

CASA Position Paper

COP/MOP1 and the responsibility of Japan

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1 Increasing GHG emissions in Japan

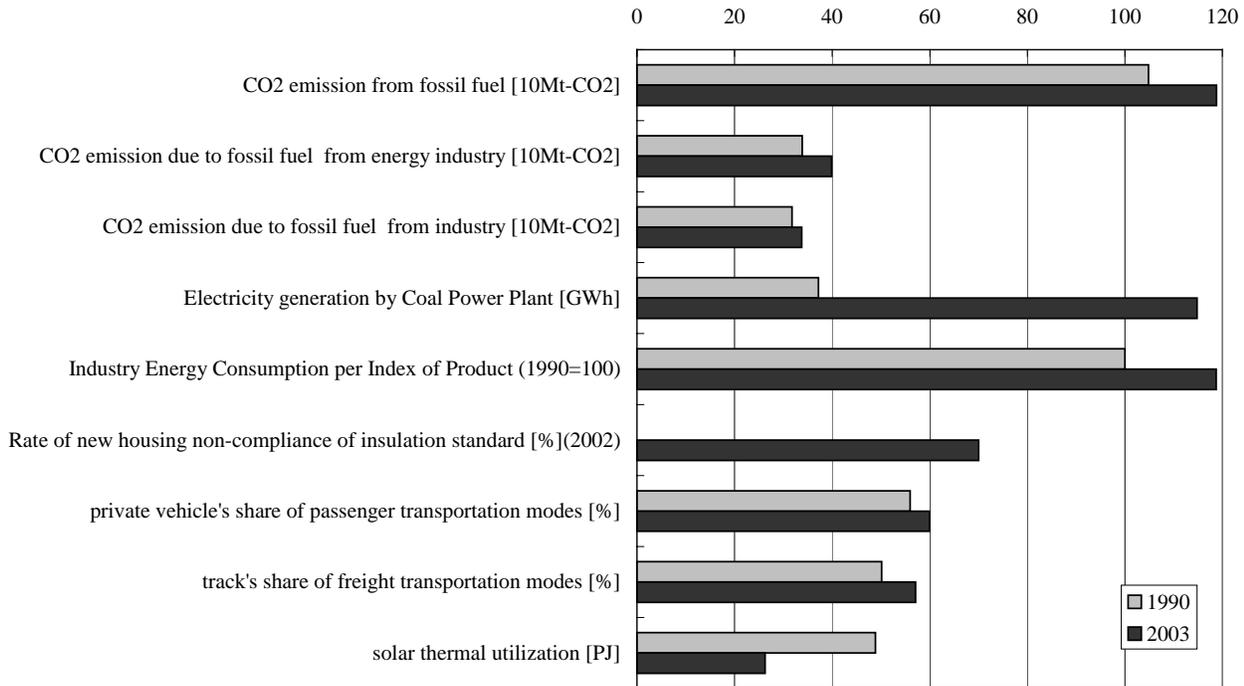
According to the latest figures announced by the government in October 2005, GHG emissions in 2004 increased by as much as 7.4% over the 1990 level and emissions of CO₂ alone increased by 11.5%. Not only will Japan fail to achieve its 6% reduction target, but it also shows no prospects to peak the emissions.

The capacity and the electric energy output of coal-thermal power plants tripled from 1990 to 2003, and around the same time, the energy consumption by mining and manufacturing per Indices of Industrial Production (IIP) rose by 20%. The share of transportation modes by private cars increased 4%, and that by truck increased 7% during the same time. On the other hand, renewable energy shows a downward trend, and the solar thermal utilization, which is the majority of the renewables, decreased by half. Natural gas in total primary energy supply accounts for 14% that is going up, but still less than the figures of coal.

As for HFC's, the Japanese government permitted the production of HFC's and permitted the increase of bulk. By 2004, the discharge of refrigerant HFC increased 5 times and that as insulating materials rose 2.3 times from the base year (1995).

This increase of GHG emissions attributes to the government's policy failure. It has left the power production and industrial sectors taking voluntary initiatives to reduce CO₂ emissions and take measures for HFC's, and spending 85% of public works investment on transport infrastructure for road construction, without regard to this emission increase.

Figure. CO₂ emission and Efficiency Trend in Japan



2 “Kyoto Protocol Target Achievement Plan” does not attain a 6% reduction

In reaction to the Kyoto Protocol's entry into force, the Japanese government passed a ministerial resolution of “Kyoto Protocol Target Achievement Plan” (hereafter the Achievement Plan), in April 2005, with which Japan should achieve 6% reduction from 1990 levels. However, this is merely nominal. The Japanese officers recognize that it is “the plan for non-achievement” that doesn't have any possibility to realize this 6% reduction. There are several reasons why the plan to achieve has ended up the plan for non-achievement.

First, although it stipulates many measures concerning climate change, it lacks concrete tactics for implementation, as well as clarification of any ideas to secure a practicable operation. Japan passed a ministerial resolution (“Action Program to Arrest Global Warming”) in 1990 that aimed CO₂ emissions per capita sustain at 1990 level by the year 2000, but its Achievement Plan doesn't reflect that failure.

Secondly, we can hardly see evidence of any drastic government measures such as the introduction of an environmental tax (carbon tax) or the utilization of renewable energy. As for an environmental tax, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has proposed its introduction, but the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) firmly opposed it. In the Achievement Plan, it says, “this is an issue that needs to have an overall consideration in sincerity,” postponing its introduction in a matter of fact manner.

The direct cause of why the Achievement Plan becomes “the non-achievement plan” lies in the heavy dependence on sinks such as forests. Japan finally managed to get 3.9% of emissions as sinks in Marrakesh. However, the Forestry Agency in charge of management on forests points out that it is difficult to reduce by as much as 3.9% under the present situation.

