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J-POWER Withdrawal from New Coal Project in Takasago

-Climate Change Mitigation is Urgent and Withdrawal from Coal needs to be Accelerated-

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On April 27, 2018, J-POWER announced that a coal fired power plant replacement plan in Takasago, Hyogo was canceled. It was planned to abolish the existing plant No.1 and No.2 (250MW each) and built two new plants (600MW each), which were to start their operation from 2021 and 2027, respectively. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was on its process since 2014 and was about to submit the third document under the EIA. However, in 27th April, 2017, it was revealed that Takasago City Department of Living Environment was told by J-POWER that the submission of the document was delayed. Because of this, the plan had been seemed to be put in a freeze.

Local residents had been protesting against this project saying that the local government and city council should listen to the residents' voice during the EIA process. We welcome this outcome led by these continuous actions. If this project were to be realized, the amount of CO₂ emission would have increased 7 million tons per year (reference: total emissions from Takasago city is 2.4 million tons per year). The decision by J-POWER means the prevention of huge amount of CO₂ emission. This is a victory of civil movement that wants the Paris Agreement to be realized.

Since 2012, there has been 50 plans of new/additional coal fired power plant construction. Amongst them, 38 is still under planning, 8 has already been in operation and 4 has been canceled. This news about Takasago has changed this number as such; 36 is under planning and 6 has been canceled. The pathway towards the national goal of GHG emission reduction by 2030 is still unclear and coal projects make it difficult to achieve this goal. The Electric Power Council for a Low Carbon Society, a voluntary framework of the electric utility industry, has not been able to comply Ministers' agreement by the Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Economic, Trade and Industry, which articulates thermal power generation to be consistent with the 2030 national GHG target. Under this circumstances, the new coal project is unacceptable.

J-POWER has revealed that the consultations with Kansai Electric Power Company (KEPCO), - the major receiver of the electricity from existing Takasago power plant, was delayed and it needed to increase its competitiveness (Energy and Electricity, 2017/01/31). This abandonment is the sign of a changing situation of Japanese coal-fired power plant; weakened profitability.

Following to this decision, J-POWER should immediately cancel another plan Nishiokinoyama (tentative) No.1 that they have in Yamaguchi. Additionally, they need to stop the operation of the existing Takasago power plant urgently.