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# Japan's Ambivalent Diplomacy on Climate Change

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Céline Pajon

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**Ifri**  
27, rue de la Procession  
75740 Paris Cedex 15 – France  
Tel: +33 (0)1 40 61 60 00  
Email: [ifri@ifri.org](mailto:ifri@ifri.org)

**Ifri-Bruxelles**  
Rue Marie-Thérèse, 21  
1000 Bruxelles – Belgique  
Tel: +32 (0)2 238 51 10  
Email: [info.bruxelles@ifri.org](mailto:info.bruxelles@ifri.org)

Internet Website: [Ifri.org](http://Ifri.org)



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Layout assistant: Amira KORKOR



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Japan has been a central and unique player on the climate change issue, ranked in 1990 both as the second global economic power and as the country with the highest energy-efficiency level in the world. However, Japan's diplomacy on the issue has been ambivalent. The importance for Japan to act as a leader pushed it to host the third Conference of the Parties, to accept a -6% emissions reduction target, and to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Japanese international cooperation on climate change, especially in the Asian region, is also significant and highly appreciated. However, the predominance of the industry-led coalition on the elaboration of a climate change policy resulted in a heavy reliance on flexibility mechanisms and carbon offsets to reach the Kyoto emissions reduction target, and on a strong lobbying strategy on part of the industrial sector to change the rules of the game of the Kyoto regime.

This ambivalent diplomacy can be explained by the way Japanese actors interpreted and reshaped norms and principles on the prevention of climate change.

In particular, the Japanese domestic experience tackling industrial pollution and achieving high energy efficiency in the 1970s and 1980s has served as the dominant narrative within which the norm pertaining to climate change has been framed, with three main implications: (1) the successful history of Japanese industry in terms of energy-efficiency was a double-edged sword when it came to implementing a climate change prevention policy and justified Tokyo's reluctance to commit to ambitious reduction targets, (2) technological breakthrough is seen as the solution for pollution control and energy efficiency, and (3) Japan considers its model a very successful one and exports it to developing countries. As a result, Japan appears as a leader in the field of international cooperation on climate change, especially in Asia.

In addition, the peculiar Japanese political decision-making process led to:

-on the one hand, difficulty in imposing a political leadership to coordinate the different approaches of domestic actors. The process thus often resulted in sub-optimal negotiations postures at the international level, where Japan acted as a mediator rather than a leader;

-on the other hand, the relative domination of the industry-led coalition at the domestic level resulted in attempts to reshape some of the core principles of the Kyoto Protocol,

by promoting Japanese-style bottom-up approaches (pledge and review, sectoral approaches, voluntary agreements).

As a result, Japan's unique approach to tackling climate change has been considered unorthodox by frontrunner countries and NGOs because it seems to contradict some of the core principles of the Kyoto Protocol. This ambivalence of the Japanese diplomacy casts shadow on the country's bid to be a leader on the issue.

Such an ambivalent posture could however be consolidated in the post-Copenhagen context, in which core norms on the governance of climate change are being reassessed. Specifically, bottom-up, pledge and review, and voluntary approaches are increasingly considered appropriate practices and equitable rules. Reflecting on its experience and experiments, Japan should seize this window of opportunity to upload, at the international level, its own long held preferences for bottom-up, pragmatic solutions that bring together governments and industry, favor consensus between parties, and promote the feasibility and fairness of commitments.

Japan provides innovative approaches that resonate strongly with the requirements of new state actors, which are key to any efficient global solution on the prevention of climate change. The success of Japanese environmental cooperation in Asia demonstrates the importance of pragmatic and co-benefit solutions when addressing this issue.

But Japan should also quicken its pace at the domestic level in order to achieve its Kyoto reduction target and lead by example. The introduction of economic instruments that put a price on carbon is necessary to improve the credibility of domestic Japanese climate change prevention and mitigation policy.

The challenge for the future governance on climate change is to develop innovative solutions that combine stringent environmental standards, flexible management, and the consideration of countries' specific needs and characteristics. Japan could play an instrumental role in the upcoming negotiations by reflecting on its own experience and achieving a synthesis between its particular bottom-up approach and ambitious objectives for emissions reduction.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In order to elaborate sound and effective climate change policies, and based on the Japanese example, the IFRI's Health and Environment programme formulates the following recommendations for decision makers, in Japan and elsewhere. In the

current climate change global regime, states remain key actors whose policies and decisions have a major impact on the way we manage climate change.

### 1) At the domestic level:

The first step in the achievement of an effective policy on climate change is the implementation of strong and credible measures at the national level. The Japanese case gives some examples of the existing options for governments wishing to strengthen their climate change policies.

- Diversify tools. While voluntary approaches have proved quite effective in the Japanese context, they are showing their limits in terms of further improvement of emission reductions.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, it may be necessary for Japan to introduce market-based instruments, such as feed-in tariffs, cap-and-trade systems, and taxes, as soon as possible in order to give positive signals and incentives. This would increase the current momentum toward achieving the Kyoto reduction target. Moreover, the Japanese domestic policy on climate change would gain credibility by putting a price on carbon.
- Build on Japanese experiences and ideas. Japan could seek to reconcile its unique experience, involving a voluntary, bottom-up approach, with the necessity to introduce ETS and green taxes. This could facilitate the process of designing a system suited to its domestic context in terms of energy performance and competitiveness. Furthermore, the DPJ government should clearly state its position regarding the use of the sectoral approach.
- Improve the governance on climate change by enhancing governmental coordination. Lack of intra-governmental communication and cooperation prevents the elaboration of a consistent and coordinated approach to tackle the issue of climate change. A supra-bureaucratic organ should coordinate the different administrations. In

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<sup>1</sup> The NGOs blame the VEA and the Keidanren Voluntary Action Plan for their lack of transparency and ambition regarding targets and actual achievements: "*In the Keidanren Voluntary Action Plan, most industry groups have selected indices that have been increasing since 1990, artificially creating energy-saving records by manipulating the use of target indices at their own discretion.*" Kiko Network, *False or True? : The Keidanren Voluntary action Plan in Japan. A Typical Example of "Pledge and Review" System*, Bali, COP 13/MOP 3, December 2007, p. 3, <[http://2050.nies.go.jp/3rdLCSWS/related/related2\\_KimikoHirata.pdf](http://2050.nies.go.jp/3rdLCSWS/related/related2_KimikoHirata.pdf)>, last accessed 5 May 2010.

the Japanese case, the Prime Minister's office (*kantei*) could play such a role. The coordination role of the *kantei* should be reassessed and strengthened.

- Empower climate change decision-makers by promoting consultations with independent experts, practitioners, and NGOs. In Japan, a standing, independent advisory committee could be established to give recommendations to the government. The emergence of independent think tanks on the climate change issue should be encouraged.
- Improve the public communication and information campaign. Getting a consensus at the domestic level on policies on climate change is the first step towards the elaboration of an effective and ambitious policy at the domestic level, but also towards the constitution of a strong position at the international level. The Japanese government should widely advertise the economic opportunities offered by the transition efforts toward a low-carbon economy.

## **2) At the international level:**

- Bridge the gap between the development and climate change communities. The lack of communication and exchange between the development community and experts on climate change issues could be bridged in Japan either by establishing a pool of mixed experts on climate change and development that could act as an advisory organ, or by institutionalizing the exchange of experts in order to promote information sharing.
- Make efforts to provide additional funds for mitigation and adaptation activities through the increase of the ODA budget and the promotion of innovative sources of funding.

## **3) Recommendations for the Japanese government:**

- Accept a more visible leadership role, take more risks. Beyond the climate change issue, it seems important to establish trust and international legitimacy through a consistent Japanese approach to environmental protection. In particular, Japan's stance on whaling greatly damages its image on the international scene.
- Consult and coordinate with like-minded partners such as the EU to develop synergies. There is a clear demand from European countries to work more with Japan in order to advance common interests and increase their leverage in negotiations.

# INTRODUCTION

*The keys to Japan's success were our outstanding technologies, social mechanisms and traditions harmonious with the environment and the solid will of our people. [...] We will demonstrate the "Japan model" in the world, which utilises its traditions and advanced technologies to create a society in harmony with the environment.*

*Prime Minister, Abe Shinzo, Speech on Invitation to "Cool Earth 50"*

The outcome of the Copenhagen conference deepened the perception of crisis with respect to the UNFCCC framework. International governance on climate change seems to be increasingly fragmented, and increasingly determined by the national level of policymaking, rather than the global one. The future of an effective climate change regime seems, today more than ever, to rely on its ability to engage new key actors to commit on shared norms, defined as "standard[s] of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity".<sup>3</sup> In this context, it is interesting to come back to the

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\* I would like to thank all interviewees for their time and cooperation. I also would like to thank all of the anonymous reviewers who contributed to the peer review of this report, including the six reviewers who attended the closed peer-review seminar on the first draft that was held in Paris in April 2010. All their remarks were very useful for the development of this report to its final state.

