On October 26, 2020, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga pledged that Japan will reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero (carbon neutrality) by 2050, and now that Japan has set itself the goal of realizing a decarbonized society, it is of the utmost importance to amend the Act during the current Diet session. There is very little time left to achieve the goal of the Paris Agreement to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, so to reach the net zero emissions target it is crucial to make steady progress and accelerate efforts to tackle this challenge. We call on the government to achieve the following with the amendment of the Act during the current Diet session.

- Inscribe the 2050 net zero goal in legislation.

When amending the Act on the Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures, it is crucial to clearly state the goal of net zero by 2050 in order to ensure that Japan makes steady efforts going forward. The goal of net zero emissions has already become a shared target in Japan, facing no resistance from neither ruling nor opposition parties, and industry has welcomed it as well. In order to ensure that there is no wavering from or neglect of this goal, it is necessary to inscribe the goal clearly in legislation.

- Clearly state that the target will be raised every five years toward the 2050 goal.

To limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, it is necessary not only to aim for net zero emissions in 2050, but to cut global CO₂ emissions in half by 2030. To achieve these targets with certainty, it is crucial to incorporate frameworks to ensure that actions to achieve them will be steadily strengthened. The Paris Agreement requires countries to communicate their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) every five years, and they are encouraged to raise their level of ambition. Accordingly, the amended Act should be written to include a review and a strengthening of Japan's target every five years, and to create systems and mechanisms in Japan that correspond to the Paris Agreement.

- Integrate climate policy and energy policy.

Under current legislation, Japan's National Climate Action Plan is mandated under the Act on the Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures, while the Strategic Energy Plan is mandated under the Basic Act on Energy Policy. However, this separation results in significant obstacles due to the disconnect between the two in terms of timing, review bodies, and processes for the revision of either Plan, even though emissions from energy sources account for 90% of Japan's CO₂ emissions. In order to have integrated policy development, the government should link the two Plans and use the amendment of the Act on the Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures to stipulate that the review timing and decision processes shall be mutually integrated.

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