



Japan: NDC We Don't Want

On, March 31, 2020 Japan was the first of the G7 countries to submit an updated NDC. However, the document presented is actually a resubmission of their 2015 NDC with the same goal set in 2015 of reducing its emissions by 26% in 2030 from 2013 levels. Therefore, it is not in line with the Paris Agreement ratchet mechanism as it presents no enhanced ambition or improvement from its previous version.

Submitting an unchanged NDC for the sake of meeting the 9 to 12 months deadline established by the Paris Agreement sent a negative political signal to the international community. Japanese and international civil society have demanded that Japan resubmits its NDC with enhanced ambition.

The submission also added that revisions to Japan's NDC "will be carried out consistently with the revision of the energy mix" rather than having to wait for the next five-year milestone of the Paris Agreement.

According to the Checklist for the NDCs We Want and taking into account that Japan is one of the world's most prosperous countries and the fifth largest emitter, we consider that its NDC is an **NDC We Don't Want**.

Advances

The introduction to the Japanese resubmitted NDC mentions two advances after the 2015 INDC: the Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures, launched in May 2016; and the Long-term Strategy, submitted to the UNFCCC in June 2019.

The submission also added that revisions to Japan's NDC "will be carried out consistently with the revision of the energy mix" rather than having to wait for the next five-year milestone of the Paris Agreement. However, there are no dates scheduled for such revision.

Gaps

The main gap of the Japanese NDC is the lack of enhanced ambition. According to CAT's evaluation, Japan's current policies are projected to meet its "Highly Insufficient" 2030 NDC target. It also fails to change the heavily coal-dependent Japanese pathway. Demands from Japanese Civil Society¹ unfulfilled by the Japanese Government, were:

Raising Japan's greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction target for 2030 to at least a 45-50% reduction from 1990 (the current target is a 26% reduction from 2013, equivalent to an 18% reduction from 1990).

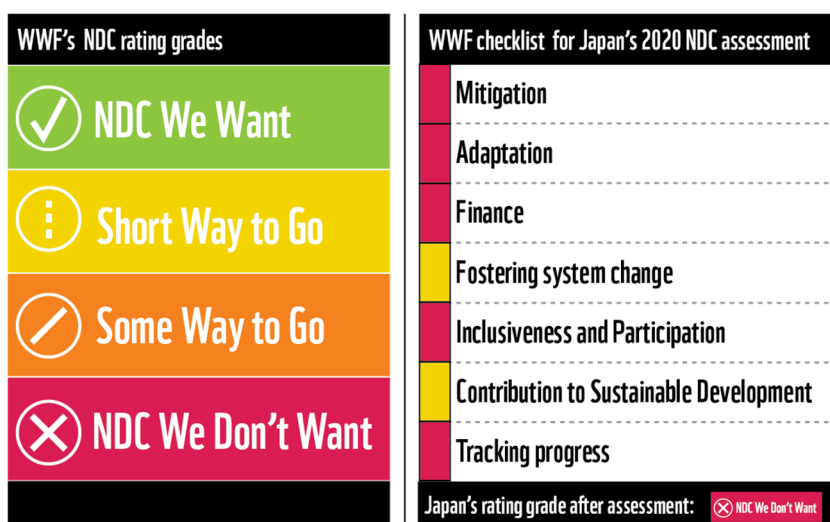
Launching an inter-ministry review process and a public consultation process.

Revising the country's Climate Action Plan and Strategic Energy Plan, moving away from nuclear and coal power; transitioning towards energy conservation and sustainable 100% renewable energy; ending preferential subsidies and tax incentives for fossil fuels; and promoting energy efficiency further by strengthening carbon pricing.

¹ Japanese Climate Action Network, 2020, available at https://www.can-japan.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CAN-Japan_Statement-on-NDC-Submission-by-Government-of-Japan_20200330.pdf

The lack of a public review process or discussion of Japan's NDC is another significant gap. Japan did not disclose information prior to the NDC submission and did not engage diverse actors such as private sector, NGOs, local governments. A strong statement by the Japan Climate Initiative (JCI) calling upon the government for a stronger NDC and signed by 248 organizations, including major companies such as SONY and Panasonic, local governments such as Tokyo and Kyoto, and other non-state actors, was not considered.

Another aspect worth mentioning is that, although having an adaptation plan and a long-term strategy, Japan does not present information on other aspects than mitigation, which would be needed for the clarity, transparency and understanding of the country's contribution to the Paris Agreement.



For more information

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