<sup>2</sup> 24 May 2007, Tokyo.

<sup>3</sup> M. Finnemore and K. Sikkink, "International Norms Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization*, vol. 52, n° 4, Autumn 1998, p. 891. According to S. Krasner's definition, norms are, with principles, rules, and decision-making procedures, at the core of the formation of an international regime. S. Krasner (ed.), *International Regimes*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1980, p. 2.

process that led to the adoption of and compliance with international norms on the prevention of climate change.

From this perspective, Japan provides a fascinating case-study for a number of reasons. Japan has been a central and unique player on the climate change issue, ranked in 1990 as both the second global economic power and the country with the highest energy-efficiency level in the world. Japan, as an Asian country, reveals a specific model of development that has been highly influential among its neighbors. Nowadays, Asian countries account for more than 40% of total Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and their level of engagement in the climate change regime is a central issue in international negotiations on climate change. Japan has been under significant pressure and has had to work around considerable constraints, both domestically and externally, in the elaborate process of articulating its policy on climate change. Despite such pressures, Japan has been able to design innovative solutions and approaches to tackle the climate change issue in an effective way. This approach can provide useful elements to design a successful post-2012 regime and help rally key actors.

The objective of this study is thus to provide clues to understanding the process of norm creation, implementation and diffusion, through the analysis of Japan's diplomacy on climate change.

Since the 1990s, Japan has presented itself as an environmental leader, apparently enthusiastically embracing international norms of environmental protection. Among global environmental concerns, global warming/climate change has become one of the major and most pressing issues in international negotiations.<sup>4</sup> Tokyo perceived global environment protection as a diplomatic niche through which it could make an international contribution and build on its comparative advantage as a leader on green technologies and a major development aid donor. Accordingly, important diplomatic efforts have been devoted to shape and promote climate change norms. One symbol

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<sup>4</sup> In this study, I will use the terms "climate change" and "global warming" interchangeably to denote the various transformations in the climate system that are brought by an increased concentration of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere. In Japan, the phrase "global warming" (*chikyu ondanka* – 地球温暖化) is more frequently used but recently the term "climate change" (*kiko endo* – 気候変動) has become mainstream.

of this commitment is the Kyoto Protocol, one of the few international agreements that bear the name of a Japanese city.

However, Japan's positioning toward the ratification and implementation of the Kyoto Protocol has been quite confusing. Reluctant to accept binding commitments in the absence of other major emitters like the United States (US), China and India, Tokyo is regularly singled out in international conferences as the "fossil of the day" – or a nation that impedes the negotiation process – by environmental NGOs. Despite this mixed record in the negotiations, Japan can be considered a leader on development aid for climate change-related projects.<sup>5</sup> The Japanese posture on climate change thus appears quite ambiguous, and sometimes even contradictory.

I argue that this ambivalent diplomacy can be explained by looking at how Japanese actors interpreted and adapted the global norm on the prevention of climate change and the core principles attached to the international regime on global warming.

Indeed, the norm of climate change prevention has not been passively accepted at the domestic level by Japanese policymakers and citizens, but has been reshaped and transformed within the Japanese domestic context. The strong resonance of the climate change norm within the Japanese domestic context did not, however, prevent the Japanese policy on the issue to end up, at times, in opposition with some of the core principles of the climate change regime.

In this report, I will use a broad definition of the "climate change prevention norm," referring to the common understanding that was reached at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 between 172 governments on the need to take urgent action to stabilize the emissions of greenhouse gases in order to prevent potential interference with the climate system.

I will also refer to the core principles or core norms that constitute the climate change issue, as defined by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the successive declarations issued by the Conferences of the Parties (COPs), as well as the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). I consider these sets of principles and norms

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<sup>5</sup> Japan is the largest donor of climate change-related ODA. See: OECD, *Aid targeting the objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, OECD, Paris, 2009, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/8/44187916.pdf>>, last accessed 26 January 2010.

developed within the UN framework as the referent ones, which define the “appropriateness” and “inappropriateness” of actions and approaches taken to tackle the climate change issue. Among these, the norms of “common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities” (UNFCCC-Article 3-1); “sustainable development” (UNFCCC-Art. 1-4); provision of “new and additional resources” by industrialized countries to fund the mitigation and adaptation efforts of developing countries (UNFCCC-Art. 4-3); facilitation of environmentally sound technology (UNFCCC-Art. 4-5); and use of the Kyoto mechanisms as supplemental to domestic action of emission reduction (COP 6 Part 2 – Core Elements for the Implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, VI-1-5) will be referred to in this report.

The appropriateness of Japanese climate change policy and diplomacy is measured by looking at the relative distance between Japanese approaches and these principles.

However, these principles have been evolving over time. Transformations of international governance on climate change have brought about new understandings on what practices and rules are considered appropriate and equitable. The Copenhagen conference and subsequent accord institutionalized these emerging norms.<sup>6</sup>

In this post-Copenhagen context, characterized by the redefinition of core norms regarding international climate change governance and practices, Japan's unique experience should be reassessed. Reflecting on its own actions and interpretations of the core principles related to the climate change issue, Japan has a major role to play in shaping the preferences of key actors after Copenhagen. This international debate on global warming could present Japan with another moment to stand out.

In this study, I will give special attention to the domestic level, which has been critical in shaping the country's position in international negotiations.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, I argue that in the Japanese case, the domestic context and the structure of its political system were determinant in translating the climate change prevention norm for the domestic level and in shaping Japanese diplomacy on the issue.

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<sup>6</sup> E. Broughton, “Copenhagen. Le bilan et l'avenir,” *Politique Etrangère*, vol. 75, n° 2, Summer 2010 (Forthcoming).

<sup>7</sup> R. D. Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games”, *International Organization*, vol. 42, n° 3, Summer 1988, pp. 427-460.

The report is organized into five chapters. The first chapter will show that while Japan decided to commit on the climate change issue primarily to signal its international involvement, the country also built on a fertile historical and cultural context, in which norms relative to climate change prevention found strong resonance. In the second part, I will show how international and domestic pressures constrained Japanese policymaking. As a result, Tokyo played the role of mediator, rather than leader, in international negotiations leading up to the Kyoto summit. The next chapter shows how the industry-led coalition influenced the way Japan has been trying to fulfill its emissions reduction target, but also has been promoting alternative principles on which to build a more beneficial post-2012 regime. The fourth chapter shows how Japan spreads its specific approach to the climate change issue to its neighbors through its international cooperation strategy. In the last chapter, I will attempt to give an assessment of Japanese diplomacy on climate change before evaluating the reality of the breakthrough brought about by the DPJ (Democratic Party of Japan), elected in August 2009. Reflecting on the main results emerging from the study, I will finally propose some recommendations for Japan to strengthen its position and play a major role in the upcoming international negotiations on climate change.

This report is based on an extensive review of the literature on Japanese climate change diplomacy and Japanese environmental cooperation, as well as an analysis of governmental reports published by the Japanese Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of the Economy, Trade and Industry, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). I also conducted 18 semi-directive interviews in Paris and Tokyo with concerned experts, civil society actors, and members of Japanese administration and parliament. The study was also reviewed by 15 experts in Paris.

#### **Japan's Emissions Profile**

Japan is today the fifth largest emitter of Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the world after China, the US, the EU, Russia and India. The country is responsible for 4.3% of total emissions (compared to 21.5% for the US, and around 20% for China). Its per capita emissions are around 10 metric tons (US=19 tons, China=4.5 tons, EU=9 tons). In 2006, its carbon intensity (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per unit of GDP) was one-fifth below the OECD average.

Under the Kyoto Protocol, ratified by Japan in June 2002, the greenhouse gases subject to quantified emissions reduction

commitments are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>). Japan committed to reduce its emissions by 6% from 1990 levels by 2012.

The target achievement plan ("Kyoto Protocol Achievement Plan"), approved in a Cabinet Decision on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2005, and revised on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008, states that 3.8% of the reductions will be achieved through carbon sinks (two thirds of Japanese territory is covered by forests, although these are declining), 1.6% through Kyoto mechanisms and 0.6% through actual reductions on Japanese territory.

As GHG emissions in Japan actually increased by 9%, the reduction effort to achieve Japan's emissions reduction targets by 2012 should therefore be stepped up, to reach -15% from 1990 levels.

