

**Open Letter: Japan’s “Zero Emissions” strategy is a fallacy  
Japan must support just and equitable transition from fossil fuels not “false solutions”**

Dear Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio,

We are writing to express our deep concern with the Japanese government’s efforts to promote and expand the use of fossil fuels at the upcoming Asia Zero Emissions Community (AZEC) Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo on March 4<sup>1</sup>. The initiative aims to promote decarbonization in Asian nations and cooperate on energy transition. Decarbonization must mean phasing out fossil fuels. Instead, Japan is spending over \$10 billion each year to develop new fossil fuel projects internationally and is promoting false solutions to address the climate crisis that will extend the life of fossil fuels far into the future.

From deadly floods in Pakistan to supercharged typhoons in the Philippines, extreme weather continues to ravage the planet. With the climate crisis intensifying day by day, we must make a swift, just and equitable transition from fossil fuels. As one of the world’s wealthiest nations and top contributors to the climate crisis, Japan has a responsibility to end its support for fossil fuels and to help countries transition to clean energy.

Thus, we demand you, Prime Minister Kishida, to commit to the following steps to ensure a meaningful, just and equitable energy transition in the region.

**1. Phase out coal completely, starting in Japan**

Japan must commit to phasing out coal by 2030. According to climate science, developed countries need to phase out coal by 2030 and other countries by 2040 to be consistent with the Paris climate goal<sup>2</sup>. However, Japan is still building and planning new coal fired power plants domestically.<sup>3</sup> It is only recently that Japan stopped financing new coal fired power projects overseas, and some plants are still under construction with the expectation to operate even after 2040. Japan must commit to a total coal phase out by 2030.

**2. Uphold G7 commitment and end international public finance for fossil fuels**

There should be no expansion of oil and gas in order to be consistent with the net zero energy path. In 2022, the G7 agreed to “commit to end new direct public support for the international unabated fossil fuel energy sector by the end of 2022”. However, the Japanese government shows no or little progress to implement this commitment and remains one of the world’s biggest fossil fuel financiers, even promoting gas as transition fuel. We urge Japan to stop financing coal, gas and oil.

In addition, Japan must stop derailing the energy transition of other countries by developing “decarbonization” plans that rely heavily on fossil fuels. For instance, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is drafting energy master plans for countries like Bangladesh as part of their technical assistance program. Through such public support, Japan is promoting fossil fuel-based technologies for other Asian countries in the guise of supporting carbon neutrality. Japan’s duplicitous efforts are not in line with the 1.5 degree climate goal and is leading countries towards more dependence on fossil fuels.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry News Release “Asia Zero Emissions Community (AZEC) Ministerial Meeting to Be Hosted” Dec 15 2022, [https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2022/1215\\_003.html](https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2022/1215_003.html)

<sup>2</sup> Climate Analytics “Coal Phase Out” <https://climateanalytics.org/briefings/coal-phase-out/>

<sup>3</sup> Japan Beyond Coal, <https://beyond-coal.jp/en/>

### 3. Stop promoting false solutions

A critical part of the Japanese government proposals for Asia's decarbonization is to promote the co-firing of ammonia, hydrogen and biomass at thermal power plants. The vast majority of ammonia and hydrogen is currently derived from fossil fuels, with substantial emissions. Japan's goal of co-firing 20% ammonia at domestic coal power plants by 2030 would still generate nearly double the greenhouse gas emissions compared to standard gas-fired power plants. Even at rates of 50% ammonia co-firing, emissions would be comparable to emissions from gas power generation<sup>4</sup>. Likewise, researchers have found that blue hydrogen co-firing can produce more greenhouse gas emissions than conventional gas-fired power generation<sup>5</sup>. Japan is also investing heavily in carbon capture and storage (CCS) despite being evaluated as costly, technologically difficult and ineffective at reducing GHG emissions. These dirty, risky technologies are only extending the life of fossil fuels.

### 4. Increase support for just, equitable transition to renewables

While Japan spends over \$10 billion on average each year on fossil fuels, renewable energy projects only get one eighth which averaged \$1.3 billion per year<sup>6</sup>. We urge the Government of Japan to stop financing fossil fuels and promoting false solutions and instead increase support towards clean energy that meets the needs of communities, respects human rights and is consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Contact:  
Friends of the Earth Japan  
info@foejapan.org

Signatories (140 organizations from over 18 countries)



<sup>4</sup> Transition Zero “The role of advanced coal technologies in decarbonising Japan’s electricity sector”  
<https://www.transitionzero.org/reports/advanced-coal-in-japan>

<sup>5</sup> Robert W. Howarth, Mark Z. Jacobson, “How green is blue hydrogen?”, Aug 12th 2021,  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/ese3.956>

<sup>6</sup> <https://priceofoil.org/2022/11/08/japans-dirty-secret/>



### International / Regional

Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD)

Asian Energy Network (AEN)

350.org Asia

NGO Forum on ADB

Market Forces

EarthRights International

South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE)

LDC Watch

## **Japan**

FoE Japan  
Mekong Watch  
Kiko network  
JACSES  
Greenpeace Japan  
JELF (Japan Environmental Lawyers for Future)  
350.org Japan  
Association for Protection of Marine Communities (AMCo)

