

Press Release

Kyoto City becomes Japan's first member of Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA)

Welcoming the decision to phase out coal on the path to zero carbon

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Kiko Network
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At the Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA)'s Global Summit 2021, which has been held online since March 2, the city of Kyoto became the first local government in Japan to declare membership to the PPCA. In a video message from the high-level plenary on the 2nd, the mayor of Kyoto announced that the city had joined the PPCA "to set the trend of phasing-out fossil fuel, including coal, and transitioning to renewable energy," expressing that Kyoto City is "aiming to achieve decarbonized society by encouraging the national government and energy suppliers to expand the use of renewable energy." Kyoto City is the 9th East Asian municipality to join the PPCA.

While there are no coal-fired power plants in Kyoto City, as the ground where the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, it has played a leading role in climate policy for local governments. In light of the need for OECD countries to phase out coal-fired power generation by 2030, through signing the PPCA Declaration, PPCA members "commit to phasing out existing unabated coal power generation and to a moratorium on any new coal power stations without operational carbon capture and storage, within their jurisdiction." In becoming a member to the PPCA, Kyoto is the first city in Japan to declare a phase-out policy for coal-fired power plants.

As the Japanese government continues its policy of using and expanding high-efficiency coal-fired power, we welcome this clear statement of coal phase-out policy from a local government as the first step in decarbonization.

Joining the PPCA was also a request from the youth on the frontlines of the climate crisis. In a proposal to Kyoto City on May 24, 2019, Fridays for Future Kyoto requested to the city concrete actions for a coal phase-out, citing as a key factor the poor reputation of Japan's climate policy due to Japan's stance of promoting coal-fired power both at home and abroad.

Currently, there are 160 coal-fired power plants are in operation in Japan, with 15 more planned and under construction. However, as of February 26, 289 Japanese local governments have declared to be a Zero Carbon City, and the number is growing day by day. These municipalities include several with coal-fired power plants, yet none have made any mention of coal power generation. Furthermore, although electric power companies are envisioning a transformation to zero-emission thermal power through co-combusting and later combusting hydrogen and ammonia, this is nothing more than an attempt to extend the life of the use of thermal power.

Kyoto City joining the PPCA shows the need for all local municipalities to look at the problems of Japan's energy structure and take the steps necessary to realize a carbon-free society, and we expect other municipalities to follow Kyoto City in becoming PPCA members. We also request the government to formulate a roadmap to phase out all coal-fired power plants - not only the inefficient ones - by 2030.

With the 10 new members that joined yesterday, including Kyoto City, PPCA members now include 36 national governments, 26 subnational governments, and 50 companies and other organizations.

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