According to the Ministry of Environment (MOE), in 1990, 84% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions came from energy sources, among which 45.5% were from the industrial sector, 20.5% from the transportation sector, 15.5% from the commercial sector, 12% from the residential sector, and 6% from energy industries (see chart below). In 2007, emissions from the industrial sector actually decreased by 2.3% compared to 1990, while other sectors grew rapidly: +43.8% for the commercial sector, +41.2% for the residential sector, and +22.2% for the energy conversion sector due to the shutdown of nuclear power plants in 2002, 2004, and after the Niigata 2007 earthquake (see annex 1). The huge difference between sectors in terms of energy intensity should be noted.

Between 1973 and 2005, energy efficiency improved by 20% in the steel industry, by 29% in the chemical industry, by 52% in the paper-making industry and by 24% in the cement industry. As a result, Japan's industrial energy efficiency level is one of the highest among IEA countries.

The Japanese government is basing its calculations for emissions reduction on the good record of its industrial sector to argue that its room of improvement in terms of energy

efficiency is small. However, the potential for emissions reduction is actually very significant in the sectors of office construction, heating of homes and buildings, and transport.

Japan's emissions compared to national productivity are among the lowest in the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), according to the Institute of Energy Economics Japan, a government think tank. Japan emitted 244 metric tons of carbon dioxide per \$1 million of GDP in 2006, compared with the OECD average of 444 tons. The US emitted 510 tons, China emitted 2,685 tons, and Russia emitted 4,190 tons.

*Sources: International Energy Agency, Key World Energy Statistics 2008, Paris, <[http://www.iea.org/Textbase/nppdf/free/2008/Key\\_Stats\\_2008.pdf](http://www.iea.org/Textbase/nppdf/free/2008/Key_Stats_2008.pdf)>, last accessed 22 April 2010; Website of the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO), <<http://www.nedo.go.jp/english/index.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010; Greenhouse Gas Inventory office of Japan, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Tokyo, <<http://www-gio.nies.go.jp>>, last accessed 22 April 2010; OECD Website, <[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)>, last accessed 22 April 2010.*



# 1. JAPAN: A “NATURAL” LEADER ON CLIMATE CHANGE?

The norm of climate change prevention resonates clearly within the Japanese domestic context. It draws in particular on the specific Japanese sensitivity to nature, and Japan’s successful experience in tackling industrial pollution in the 1960s-70s. Japanese policymakers also identified the issue of climate change as a new diplomatic niche, which could help raise Japan’s profile on the international stage. The combination of these factors led to the outline of a strong position on climate change, and indeed an attempt to appear as a leader on climate change issues in international negotiations.

## A. DOMESTIC RESONANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL NORMS

The adoption of an international norm, such as that of climate change prevention, at the domestic level is not a passive process. It is rather the result of complex interactions between the international and domestic levels, through which an international norm is transformed and reinterpreted according to domestic specificities and made “appropriate” within the domestic context. The domestic salience of the norm is made possible by its resonance with the cultural, historical and political backgrounds of the country at hand, and helps explain why some norms become embedded in specific contexts, while some others do not.<sup>8</sup> Acharya introduces the

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<sup>8</sup> A. P. Cortell, J. W. Davis Jr., “Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda,” *International Studies Review*, vol. 2, n° 1, Spring 2000, pp. 65-87; J. W. Legro, “Which norms matter? Revisiting the ‘Failure’ of Internationalism,” *International*

concept of “constitutive localization” of norms, which refers not only to the reinterpretation of external norms, but also to “more complex processes of reconstitution to make an external norm congruent with an existing local normative order.”<sup>9</sup> This normative order constitutes the “cognitive prior,” defined as “an existing set of ideas, belief systems, and norms, which determine and condition an individual or social group’s receptivity to new norms.”<sup>10</sup>

### **A SOCIETY IN HARMONY WITH NATURE: THE “OPENING UP” OF NATURE AND THE EDO SPIRIT**

The climate change prevention norm resonates with a traditional Japanese conception of the relationship between human beings and their natural environment.

While Japan is blessed with a luxurious and varied natural environment, most of the country is covered by mountains and forests and does not offer the natural underground resources needed for industrial development. Japanese people have also had to learn to live under the persistent threat of natural hazards such as earthquakes, typhoons, and heavy rain during monsoon season. This gorgeous yet inhospitable natural environment is one of the reasons that explain the deep spiritual and cultural relationship that exists between Japanese people and nature. This connection is embodied in the indigenous animist religion of Shinto, manifests itself within Japanese arts, literature, and poetry, and is still present today through the numerous traditional festivals (*matsuri*) and events related to the celebration of the seasonal transformations of nature. Sensitivity to the beauty of nature has thus been identified as an essential characteristic of Japanese culture.<sup>11</sup>

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*Organization*, vol. 51, n° 1, 1997, pp. 31-63; J. T. Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,” *World Politics*, vol. 50, n° 2, 1998, pp. 324-348.

<sup>9</sup> A. Acharya, *Whose Ideas Matter? Agency and Power in Asian Regionalism*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2009, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> T. Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan: time, space, nation*, Armonk, M.E. Sharpe, 1998, p. 36.

This perceived characteristic of Japanese culture needs both to be reassessed and nuanced, particularly with regards to its supposedly positive effect on environmental protection and conservation. Indeed, the common perception of a civilization respectful and protective of the environment has been challenged, over time, in a number of ways.

Tessa Morris-Suzuki in her seminal work on Japan's modern identity deconstructs the image of the nature-loving Japanese, arguing for the existence of a less monolithic relationship to nature.<sup>12</sup> At the root of this diversity lie the two philosophical poles of Taoism and Confucianism. While the first sees man as an integral part of the natural order, the latter advocates using the wealth of nature to relieve the suffering of the people.<sup>13</sup> As a result, a conservationist view of nature emerged, as well as a more utilitarian approach, including the notion of *kaibutsu* (開物 – making use of the nature), popularized by the 19<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Satō Nobuhiro (1769-1850).<sup>14</sup> Such a philosophical stand encourages people to make the most of the generous resources provided by nature, in order to reduce poverty and enrich the nation (*fukoku*-富国). The concept of *kaibutsu* became a powerful national driver and served as a conceptual bridge facilitating the import of Western developmentalism and industrialism.<sup>15</sup> The Japanese relationship to nature is thus complex, and multifaceted. A relationship to nature strongly inspired by aesthetics and a sensitive bond to man's natural environment does not preclude the development of more utilitarian approaches and actions.

Augutin Berque,<sup>16</sup> like Morris-Suzuki, shows that the path towards an industrial and technological state that Japan has followed since the Meiji era (1868-1912) has broken from the conservationist approach to nature that was predominant during the

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<sup>12</sup> The scholars of *Nihonjinron* (theory of Japanology), saw the Japanese animist "model" as "the answer to the issue of preserving the global environment." Y. Yoshinori, "Animism Renaissance," *Nichibunken Newsletter*, n° 5, January 1990, quoted in T. Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan: time, space, nation*, Armonk, M.E. Sharpe, 1998, p. 36. They further explain that the Japanese model has been corrupted by the imported western industrial civilization.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>16</sup> A. Berque, *Le sauvage et l'artifice. Les Japonais devant la nature*, Editions Gallimard, 1986, p. 174.

Edo era (1603-1867). This two-century period of quasi-national seclusion – the country was then diplomatically and economically closed to the outside world aside from a handful of trading posts such as Nagasaki – was characterized by material yet bound growth. Because of this seclusion, economic growth was dependent on domestic resources, and waste had to be managed carefully in order to ensure a sustainable livelihood. The values of long-lasting materials and tools, frugality and “recycling,” in short the *mottainai* spirit, permeated Japanese society at the time.<sup>17</sup>

The then Environmental Agency (renamed the Ministry of Environment in 2001) drew a parallel in 1992 between the new era of “sustainable development” that was to be ushered in by the Rio Earth Summit, and the Japanese economic model under the Edo period:

*From the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Japan remained an isolated country. Depending on foreign resources to some extent, it built refined culture of its own while making full use of natural products available in the country. [...] Nobody wants a return to the same world as in the Edo Era with those sufferings, but in the sense that man has to live on the earth, the Japanese today find themselves in the same fate as those in the Edo Era. Man must coexist with a finite global environment and work for their happiness there. [...] If people act without regard to the fact that the earth is materially a closed system,<sup>18</sup> the ensuing disasters will be of unbearable proportions.*

In 2004, this approach was endorsed by the Prime Minister's Cabinet: in 2005, the “Kyoto protocol target Achievement Plan” clearly states that the Japanese leadership on the issue of global warming is based on its technological advancement, its successful experience in tackling pollution, and its specific “harmonious” relation with nature, encapsulated in the concept of *mottainai*.

