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. 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. However, Japan is still building and planning new coal fired power plants domestically. 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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2 Climate Analytics “Coal Phase Out” https://climateanalytics.org/briefings/coal-phase-out/
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 generation⁴. Likewise, researchers have found that blue hydrogen co-firing can produce more greenhouse gas emissions than conventional gas-fired power generation⁵. 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 year⁶. 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)

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

⁵ Robert W. Howarth, Mark Z. Jacobson, “How green is blue hydrogen?”, Aug 12th 2021,

⁶ 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 Bhumibeen Samity
Bangladesh Rural Intellectuals' Front
Bangladesh Sangjukto Shramik Federation
Bangladesh Shramik Federation
Charbangla Bittoheen Samobay Samity
Eamarat 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