

NGO Joint Statement on G7 on Climate Change and Energy

G7 failed to take leadership to tackle catastrophic climate change

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'Climate Change and Energy' was one of the issues on the main agenda for G7 Ise-Shima Summit, however, the general meeting of G7 treated the issue as very low priority. It was completely inappropriate that G7 paid least attention to the greatest threat to humanity. In particular, the G7 failed to take political leadership on this issue at the first summit following the historic Paris Agreement, and missed an opportunity to maintain political momentum gained at the 2015 G7 summit in Elmau.

Japan is the only country in the G7 to push coal-fired power and is isolated in its position toward climate change and sustainable energy. As a consequence, minimal attention was paid to climate change and energy in this communiqué.

Key climate and energy points:

1. Timeline for Paris Agreement to enter into force in 2016:

The G7 reaffirms "the commitments to taking the necessary steps to secure ratification, acceptance or approval of the agreement as soon as possible and calls on all parties to do so striving for a goal of entry into force in 2016"

→This means the G7 countries agree to lead the ratification process by the end of 2016.

This also requires Japan to accelerate the process to ratify this year.

2. Formulating long-term low GHG emission development strategies well ahead of the 2020 deadline:

"G7 countries commit to formulating and communicating the formulating long-term low GHG emission development strategies" which is required by the Paris Agreement. This will ensure G7 countries formulate long-term low GHG emission development strategies well ahead of the 2020 deadline, which will also send a strong signal to Japan.

3. No policy on phasing out coal :

In order to achieve the 1.5-2C goal, it is imperative to stop constructing new coal-fired power plants. However, the communiqué did not make any mention of coal power.

4. Investment in upstream development :

It is problematic the G7 encourages investment in upstream development as the Paris Agreement made it clear that we cannot burn three quarters of remaining fossil fuels in the ground.

5. Elimination of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies

It is positive that the G7 outlined a specific timeline to eliminate inefficient fossil fuel subsidies by 2025. However, the definition of 'insufficient' is vague. G7 must define the term and eliminate all subsidies as soon as possible.

6. Investment in quality infrastructure :

One of the positive reasons to promote quality infrastructure is to tackle climate change and other related issues. However, the Annex paper "G7 Ise-shima principles for promoting quality infrastructure investment" does not match the Paris agreement, nor other mitigation plans.

7. Nuclear power as a solution to climate change :

The G7 proposal for nuclear power to contribute to cut GHG emissions is concerning. Nuclear power is not the solution to climate change. This proposal was included based on the will of Japanese government and other countries wishing to push nuclear power. It is clear that nuclear power will never be the big part of energy mix of Japan. Prime Minister Abe uses climate change as a pretext for achieving his short-sighted manifesto and for pushing dangerous and old-fashioned nuclear technology.

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