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<sup>17</sup> The article of Y. Tanaka, “The Cyclical Sensibility of the Edo Period Japan,” *Japan Echo*, vol. 5, n° 2, 1998 (Translated from “*Edo shomin no chie ni manabu risaikuru*,” in *This Is Yomiuri*, January 1998, pp. 81-90) is an early example of promotion of Edo-period values regarding recycling and management of waste: “*We should be able to learn from an age when people were judged by their ability to utilize finite resources to the full, cycling and recycling them and using them to the very end.*”

<sup>18</sup> Environment Agency, *Quality of the Environment in Japan*, Tokyo, 1992.

*Japan is a resources-poor country in which the foundations of the citizens' lives and industrial activities are dependent on overseas natural resources and which has developed technologies to overcome energy and environmental issues. Moreover, it possesses a lifestyle and history in harmony with nature represented by the concept of "mottainai" (literally translated as "don't waste what is valuable"). This adds even more to the reasons why Japan should contribute to the world by presenting a vision of an attractive society which uses natural resources efficiently, making more effort than any other country to achieve the safety and reassurance of the human race and producing results.*

If policymakers, and particularly the Environment Agency, referred to the culture of frugality characteristic of the Edo period to promote sustainable development and the new practices associated with it, the more recent experience of industrial pollution management, and the improvement of energy efficiency provided the main narrative within which the norm of climate change prevention could be nested.

### **A WIN-WIN MODEL FOR TACKLING INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION AND ACHIEVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

Working towards greater energy-efficiency is one of the strategies that can be pursued to reduce GHG emissions. This path towards mitigation resonates strongly with a Japanese population marked by the policies put in place by the government in the 1970s and the 1980s to fight against industrial pollution and energy insecurity.

The overall priority given to an intense industrialization process in the postwar period resulted in a huge ecological crisis in Japan, beginning in the late 1950s. As a side effect of its economic recovery, Japan had become the most polluted country in the world.<sup>20</sup> In the 1970s, the public health scandal of the "four cases" was fully disclosed

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<sup>19</sup> Cabinet of Prime Minister, *Kyoto Protocol Target Achievement Plan*, Tokyo, 28 April 2005, p. 80, <<http://www.kantei.go.jp/>>, last accessed 6 November 2009.

<sup>20</sup> See N. Huddle and M. Reich, *Islands of Dreams: Environmental Crisis in Japan*, New York and Tokyo, Autumn Press, 1975, p. 352.

as communities neighboring polluted sites filed lawsuits.<sup>21</sup> Grassroots pressures played a central role in pushing cases of citizens affected by water and air pollution (*koga*) induced diseases to the top of the political agenda.

As a result, the government adopted a series of norms and regulations, and put pressure on the industry to better manage its waste and control its polluting activities. In 1970, the “Pollution Diet” voted in fourteen antipollution laws.<sup>22</sup> After a reinforcement of the legislation and the creation of the Environmental Agency in 1971, the air quality improved significantly, and the prevention, monitoring and repression of all kinds of pollution became an important economic market in Japan.<sup>23</sup> The 1970s oil shocks, and the subsequent skyrocketing energy prices, provided an economic context that incentivized research and development in the field of energy efficiency for industries. Improving energy efficiency, because it reduced dependency on scarce energy sources, was considered a matter of national security.

Japan developed an innovative approach for the management of industrial pollution. The industry indeed benefited from a special relationship with the public administration, which ensured that their interests would be taken into account by the bureaucrats, while companies guaranteed a smooth implementation of the regulation and a proactive innovation policy. The Japanese government guided the efforts of the industrial sector to cut down pollution by applying a mixture of direct regulation (command and control regulation through administrative guidance – *gyōsei shidō*) and inductive approaches such as preferential treatments.<sup>24</sup> The implementation of stricter regulation was secured through the development of a “race to the top” between firms, encouraged by the need to anticipate future regulation, and the development and availability of new technology. Moreover, the multiplication of voluntary “Pollution Prevention Agreements” between local governments and firms provided further

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<sup>21</sup> The four cases are: the Toyama *itai itai* case (pollution of water by cadmium), Niigata and Kumamoto Minamata disease (pollution of water by mercury), and Yokkaichi asthma disease (provoked by air pollution from industrial activity). N. Huddle and M. Reich, *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> The National Diet of Japan is the English name of the national parliament of Japan, it is translated from the Japanese name *kokkai* (国会).

<sup>23</sup> OECD, Japan Environmental Performance Review, Paris, 1994.

<sup>24</sup> T. Terao, “Industrial Policy, Industrial Development and Pollution Control in Post-War Japan: Implications for Developing Countries,” in T. Terao, K. Otsuka (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 18.

incentive for industry to adopt the best available technologies.<sup>25</sup> The close cooperation and trust between the government and the private sector ensured the success of this approach.

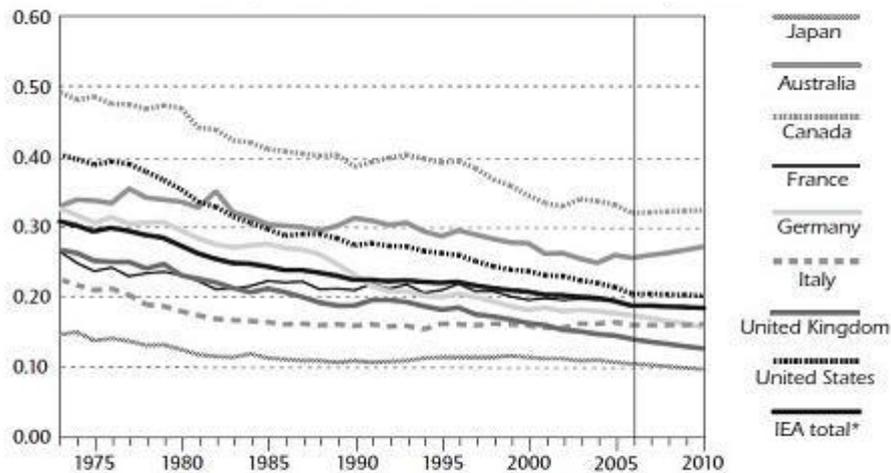
As a result, in 1990, Japanese industry had improved its energy intensity by 30% and had become the world leader in this category.<sup>26</sup> Japan could stand as a model of an economic power that had won the battle against pollution, as seen in Figure 1.

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<sup>25</sup> M. Wakabayashi and T. Sugiyama, "Japan's Keidanren Voluntary Action Plan on the Environment," in R. D. Morgenstern and W. A. Pizer (eds.) *Reality Check: The Nature and Performance of Voluntary Environmental Progress in the United States, Europe and Japan*, Washington, RFF Press/Resources for the Future, 2007, p. 44.

<sup>26</sup> International Energy Agency (IEA), *Energy Policies of IEA Countries, Japan, 2008 Review*, Paris, 2008, p. 53.

**(Figure 1) Energy Intensity in Japan and in Other Selected IEA Countries, 1973 to 2010**  
(TOE per thousand USD of GDP at 2000 exchange rates)



Note: Japanese forecast data are to be revised by the Japanese government in 2008.

\* excluding Luxembourg and Norway throughout the series, as forecast data are not available for these countries.

Sources: *Energy Balances of IEA Countries*, IEA/OECD Paris, 2007; *National Accounts of OECD Countries*, OECD Paris, 2007 and country submissions.

*Source: Reproduced from International Energy Agency (IEA), Energy Policies of IEA Countries, Japan: 2008 Review, Paris, 2008, p. 53.*

This “success story” has become the dominant narrative in the shaping of the Japanese position on the climate change issue. Three elements in particular structure the elaboration of this position:

- First, Japan was an energy-efficient country in 1990. This represents, of course, a competitive advantage for Japanese industry, but it also means that the marginal costs that must be incurred to further improve this efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions are higher than in other countries.
- Second, technological breakthrough is seen as the solution to achieve pollution control and energy efficiency. Japan is a leader in clean technology, which means the industry has an economic interest in the development of an international market of clean tech products, in which it would benefit from a strong position. This element can help explain the proactive involvement of the Japanese industrial sector on the climate change issue.

- Third, Japan considers its pollution control management model to be successful, and is willing to export it to developing countries.<sup>27</sup>

It should be noted that some elements of the Japanese experience in tackling industrial pollution have been left out of this narrative. For example, Japan's initial success was also made possible by the transfer of the most polluting industries to neighboring Asian countries.<sup>28</sup>

When Japanese political leaders identified the climate change issue as a diplomatic niche through which Japan could make a significant international contribution, they understood that they could draw on the country's unique experience with nature conservation and energy efficiency to put Japan forward as a "natural" leader.