Furthermore, in spite of the fatalities and injuries caused by the critical accident in

Toukai Village in 1999 and by the Kansai Electric Corporation in Mihama in 2004, Japan still live up to its nuclear power plant depending policy line. This is an important factor that is preventing the promotion of renewable energy. The Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) legislated for more utilization of renewable energy, sets extremely low-targeted figures, and since it includes the waste power generation, the targets are mostly satisfied with waste power generation. As a result, it hinders the promotion of renewable energies.

However, the biggest problem seems to be the fact that the Japanese government doesn't have any long-term target. In May 2005, the committee of the MOE released a report saying "The idea of 2 temperature rise from pre-industrialized period could be the starting point at present in settling long-term targets." But as it is, the METI and the industrial world which have opposed viewpoints prevent the officials from discussing long-term target.

3 METI is turning their back to the Kyoto Protocol

According to two reports¹ that METI has drawn up concerning the post-2012 regime, we find its content extremely flawed where the Kyoto Protocol is seen as a failure and alteration of the Kyoto Protocol's basic structure such as the total emissions reductions, legally binding provisions, and the compliance scheme are asserted. The contents of those reports are as follows.

The short-term absolute differentiated reduction targets assume only in the dependence on present technology and do not promote technological development that would harm economic growth.

A present disciplinary compliance scheme of the Kyoto Protocol discourages incentive for participation.

The core of the commitment to a future framework should be centered on concrete programs such as support to developing countries, technological development etc.

The next commitment period should consider the lead-time for technology development so "it should be set in a certain fixed period (10 years from 2030 to 2040) in the future and until then, an intensity target" should be examined.

Although it is a discussion about the future framework, the reports do not refer to the level of serious impact that should be avoided and the level of long-term emissions reduction. Furthermore, we cannot see how drastic cutbacks to emissions are possible through measures such as support to developing countries and technological development, and how they could reduce more than to set a differentiated absolute target. If we set as long a commitment period as the reports propose, there is the high probability that it would not bring any positive measures during the short to mid term. It is clear that it would lead to a steady progress of measures if we introduce a long-term target that is suitable to achieve "the ultimate goal", and then set a mid-term and short-term targets.

The reports also insist that the compliance scheme of the Kyoto Protocol "discourages incentive for participation," but METI seems to have forgotten that only Japan and Russia opposed the legally binding force in Marrakesh at that time.

¹ "Perspectives and Action for Building a Future Sustainable Framework Concerning Climate Change" (July 2003) and "A Future Sustainable Framework Concerning Climate Change (Interim Summary [Draft])," (October 2004)

4 What the Japanese Gov. should do in Montreal

The issue that COP/MOP1 is facing is that it firstly has to adopt the Marrakesh accord as it is and enable the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol. Secondly, as we have an assignment from Marrakesh, a decision on compliance should also be adopted. Thirdly, we need to start the discussion about reduction target and regime for post-2012 and decide on a road map to decide when to end this discussion.

The adoption of the Marrakesh accord will not be a difficult matter, but when it comes to compliance with it, we still have a fresh memory that our government strongly opposed to have a force of law in Marrakesh, and this decision had to be postponed. We think that we need to adopt the decision on compliance in COP/MOP so that the compliance scheme functions. After COP/MOP decision, we need to amend the Protocol that gives legal vigor to the result of the compliance scheme. Japanese government should stop the quibble "The incentive of participation doesn't work" that even the US did not agree with and should make an effort to give it the force of law.

CASA thinks about the targeted reduction and the regime after 2012 as follows;

Reduction targets for the second commitment period and thereafter must naturally be substantially higher than those of the first commitment period.

The post-2012 regime should continue with the basic structures of Kyoto, including legally binding provisions, approximately 5 year short-term absolute reduction targets, compliance scheme etc.

The reduction target must be based on an objective index so that it can be determined automatically.

The METI proposal differs quite from that of CASA, creating quite a different regime after the first commitment period. However, if the Kyoto regime is not continued after 2012, there is a high possibility that the reduction target of the first commitment period be neglected, resulting in a failure of the Kyoto mechanism. This METI position might undermine first commitment period, and it clearly has no sense of crisis concerning advancing climate change, and shows a lack of will to stop it.

Article 3.9 under the Kyoto Protocol is provided for to start the discussion about the targeted reduction for the second commitment period from this year. It is an obligation in the Protocol for the parties to start discussion at COP/MOP1. In addition, we think the parties need to decide the end date when they agree on the reduction target for the second commitment period at COP/MOP1. The deadline should be by the end of 2007 before the first commitment period starts. Due to the fact that the fourth evaluation report of IPCC will be published in 2007, it may be possible to set the deadline to the end of 2008, if the time is insufficient for the discussion based on the finding of this report.

As a chair in COP3 where parties agreed to the Kyoto Protocol, Japan has the special responsibility to surely achieve the target and to make efforts to ensure smooth operation of this regime. Japan also has the responsibility to show leadership so that the Kyoto Protocol may succeed, by agreeing with the absolute reduction target and the system that is effective to stop climate change. We expect the Japanese government to fulfill those responsibilities in Montreal.

We do not deny that the participation of the U.S. that occupies 1/4 of the amounts of the emission in the world is necessary, and efforts are needed to return the U.S. to the protocol negotiation. However, with an easy target and a system in which the U.S participates readily, dangerous effects of climate change cannot be avoided, and we cannot fulfill our responsibility to future generations. 157 countries and region have ratified the Kyoto Protocol. We should not forget that massive majorities of the world are supporting this Protocol.