## **Argentina**

Tierra Nativa - Amigos de la Tierra Argentina

## **Bangladesh**

Bangladesh Adivasi Samity  
Bangladesh Bacolight Shramik Federation  
Bangladesh Bhasaman Nari Shramik  
Bangladesh Bhasaman Shramik Union  
Bangladesh Chattra Sabha, BANGLADESH  
Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association  
Bangladesh Jatyo Shramik Federation  
Bangladesh Krishok Federation  
Bangladesh Krishok Sabha  
Bangladesh Bhumiheen Samity  
Bangladesh Rural Intellectuals' Front  
Bangladesh Sangjukto Shramik Federation  
Bangladesh Shramik Federation  
Charbangla Bittoheen Samobay Samity  
Emarat Nirman Shramik Bangladesh  
Ganochhaya Sanskritic Kendra  
Jago, Bangladesh. Garment Workers' Federation  
Life & Nature Safeguard Platform  
Motherland Garment Workers' Federation  
Progressive Peasants' Council  
Ready Made Garment Workers' Federation  
Voices for Interactive Choice and Empowerment (VOICE)  
Waterkeepers Bangladesh

## **Canada**

Friends of the Earth Canada

## **Georgia**

The Greens Movement of Georgia/FoE Georgia

## **Ghana**

AbibiNsroma Foundation ANF

## **India**

All India Womens' Hawker Federation  
Environics Trust  
Growthwatch  
Himalaya Niti Abhiyan (HNA)  
Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF)  
Mineral Inheritors Rights Association (MIRA)  
mines, minerals & People (mmP)  
Nadi Ghati Morcha  
National Hawkers Federation  
Project Affected People's Association (PAPA)

### **Indonesia**

Trend Asia  
WALHI Jawa Barat  
KRuHA  
Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (WALHI)  
AEER  
Greenpeace Indonesia

### **Myanmar/Burma**

Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN)

### **The Netherlands**

Both ENDS

### **Nepal**

All Nepal Peasants' Federation (ANPFa)  
Digo Bikas Institute (DBI)  
All Nepal Peasants' Federation (ANPFA)  
NGO Federation Nepal (NFN)  
Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN)  
National Alliance for Human Rights Human Rights and Social Justice-Nepal (HR Alliance)  
Jagaran Nepal  
All Nepal Women's Association (ANWA)  
TAFJA Nepal

### **Pakistan**

Agrarian's Collective Pakistan  
Akhuwat Kissan  
Anjuman e Muzareen e Punjab  
Cholistan Development Council  
Clean and Green Khai  
Climate Activists Collective  
Community Developers Association (CDA)  
Crofter Foundation  
Feminist Collective Pakistan  
Gilgit-Baltistan Social Welfare Organization  
Haqooq e Khalq Movement

Home Net Pakistan  
Indus Consortium  
Kissan Ikkat  
Kissan Karkeela  
Kissan Ravi Club  
Labour Education Foundation  
Labour Qomi Movement  
Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee (PKRC)  
Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF)  
Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER)  
Policy Research Institute for Equitable Development (PRIED)  
Progressive Student's Collective  
Sanga  
Sawera Foundation  
Sindh Hari Porchat Council  
Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)  
Tameer e Nau Women's Worker Organization  
Textile Powerloom Garments Workers Federation  
Vision Building Future  
Visionary Forum  
Young Reformers

**Papua New Guinea**  
CELCOR/FOE PNG

**Philippines**

350 Pilipinas  
Aniban ng Mangagawa sa Agrikultura (AMA)  
Atimonan Power for People  
Break- free Pilipinas, Break - free from Fossil Gas - Philippine Campaign  
Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino (BMP-Workers Solidarity)  
Camarines Norte Movement for Climate Justice  
Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development  
Concerned Citizens of Sta. Cruz , Zambales  
Gitib, Inc.  
Koalisyon Isalbar ti Pintas ti La Union (Coalition to Save the Beauty of La Union)  
Kongreso ng Pagkakaisa ng Maralita ng Lungsod (KPML)  
Limpyong Hanging para sa Kaugmanon sa Tanan (Clean Air for ALL) -Toledo, Cebu  
Oriang Women's Movement  
Partido Lakas ng Masa (PLM)  
Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ)  
Piglas- Batangas  
PMCJ- Cebu  
PMCJ- Davao  
PMCJ-Eastern Visayas  
PMCJ- Western Mindanao  
Quezon for Environment (QUEEN)  
Tagapagtanggol; ng Kalikasan sa Pagbilao (TKP)

S.A.V.E Luna  
SANLAKAS  
Youth for Climate Justice –Mindanao  
Youth for Climate Justice –Tacloban  
ZALIKA (Zambales Lingap Kalikasan)  
Zambales Movement for Climate Justice

**South Korea**

Korea Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM-FoE Korea)

**Thailand**

Climate Watch Thailand (CWT)  
Project SEVANA South-East Asia  
Mekong Energy and Ecology Network (MEENet)

**UK**

Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**US**

Mighty Earth  
Oil Change International  
Friends of the Earth United States  
Center for International Environmental Law