## **B. CLIMATE CHANGE: A NEW DIPLOMATIC NICHE FOR JAPAN**

The introduction of a concern for the global environment in Japanese politics can be attributed to a large extent to the leadership of Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru (Liberal Democratic Party-LDP -1987-89). In late 1988, after his participation in the Toronto conference on Global Warming, and upon his acknowledgement of the growing importance of the issue on the international stage, the Prime Minister made climate change his political hobbyhorse.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See Japan's national report to UNCED in 1992: Japan, *Environment and Development: Japan's Experience and Achievement*, Government of Japan, Tokyo, December 1991.

<sup>28</sup> See D. Hall, "Pollution Export as State and Corporate Strategy: Japan in the 1970s," *Review of International Political Economy*, vol. 26, n° 2, pp. 260-283.

<sup>29</sup> S. Oshitani, *Global Warming Policy in Japan and Britain, Interactions between Institutions and Issue Characteristics*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2006, p. 92. Some speculate that this decision aimed at restoring his image in the perspective to win a second mandate. Others argue that he was influenced by Margaret Thatcher's decision to hold the conference of the depletion of the ozone layer in London in March 1989. See M. A. Schreurs, "Policy Laggard or Policy Leader? Global Environmental Policy-Making Under the Liberal Democratic Party," *The Journal of Pacific Asia*, vol. 2, 1995, p.12.

At that time, Japan was under significant pressure – from the US especially, but also from other industrialized countries – to step up its international involvement (*kokusai koken*) in a way that was commensurate with its economic power. However, the antimilitarist norms enshrined in its constitution (Article 9), reinforced by political principles and sensitivities in neighboring countries regarding Japan's military activities, prevented the country from playing a significant role on traditional security issues. As a result, Tokyo's foreign policy objectives have consistently been pursued through funding, trade, economic cooperation, and development assistance. However, Japanese "checkbook diplomacy" was harshly criticized by the United States and its allies in the wake of the Gulf War (1990-1991). They accused Tokyo of free-riding and demanded that Japan make concrete political contributions to the maintenance of global security, in line with its economic might.

Japanese policy-makers perceived the concomitant emergence of the climate change issue, which included an important security dimension, as an acceptable way for the country to raise its international profile.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Japan's high energy efficiency was considered a comparative advantage for action on this issue.

The political leadership of Prime Minister Takeshita was critical in popularizing the global environment issue among the LDP members and led to the creation of a powerful *Kankyo Zoku* ("environmental policy tribe" – a political lobby composed of representatives of the National Diet, the Japanese parliament).<sup>31</sup> This "green wing" within the LDP pressured reluctant administrations, such as the Ministry of International Trade and Industry-MITI, and the industry lobbies, and backed proactive players like the Environmental Agency (EA).<sup>32</sup> New institutions were established to promote and manage the issue of global environmental protection within the

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<sup>30</sup> See H. Sato, "Japan's Role in the Post-Cold War World," *Current History*, vol. 90, n° 555, April 1991, pp. 145-148: "A fourth task for Japan is to take the initiative in combating environmental problems." See also: K. Yanagiya, M. Yamaguchi, "Directing Japan's Aid Efforts," *Japan Echo*, 1989, vol. 6, n° 1, pp. 8-12: "We must give more thought to the world environment."

<sup>31</sup> H. Ohta, "Japan and Global Climate Change: the Intersection of Domestic Politics and Diplomacy," in P. G. Harris (ed.), *Confronting Environmental Change in East and Southeast Asia: Eco-Politics, Foreign Policy and Sustainable Development*, Tokyo, United Nations University Press, 2005, p. 63; M. A. Schreurs, *Environmental Politics in Japan, Germany and the United States*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 164.

<sup>32</sup> S. Oshitani, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-119.

governmental organizations. By 1991, every governmental institution had its own section dealing with global environment issues. Among these, global warming was considered the most urgent and also the most popular question.<sup>33</sup>

The frequent appearance in the media of the expression *Heisei Gannen wa Chikyukankyo Gannen*, “the first year of the Heisei era (1989) is the first year of the global environment era,”<sup>34</sup> is a clear symbol of the new Japanese leitmotiv.

This brief presentation of the main domestic experiences and narratives that helped mainstream the climate change issue within the Japanese domestic political framework highlights and helps explain some of the main features of the Japanese approach to climate change and its prevention: a strong desire to make a visible and important international contribution, a technology-oriented approach and international cooperation policies centered on energy-efficiency and pollution control. The advances made by Japanese industry in terms of energy-efficiency became a double-edged sword when it came to implementing a climate change prevention policy: if it allowed Japan to “lead by example” and spread its clean technologies and know-how, it also heightened the cost of further reducing GHG emissions, particularly compared with other countries, and thus contributed to rationalizing, at the international level, Tokyo’s reluctance to commit to ambitious reduction targets.

Despite a strong political will to lead the debate on climate change prevention, and the commitment of domestic political actors to make the issue a national priority, Tokyo was unable to elaborate a coherent, proactive diplomatic approach on the subject because of the difficulty it experienced in reconciling the diverse approaches of domestic players.

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<sup>33</sup> Y. Kawashima, “Japan and Climate Change: Responses and Explanations,” *Energy and Environment*, vol. 12, n° 2 & 3, 2001, p. 169.

<sup>34</sup> T. Hattori, “The Rise of Japanese Climate Change Policy: Balancing the Norms of Economic Growth, Energy Efficiency, International Contribution and Environmental Protection,” in M. E. Pettenger (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 80.



## 2. TOWARD THE KYOTO PROTOCOL: THE MEDIATION ROLE OF A REACTIVE STATE

The Kyoto Protocol was key in mainstreaming the norm of climate change prevention on the international agenda. Japan had intended to play a central role in this conference and in the development of this norm more generally, but its contribution has been rather ambivalent. I argue that Japan has demonstrated a “reactive diplomacy,” a concept borrowed from Kent Calder’s definition of a “reactive state.”

*The reactive state interpretation merely maintains that the impetus to policy change is typically supplied by outside pressure, and that reaction prevails over strategy.*

Calder also emphasizes that:

*institutional difficulties in initiating pro-active policies handicap Japan in pursuing strategic interests in multilateral settings.*

Indeed, the formulation of a proactive policy has been impeded by the difficulty in reaching a consensus between different domestic actors. Furthermore, a number of contradictory pressures, originating from the EU and the US, also influenced the implementation of policy. These constraints have led Japan to adopt a middle-ground approach and play the role of mediator, rather than leader. The result of the Kyoto Protocol can be considered from two opposing perspectives: as a major Japanese achievement on the international scene and as a treaty that imposes an unfair and burdensome reduction target on the country.

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<sup>35</sup> K. E. Calder, “Japanese Foreign Economic Policy Formation: Explaining the Reactive State,” *World Politics*, vol. 40, n° 4, 1988, p. 518.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 518.

## **A. FRAGMENTED DOMESTIC INTERESTS AND PREVALENCE OF THE INDUSTRY-LED COALITION**

As in other countries, the domestic management of the climate change issue in Japan involves multiple actors, which complicates the elaboration of pro-active and consistent policies. The specific Japanese decision-making process, which favors consensus, reinforces the difficulties in reaching a common approach on climate change and increases the probability that the national position suffers from a least common denominator syndrome. In such a context, the industry-led coalition, more powerful and organized, has had an important influence on the debate.

### ***THE DIFFICULTY IN RECONCILING DIVIDED INTERESTS***

In Japan, the debate on climate change involves different ministries and governmental agencies including the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) (after 2001: METI); the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA); the Environment Agency (EA) (after 2001: MOE); *Keidanren*, the industry's main lobby federation; and politicians. The decision-making system is generally closed to outside players such as environmental groups, and gives little consideration to public opinion. In such a context, the personality and leadership of politicians can make a big difference in advancing a particular agenda.

The MOE and METI have been the two main actors on the climate change issue in Japan. While the two administrations have been embracing the climate change prevention norm, their interpretation of the issue has been different and these differences have continued to shape the Japanese policy debate.

It is important to note that this battle of interests is biased by the very natures of the two administrations. While the MOE, having only recently obtained the status of a full ministry, was constrained in its budget and continues today to have limited human resources, METI has been the most powerful ministry in Japan, leading the economic and trading expansion of the country in the post-war period.

The EA originally had a mandate of pollution control and, as such, was predominantly a domestically-oriented institution with few sections devoted to international environmental negotiations. The MOE promotes the norm of environmental protection and emphasizes the importance for Japan to take a leadership role in this area

through ambitious targets for emissions reductions and the introduction of stringent domestic tools such as environmental taxes and assessment laws.

METI, on the other side of the debate, tackles the climate change issue primarily from an energy and technology perspective. It was and remains worried about the high cost of emission reductions for already highly energy efficient sectors of Japanese industry. The ministry has consistently defended a technology-based approach to environmental protection, arguing that technological innovation is the solution to the problems of pollution and depletion of resources. The global warming issue is thus seen as an opportunity to strengthen the R&D activities on green technologies. This ministry is also eager to encourage the US, Tokyo's largest trading partner until 2007, to match Japan's commitments on the issue.

