9 November 2026

## Open Letter: At COP31, the EU and Japan Should Stand Together on Methane and Against Trump's Energy Dominance Agenda

Dear Prime Minister Takaichi, President von der Leyen, and legislators in Japan and in the EU,

Facing the worsening climate crisis, we, the undersigned 50 civil society organizations from Japan, Europe and beyond, call on the EU and Japan to stand together on methane reduction and against Trump's energy dominance agenda. COP31 in Antalya is a moment for Japan and the European Union to lead with new and stronger commitments.

Both the EU and Japan have led on methane, but both are now moving backwards. The European Commission has proposed a one-year delay to the import requirements of the EU Methane Regulation (EUMR). In October, the EU parliament voted in favor of a three-year delay of the EUMR. On Nov 6, 2026, the EU Council agreed on the Commission's proposal for a one-year-postponement which might be the final outcome. Japan has started to deliver public financial support to US fossil infrastructure under its tariff deal with the Trump administration, and the EU is being pushed down the same path, despite clear economic and climate risks. Real energy security means - first and foremost - reducing our dependence on imported fossil fuels, and strong methane rules serve the interests of both Japan and Europe.

**Japan and the EU have shared interest** in getting out of the same fossil dependency that comes with a high price for our economies and climate and leads households into energy poverty. Fossil fuels still supply about 80% of Japan's primary energy, and 95% of its crude oil comes from the MENA region. Europe buys two-thirds of its LNG from the United States, a share expected to reach 80% by 2030. This dependence comes at a cost. In Japan, for instance, the Hormuz crisis drove up fuel import bills by 58.7% and its LNG import bill by 29.7% from a year earlier. In July the yen fell close to 164 to the US dollar, partly because of these expensive fossil fuel imports. Europe paid over 100 billion Euro more for energy since the Iran war - without importing more fossil fuels. Implementing ambitious methane mitigation measures both in the EU and in Japan would incentivize more efficient supply chains and help end this dangerous fossil fuel dependency.

**Furthermore, we face the same threats.** In return for lower tariffs, Japan agreed to invest up to USD 550 billion in the US, including fossil gas projects and to buy around USD 7 billion of US energy a year, including LNG. The EU promised to buy USD 750 billion of US energy and invest USD 600 billion by 2028. These investments and trade deals risk deepening the fossil dependency even further and have the potential to undermine our sovereignty.

**Moreover, the EU and Japan have shared commitments.** Both championed the Global Methane Pledge. Japan initiated CLEAN to collect methane data from LNG projects. Both Japan and the European Commission are supporters of the COP30 statement to drastically reduce

methane emissions in the global fossil fuel sector. In October 2024, Japan and the European Commission issued a joint statement on LNG importers' initiative alliance for methane mitigation, committing to reduce methane emissions from the LNG value chain. Both also committed to "end new direct public support for the international unabated fossil fuel energy sector by the end of 2022" in the 2022 G7 leaders' communiqué.

**However, Japan and the EU also share a broken promise**, since both continue to finance fossil fuels. In 2024, the emissions from the fossil fuel projects financed by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) reached about 408 million tonnes of CO2e (GWP20), which was more than the annual emissions of France, the UK or Italy. Some European public financiers, including those of Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, also continued to finance fossil fuels after the end-2022 deadline, violating the commitment made in the Clean Energy Transition Partnership.

We therefore call upon you to:

1. **Hold the line on methane.** We join the 99 US organizations that wrote to the EU and demand that the EU reject industry pressure to weaken the EUMR, and to stand firm against the Trump administration's bullying. The Government of Japan should publicly support the EUMR, as it also serves its own CLEAN initiative's purpose of enhancing transparency in upstream methane emissions and mitigation measures. To lead global methane reduction alongside the EU, Japan should push CLEAN beyond its current voluntary, transparency-focused approach and advocate for binding regulatory requirements on companies to deliver measurable methane reductions, in line with the ambition of the EUMR. The EU should stop giving in to political pressure that is weakening core climate and energy policies, and put in place sufficient safeguards to ensure continued implementation of the EUMR, while the negotiations on delaying the import framework are happening.
2. **Stop the US from driving the EU and Japan into ever deeper fossil dependency with tariff threats**. Defending the EU's and Japan's climate commitments and obligations means defending our sovereignty and energy independence.
3. **End fossil finance and press for methane cuts as the biggest financiers.** Public and private financial institutions in Japan and Europe should end finance for fossil fuel projects. Europe in particular should not copy the Japanese model, in which public finance backs fossil fuel projects abroad to create LNG demand for trading. It has brought huge financed emissions and serious harm to local communities across the globe. As major financiers of the gas industry, these institutions should press the developers they already finance for measurement-based MRV, and methane mitigation measures such as leak detection and repair, and an end to routine venting and flaring.
4. **Cut fossil fuel imports and lead at the "electrification COP."** Commit to cutting fossil fuel imports and support a global electrification target that is built on renewables, reduces

fossil fuel dependence, and delivers for people without energy access, without repeating the harms of extraction. Energy efficiency and sufficiency should be an integral part of the electrification agenda. Türkiye and Australia, which are leading COP31, have made electrification a defining priority and aim to electrify 35% of global energy use by 2035. This is where Japan and the EU can show real leadership with initiatives such as the EU Electrification Action Plan and AccelerateEU.

5. **Legislators Join Hands.** Legislators across the Atlantic have already joined forces. On September 18, US lawmakers and members of the European Parliament wrote jointly in support of the EUMR. We call upon Japanese and European legislators to respond to civil society in both regions and to stand together for stronger methane mitigation and an end to fossil dependence, including through the Joint Parliamentary Committee now under consideration.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of our requests. We look forward to seeing Japan and the EU stand together at COP31 and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

*FoE Japan*

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*Deutsche Umwelthilfe*

*Environmental Investigation Agency*

*Japan Center for a Sustainable Environment and Society (JACSES)*

*Connected Advocacy*

*EKOenergy ecolabel*

*Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED)*

*Energy Shift Southeast Asia*

*Power for People Coalition*

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*Les Amis de la Terre France*

*RAC - Climate Action Network France*

*Institute for Sustainable Development Foundation*

*Green Transition Denmark*

*Workshop for All Beings*

*Polski Klub Ekologiczny Okręg Mazowiecki*

*Polish Green Network*

*Friends of the Earth Europe*

*Society for the Earth*

*Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczne EKO-UNIA, Poland*

*For a Better Bayou*

*Debt Observatory in Globalisation (ODG)*

*Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe*

*Food & Water Europe*

*Centre for Transport and Energy*

*Tonn na Clé*

*Fossielvrij Netherlands*

*Better Brazoria: Clean Air and Water*

*urgewald*

*Solutions for Our Climate*

*Instrat*

*Oil Change International*

*Mekong Watch*

*Ecologistas en Acción*

*Gas No Es Solución*

*ECODES*

*Kiko Network*

*Stop Shannon LNG*

*Love Leitrim*

*Razom We Stand*

*Rinascimento Green*

*South Texas Environmental Justice Network*

*Campagna Per il Clima Fuori dal Fossile*

*Coordinamento Nazionale No Triv*

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*Zukunftswerkstatt Wilhelmshaven*

*Futureproof Clare*

*CEE Bankwatch Network*