



CAN-Japan Statement on NDC Submission by Government of Japan  
**Japan fails to do its part to fight climate crisis**

March 30, 2020

Climate Action Network Japan (CAN-Japan)

Parties to the Paris Agreement are required to submit updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) this year, but on March 30, the Japanese Cabinet's Global Warming Prevention Headquarters decided the NDC with target that is unchanged from the current level.

Anticipating an updated NDC, on January 23, CAN-Japan\* released a statement calling upon the government of Japan to do the following:

- Raise Japan's greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction target for 2030 to at least a 45-50% reduction from 1990, a greater reduction than the current NDC (26% reduction from 2013, equivalent to an 18% reduction from 1990).
- Give a higher priority to climate change measures, immediately launch an inter-ministry review process, and start a public consultation process.
- Revise the country's Climate Action Plan and Strategic Energy Plan in conjunction with a review of Japan's emission reduction targets. End the government's long-standing policies promoting nuclear and coal power; transition toward energy conservation and sustainable 100% renewable energy; end preferential subsidies and tax incentives for fossil fuels; and promote energy efficiency further by strengthening carbon pricing.

However, today the government of Japan made no attempt to strengthen its climate policy measures, and re-submitted the same NDC with no substantial changes. As for the review of reduction target in the NDC, it states that Japan will pursue mid and long term efforts to reduce GHG emissions beyond this level, and that the review will be carried out consistently with the revision of the energy mix so as not to wait for the five year NDC submission cycle, and Japan aims for aspiring figures to reflect further ambitious efforts. But the government has not clearly indicated any schedule for revision of the energy mix and review of emission reduction target. This stance fails to respond to the need for drastic emission cuts by 2030. Furthermore, by stating that Japan's submission of an updated NDC will use the latest energy mix, the government is in effect letting the energy mix revision process drive Japan's climate policies, rather than the other way around.

An even more significant issue is the complete absence of any public review process or discussion leading up to this re-submission of Japan's NDC. Its entire content was decided internally by the government, behind closed doors. CAN-Japan has consistently called for transparent processes and public participation. Not only has this NDC submission failed in that regard, it has also failed to recognize the importance of information disclosure and public participation as stipulated under the Paris Agreement, and the importance of ensuring that national government responses to climate change involve diverse actors, including local governments and citizens. This NDC was adopted by an undemocratic process, and is unacceptable as a response to a significant issue that will affect all the people of Japan.

CAN-Japan has stated three reasons Japan needs to strengthen its NDC and climate action: urgency based on scientific facts, international calls for action, and its responsibilities as one of the world's largest emitters. Japan's resubmitted NDC is not consistent with the need to increase ambition. The government is squandering the remaining decade that the IPCC has indicated is the window to avoid irreversible damage from climate change; ignoring calls for action from civil society, the UN Secretary General and the international community; and shirking its responsibilities as a developed country. The resulting message to the world is that the government of Japan is a laggard and dragging down international efforts.

CAN-Japan calls upon the government of Japan to recognize that stronger action must be taken by 2030 in order to avoid irreversible damage to the climate, and instead of adhering to Japan's current NDC targets for 2030, revise Japan's energy mix during the current year from the perspective of avoiding the climate crisis and keeping in mind the timing of COP26, quickly decide on a concrete schedule and process to raise Japan's emission reduction targets for the NDC, and begin a review of Japan's domestic policies and measures.

**Quotes from CAN-Japan members;**

**Kimiko Hirata** (International Director, Kiko Network and Representative, CAN-Japan) said, "In the face of the climate crisis, we have no time to delay actions. The Japanese government must choose between showing the ambition to lead and succeed, or settling for collective failure and the false comfort of empty words. Sadly, the NDC that Japan submitted is very much the latter. This failure will cost us all dearly. Japan should restart the process to review the NDC quickly to be able to update the 2030 target in the coming year."

**Takayoshi Yokoyama** (Team Leader, 350.org Japan) said, "It is extremely disappointing that the Japanese government submitted the NDC without any upward revisions... As the world's fifth largest emitter, Japan should take responsibility and lead towards a decarbonized society, not show a bad example to countries that have been seriously considering reductions."

**Naoyuki Yamagishi** (Leader, Climate and Energy Group, WWF Japan) said, "Japan missed yet another opportunity to show leadership for decarbonization. The government should have listened to the strong statement by the Japan Climate Initiative (JCI) calling upon the government for a stronger NDC and signed by 248 organizations, including major companies, local governments and other non-state actors."

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\* CAN-Japan is the Japanese node of the Climate Action Network (CAN), a network of more than 1,300 NGOs in more than 120 countries.