MITI holds close ties with the industrial sector, whose interests it conveys at the governmental level. The Japanese industrial sector is mainly represented by *Keidanren*, Japan's largest business federation. Acknowledging the new political interest in climate change, *Keidanren* issued its *Global Environment Charter* in 1991.<sup>37</sup> In this important text, the industry recognizes that environmental protection is becoming an essential part of corporate social responsibility, and states its willingness to cooperate with the government. This proactive stance is meant to promote voluntary actions from the industrial sector, coupled with governmental regulation, to allow industries to take the initiative and implement goals in a flexible manner. The global warming issue is also perceived as a business opportunity for some sectors. In 1991, 80% of large manufacturing and construction companies were investing in R&D for global environmental technologies or protection.<sup>38</sup>

MOFA is responsible for coordinating the different ministries' positions in order to present a unified national policy in international forums. It places priority on the international contribution that Japan could make by acting on the global warming issue. For this reason, it generally pushes for Japan to play a visible role in international negotiations; however, MOFA also highly values Japan's relationship with the US and tries not to antagonize or isolate Washington. As the Ministry is also responsible for a large part of the Official Development Assistance (ODA), it has been

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<sup>37</sup> Nippon Keidanren, *Keidanren Global Environment Charter*, Tokyo, 23 April 1991, <<http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/speech/spe001/s01001/s01b.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>38</sup> M.A. Shreurs, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

very active in promoting cooperation with developing countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change. By playing a positive role in the UNFCCC, MOFA expects to advance Japan's request for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Despite the convergence of the various interests of the ministries and industry to act proactively on the climate change issue, the opinions on how to tackle the issue are somewhat different.

The power struggle between these domestic actors explains some of the difficulty in reaching a common position on a national target for emissions stabilization or reduction. This problem is reinforced by the peculiar Japanese decision making-process, in which long negotiations are held behind closed doors until a compromise is reached (this practice is called *nemawashi*-根回し). This is not conducive to producing a proactive policy but rather a low-profile, middle-ground posture.

Furthermore, Norichika Kanie demonstrates that Japan lacks a substantial structure to effectively coordinate or bridge the gap between these various approaches in order to design a coherent strategy.<sup>39</sup> The Cabinet has only played this conciliatory role a few times; this was notably the case in 1997 when Japan hosted the third Conference of the Parties. But chronic political instability (the average life of a government is only two years) allows the bureaucracy to remain strong.<sup>40</sup> As a result, bureaucrats in the Ministries often hold more power in deciding on political stances than the Prime Minister's office and the politicians. This coordination problem between governmental agencies also affects other areas of Japanese diplomacy, such as the negotiations on Free Trade Agreements, in which at least four different ministries are involved.<sup>41</sup>

This system explains why the national position usually seems quite timorous, reflecting the least common denominator among the actors rather than a bold political decision. A perfect example of this problem was when Japan entered the Kyoto negotiations in 1997 with a proposal for a national reduction target of -2.5% (from

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<sup>39</sup> Kanie, N., "Controversies and Approaches on Mid-term Target Setting in Japan: From 8% to 25%," conference held by IDDRI and SciencesPo, Paris, 27 October 2009.

<sup>40</sup> This is the argument of Chalmers Johnson in his book, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: the Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1982, p. 412.

<sup>41</sup> My thanks to a reviewer (who wishes to remain anonymous) for pointing this out.

1990, by 2020) which was considered a very low and insufficient target, especially by the EU.<sup>42</sup>

### ***THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE INDUSTRY-LED COALITION***

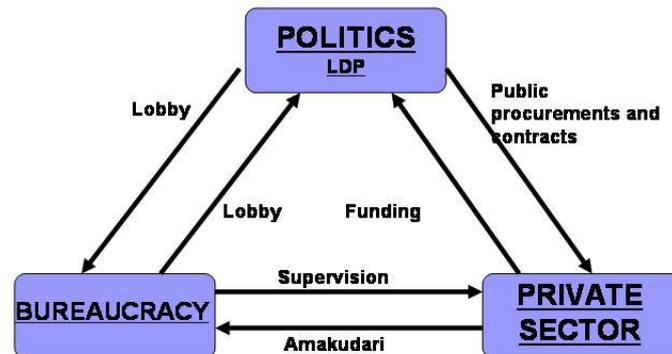
The Japanese political system allowed the rise of a strong industry-led coalition, backed by the most influential ministry (MITI), the largest corporate federation (*Keidanren*) and the majority of the LDP. The “1955 regime” (1955 is the foundation year of the LDP) lies on three poles of power: the politicians, the bureaucracy, and the industrial sector, who together form the “iron triangle” (see Figure 2, below). Their interests are closely intertwined, leading to collusion and bribery.<sup>43</sup> In such a context, the balance of power between the national actors is tipped toward the industry-led coalition (MITI and *Keidanren*), which are more powerful and have greater access to politicians than the other side represented by the EA and some rare green NGOs (there is no green party in Japan).

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<sup>42</sup> S. Oshitani, *Global Warming Policy in Japan and Britain: Interactions Between Institutions and Issue Characteristics*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2006, p. 99; and see *infra*.

<sup>43</sup> The two greatest corruption scandals that led the resignations of Japanese Prime ministers were the Lockheed scandal in 1976 under Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka and the Recruit Scandal in 1989 under Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita. In Japan scandals caused by bribery are numerous. Recently, three former and current aides to PDJ Secretary-general Ichiro Ozawa have been indicted under charges of political funding violations.

(Figure 2) The 1955 system: The “Iron Triangle”



*Source: Adapted from G. L. Curtis, The Logics of Japanese Politics: Leaders, Institutions, and the Limits of Change, Columbia University Press, 2000.*

The relationship between the bureaucracy (MITI) and industry are very close, resulting in frequent consultations. The two poles work as partners to advance Japanese private and governmental interests, through voluntary environmental agreements (VEA). This type of agreement between firms and government is designed to facilitate voluntary action from the private sector in order to adapt to the government's requirements for the reduction of activities causing negative environmental impacts.<sup>44</sup> The industry can negotiate the conditions of the implementation of rules with the bureaucracy and can adapt in a progressive and flexible way, allowing it to limit the costs of transformation.

VEA are also found in the US and some European countries, however, the particular Japanese context made it the “world's longest running and perhaps most successful experiment in environmental voluntarism”.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> E. W. Welch and A. Hibiki, “Japanese Voluntary Environmental Agreements: Bargaining Power and Reciprocity as Contributors to Effectiveness,” *Policy Sciences*, vol. 35, n° 4, December 2002, p. 402.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 401.

Welch shows that the effectiveness of VEA depends on the government's control over the bargaining process (through its regulatory and non-regulatory powers) and the expectations of reciprocity between firms and the government. The Japanese context – in which the government can legitimately intervene in the economic market, citizens' awareness of environmental protection is high (therefore enhancing the pressure on industry), and the bargaining process favors consensus and trust between the government and industry – provides the ideal conditions to ensure effective VEAs.<sup>46</sup> Compliance with these “gentlemen's agreements” is guaranteed by the threat of “losing face” if one player has to break the consensus.<sup>47</sup> As a result, in the Japanese context, voluntary agreements are often more stringent than classical regulations.

While this relationship, originating in the 1970s battle against industrial pollution, ensures smooth implementation and cooperation from the private sector, the embedded interests make it difficult for the government to impose new economic instruments like market mechanisms that would push for even greater efforts from firms.<sup>48</sup> The application of a mandatory system is indeed interpreted by the industry sector as a breach of the social contract that has been established with the government.

The embedded interests and the inertia of the regime have prevented any radical change in approach and ensured the general predominance of the industry-led coalition's position. In this context, two factors could play a positive role to advance the agenda defended by the Environmental Agency: (1) powerful political leadership (quite rare in Japan) and (2) heavy “external pressure” (*gaiatsu* – 外圧) by other international actors.<sup>49</sup>

Japan, whose ultimate strategic objective is to gain international respect and prestige, is generally very attentive to the perception of the international community towards its policies and is eager to be considered favorably. The *gaiatsu* is an important

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 411-412.

<sup>47</sup> H. Weidner, “Japanese Environmental Policy in an International Perspective: Lessons for a Preventive Approach,” in S. Tsuru and H. Weidner (eds.), *Environmental Policy in Japan*, Berlin, Sigma Bohn, 1989, p. 491. Quoted in E. W. Welch and A. Hibiki, *op. cit.*, p. 416.

<sup>48</sup> This criticism was formulated by the OECD in the *Environmental Performance Review of Japan-2002*, *op.cit.*, p. 207.

<sup>49</sup> See S. K. Vogel, *Bargaining with Japan: What American Pressure Can and Cannot Do*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1997, p. 170.

dimension of Japan's paradigm as a "reactive state," which spends most of its time adapting to new contexts and reacting to foreign pressures rather than taking initiatives.<sup>50</sup> This helps explain the role Japan played during the UNFCCC negotiations.

## **B. PLAYING THE MEDIATOR IN THE UNFCCC NEGOTIATIONS**

During the negotiations, unable to design a really ambitious national policy and reduction target, Japan was caught between the EU and the US-led groups. Tokyo took the middle path, hoping to keep all the players at the negotiation table.

Focusing on the issue of the cost of emissions reduction, Japan joined JUSSCANNZ in the formulation process of a UN convention on climate change. The participants of this coalition (Japan, the US, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, Norway and New Zealand), argued that they had high marginal abatement costs per emission reduction due to either an already high energy efficiency level (Japan, Norway and Switzerland) or a significant reliance on coal (US, Canada and Australia), and demanded an equitable differentiation calculus regarding reduction targets.<sup>51</sup>

On the other hand, the European Union sought to create a strong regime on climate change, while securing the economic development of the developing countries. With the major exception of the OPEC countries, most of the developing countries, gathered in the G-77 group, rallied for the EU propositions.

Attempting to demonstrate its leadership, Tokyo strove to keep all the players around the table by proposing at the Geneva Summit in 1990 the idea of "pledge and review," under which states would unilaterally pledge specific actions, which would be reviewed by an international body:

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<sup>50</sup> K. E. Calder, "Japanese Foreign Economic Policy Formation: Explaining the Reactive State," *World Politics*, vol. 40, n° 4, 1988, pp. 517-541.

<sup>51</sup> See S. Andresen and S. Agrawala, "Leaders, pushers and laggards in the making of a climate regime," *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 12, n° 1, April 2002, pp. 41-51.

*The hope was that [the pledge and review system] would produce a momentum towards stricter commitments and that the international review process would promote transparency. This novel concept was [adopted] in <sup>52</sup>addition to, rather than in place of, commitments.*

The Japanese “pledge and review” idea, introduced to keep the US in the negotiations, was quickly renamed “hedge-and-delay” by the international NGOs, and was criticized as a bid to soften commitments.<sup>53</sup>

It was nevertheless very important for Japan to secure the participation of its close US ally. The partnership with Washington has been one of the core elements of Japanese diplomacy in the post-war period. Under the Security Treaty signed in 1951, Tokyo relies on Washington’s extended nuclear deterrence and US forces for its security. An economic interdependence also grew, with the US as (until 2007) Japan’s biggest trading partner, which has been the largest source of financing for the US national debt. This means that there is a strong concern in Tokyo to accommodate US interests in order to protect its own security and economy. Hence, Japan has mainly been following Washington’s strategic orientations since the end of the Pacific war, even if this trend may be weakening today. The climate change issue has been identified as a “niche diplomacy” on which Japan should take a proactive, autonomous stance to show its own contribution to the management of global common goods. Therefore, the MOFA, and (also for economic reasons) METI and *Keidanren* did not simply follow the US but worked diligently to involve their ally in the climate change regime.<sup>54</sup>

Finally, once the principle of “quantified legally-binding objectives for national emissions reduction within specified time-frames for Annex I Parties” was adopted,

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<sup>52</sup> S. Halpern, *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: Process and Documentation*, Providence, RI, Academic Council for the United Nations System (ACUNS), 1992, <<http://www.ciesin.org/docs/008-585/unced-home.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010. See also: J. Graham, “Changing Environmental Policy Agendas: Japan’s Approach to Environmental Problems,” in J. Maswood, J. Graham, and H. Miyajima (eds.), *Japan – Change and Continuity*, London, Routledge Curzon, 2002, pp. 133-134.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133-134.

<sup>54</sup> I. Miyaoka, “Japan’s conciliation with the United States in climate change negotiations,” *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*, vol. 4, 2004, p. 72.

the next challenge was to announce a national limitation target. Japan found itself again between a rock and a hard place as the EU asked Annex I Parties to reduce their GHG emissions by 15% by 2012 from the 1990 level while the US refused any commitment in the absence of a binding engagement from the developing countries.

Actually, it seems that Japan, like the EU and the US, “got trapped” by the negotiations process and results as the three actors had to come up with reduction targets without having conducted proper reflection and preparation at the domestic level.<sup>55</sup> As the host of COP 3 in 1997, Japan was the actor who faced the biggest pressure to show its leadership. In this context, it seemed almost impossible for Tokyo to escape its responsibility: it was urged to make a proposal, which was difficult due to the gap that existed between the main domestic policy-makers. The EA supported a 7% reduction, while MITI stuck to a stabilization target. MOFA promoted a 5% reduction

*in order to frame an internationally acceptable rate of reduction between the European's Union 15 percent reduction proposal and the <sup>56</sup>unknown level of reduction offered by the United States.*

Eager to show Japanese leadership in Kyoto, the Prime Minister's cabinet played an unusually strong role in facilitating dialogue and coordinating the different governmental agencies in order to reach a compromise.<sup>57</sup> MITI eventually made a concession,

*in the face of a general concern about the need to live up to the international norm and to <sup>58</sup>meet Japan's responsibility as the host country for COP3.*

As a result, Japan submitted a general proposal to reduce its emission of GHG by 5% below 1990 levels in 2008-2012. This baseline target of 5% could be adjusted according to a differentiation calculus based on either the level of energy efficiency (in case that national emissions level *per GNP* and/or *per capita* in 1990 is lower than the average level of Annex I parties), or a superior population growth rate between 1990

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<sup>55</sup> My thanks to a reviewer (who wishes to remain anonymous) for pointing this out.

<sup>56</sup> Emphasis mine, T. Hattori, 2007, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>57</sup> Kanie considers it is the only time that a real coordination has taken place before a COP. N. Kanie, 27 October 2009, *op. cit.*

<sup>58</sup> S. Oshitani, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

and 1995. This last point was specifically added to accommodate and obtain the support of the US.<sup>59</sup>

Despite the strong political will to act as a leader on the climate change issue, Japan was constrained by internal bureaucratic difficulties and external pressures. Moreover, the relative predominance of the industry-led coalition led to attempts to resist the definition of a national reduction target. The ambivalence of the Japanese approach made it more appropriate for the country to act as a mediator and go-between for the US and the EU, rather than a leader in the negotiations.

### **C. JAPAN AND THE KYOTO PROTOCOL: SUCCESS OR FAILURE?**

The meeting of the third Conference of the Parties in Kyoto proved to be a success in the sense that it allowed a broad and strong mobilization of political, social and economic actors in Japan regarding the necessity to combat global warming. Moreover, the conference eventually led to the conclusion of a historic agreement that would legally bind the Parties to address the climate change issue. However, it has imposed a high reduction target for GHG emissions on Japan, which was widely seen as an unfair burden.

The Japanese decision to host the third Conference of the Parties in Kyoto was first designed for Japan to make a huge, visible international contribution. Oshitani writes that

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<sup>59</sup> Y. Kameyama, "Climate Change as Japanese Foreign Policy: From Reactive to Proactive," in P. G. Harris (ed.), *Global Warming and East Asia: The Domestic and International Politics of Climate Change*, New York, Routledge, 2003, p. 140.

*The real purpose of hosting COP 3 was not in fact related to any environmental issue but rather to the Japanese government's ambition to join the UN Security Council as a permanent member.*

The organization of COP 3 in Kyoto also served as a real stimulant in raising public awareness, strengthening the environmental community in Japan and providing incentive for more efforts from the industrial sector.

The issue of raising public awareness of environmental problems was very important, both for the EA, who promoted a lifestyle transformation toward a sustainable society, and MITI, who needed public support to increase energy efficiency and also to develop the nuclear energy sector.<sup>61</sup> The Japanese public responded very positively to these concerns: a 1996 survey conducted by the Prime Minister office indicated that 86% of respondents knew about global warming. The same survey shows that 74% of those surveyed were aware that a reduction of energy consumption was required to tackle the phenomena and 87% approved the strengthened reduction of energy consumption.<sup>62</sup>

Environmental NGOs also benefited from governmental activism in the lead up to COP 3. In the early 1990s, there were only a few green NGOs in Japan specializing in climate change; moreover, these organizations were seldom involved in the decision-making process. In an attempt to address some international criticisms arguing that Japan was a cynical eco-predator that jumped on the international environment agenda in order to clean up its image, the Japanese government tried to develop its green non-profit community.<sup>63</sup> In 1993 the Japan Fund for Global Environment, set up under the EA, began providing new financial support to NGOs working on

<sup>60</sup> S. Oshitani, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

<sup>61</sup> Y. Kameyama, "Climate change as Japanese foreign policy: From reactive to proactive," in P. Harris (ed.), *Global Warming and East Asia: The Domestic and International Politics of Climate Change*, Routledge, 2003, p. 140.

<sup>62</sup> 内閣府政府広報室 [Office of the Prime Minister], 「省エネルギー・新エネルギーに関する世論調査」 [Opinion Poll on new energy and energy conservation], 1 February – 11 February 1996, <<http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h07/H07-10-07-11.html>>, last accessed 21 April 2010.

<sup>63</sup> M. A. Schreurs, "International Environmental Negotiations, the State, and Environmental NGOs in Japan," *Occasional Paper n° 14, Harrison Program on the Future Global Agenda*, August 1996.

environmental conservation in Japan and developing countries. In 1996 the *Kiko forum* (climate forum) was established as an umbrella organization to raise the public awareness on climate change and also to convey NGOs requests to the government before the Kyoto conference.<sup>64</sup> Before COP 3, NGOs became associated more closely to the decision-making process, through consultation with MITI and hearings held by the Cabinet. In the big picture, however, their influence remained limited.<sup>65</sup>

The industrial sector also engaged with the climate change issue in the pre-Kyoto period. In June 1997, *Keidanren* issued its Voluntary Action Plan on the Environment, in which 34 different industries took part. The Action Plan basically provided a broad single basis for the numerous voluntary agreements concluded on an individual level between firms and the central or local governments. Quantified targets for GHG emissions reduction were assigned to industrial sectors in order to “reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the industrial and energy-converting sectors in fiscal year 2010 to below the level of fiscal 1990.”<sup>66</sup> *Keidanren*, the government, and NGOs would conduct a review process every year. In 2005, this process revealed that the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the 34 participating industries had decreased by 0.6% in comparison to 1990.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, the political parties established a “COP 3 team” in order to,

*pressure the administration to make contributions at COP 3 internationally and to promote<sup>68</sup> environmental awareness within the Japanese society.*

An important mobilization took place in all areas of Japanese social, economic and political sectors on the climate change issue, which gave Japan enough legitimacy to play a proactive role in the international negotiations.

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<sup>64</sup> A. Sato, “Knowledge in the Global Atmospheric Policy Process: The Case of Japan,” in P. G. Harris, 2003, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>65</sup> Interviews with Yurika Ayukawa and Mika Ohbayashi, *Office Ecologist*, Tokyo, January 2010.

<sup>66</sup> Nippon Keidanren, *Keidanren Voluntary Action Plan on the Environment*, Tokyo, 17 June 1997, <<http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/policy/pol058/index.html>>, last accessed 4 December 2009.

<sup>67</sup> Nippon Keidanren, Results of the Fiscal 2006 Follow-up to the Keidanren Voluntary Action Plan on the Environment (Summary) —Section on Global Warming Measures—Performance in Fiscal 2005, Tokyo, December 14, 2006, <<http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/policy/2006/089.pdf>>, last accessed 22 March 2010.

<sup>68</sup> T. Hattori, 2007, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

The Japanese middle-ground proposal in terms of reduction targets was designed to rally both the EU and the US and allow for a successful agreement in Kyoto, thus demonstrating Japanese leadership. However, according to the differentiation calculus, the Japanese national reduction target only reached 2.5%, which was considered too small to meet the principle of “significant reduction” commitments, as stated in the Geneva Ministerial Declaration.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the mediation effort by Japan, focused on the reduction target number, was not considered as sufficient until the final stage of the negotiations. The Kyoto agreement was eventually reached when concessions were made on the composition of GHG, the flexibility mechanisms and the sequestration by sinks, topics on which Japan mostly rallied the US position.<sup>70</sup>

Despite having reached an agreement on a Protocol text, Japan's contribution to this process was not as important as expected. Moreover, the Japanese industrial and economic sectors, as well as MITI, were critical of the way Japanese diplomats had handled the negotiations, considering the results of COP 3. Indeed, Japan “entered with a -2.5% target and ended with a -6% target,” and this was perceived as a “defeat,” imposing what were perceived to be unfair and excessive costs on the industrial sector.<sup>71</sup> This perception, still visible today, was reported by many of those interviewed for this study and will likely dominate the Japanese debate on global warming in the coming years.

The fragmented political interests and the relative predominance of the approach supported by the economic and industrial sectors prevented Tokyo from forming an

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<sup>69</sup> S. Oshitani, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

<sup>70</sup> Y. Kawashima, “Japan's decision making about climate change problems: comparative study of decisions in 1990 and in 1997,” *Environmental Economics and Policy Studies*, vol. 3, n° 1, 2000, p. 42. See also: “Report of the Third Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: 1-11 December 1997,” *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, vol. 12, n° 76, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), 13 December 1997, <<http://www.iisd.ca/vol12/enb1276e.html>>, last accessed 22 March 2010. Nevertheless, Toshiaki Tanabe, the chief negotiator for Japan, argues strongly that the Kyoto conference constitutes a “landmark achievement” for Japanese diplomacy. He explains clearly that the “highest priority” was to reach a consensus between the EU, the US, and Japan, and that the protection of the environment was not the only concern. The objective of keeping each country's international competitiveness was “at the core” of the negotiation process. See: T. Tanabe, “Reflections on the Kyoto Conference on Global Warming,” *Asia Pacific Review*, vol. 5, n° 2, 1998, pp. 39 and 41.

<sup>71</sup> According to several of our interviewees.

ambitious policy and acting as a leader in the UNFCCC negotiations. Japan instead played the role of the mediator between the EU frontrunner and the laggard US. The conclusion of the Kyoto Protocol was thus considered an ambivalent achievement in Japan: a strong diplomatic symbol but also an unfair treaty in the eyes of the industry-led coalition.



### **3. REFRAMING KYOTO: COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

In the post Kyoto period, the industry-led coalition dominated the debate in Japan as international discussions focused on the means and conditions to achieve the Kyoto targets, and later, on the future of the climate governance. In the absence of the major emitters from the Kyoto regime, Japan's policy aimed to achieve its national target in the least expensive way, and to promote alternative principles on which to build a more beneficial post-2012 regime. The coalition representing industrial and economic interests achieved to gain broad influence as they attempted to reframe the core principles of the climate change regime.

#### **A. IMPLEMENTING KYOTO THROUGH “CHEAP” MEASURES**

The Kyoto Protocol target of -6% (by 2020 from the 1990 level) has been labeled as unjust by the industrial sector, as it does not reflect previous efforts made by Japan in the 1970s and 1980s to increase energy efficiency. Consequently, Tokyo decided to use the flexibility mechanisms introduced by the treaty as much as possible in order to achieve their target. The *Guidelines for Measures to Prevent Global Warming* (1998), reflecting requests by MITI and studies undertaken by *Keidanren* on energy

conservation,<sup>72</sup> stated that up to 3.7% of the total reduction of emissions would be achieved through the use of carbon sinks and market mechanisms, which is quite significant if one considers the fact that the flexibility mechanisms were originally designed only to supplement national efforts.<sup>73</sup>

In late 2000, during the tough negotiations on the specifics of the Protocol at COP 6 in The Hague, Japan sided with the Umbrella Group (Japan, US, Canada, Australia, Norway, New Zealand, Russia and Ukraine) to advocate a quasi-unlimited use of the Kyoto mechanisms, as well as a few major concessions: the inclusion of civil nuclear energy projects in the Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM-see the glossary) (rejected), the use of domestic carbon sinks as an option to decrease CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (granted at COP 6 Part 2), the inclusion of sinks-related activities in the CDM (granted at COP 7), and the use of ODA to fund CDM projects (granted at COP 7). In opposition to these requests, the EU, AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States), the G77, and green NGOs argued that such allowances would weaken the targets set at Kyoto, and strongly called for meeting emission reduction commitments primarily by reducing domestic greenhouse gas emissions. However, once Washington announced in March 2001 that it would not ratify the Kyoto protocol, the EU had no choice but to accommodate the demands of Russia, Canada and Japan in order to secure adequate participation and save the agreement.<sup>74</sup>

Despite Japan's ambition to take the lead on climate change, the domestic political discourse remained largely shaped by considerations of cost. This explains why Tokyo focused on "cheap" measures to meet its reduction target. In this context,

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<sup>72</sup> Y. Tiberghien and M. A. Schreurs, "High Noon in Japan: Embedded Symbolism and Post-2001 Kyoto Protocol Politics," *Global Environmental Politics*, vol. 7 n° 4, November 2007, pp. 86-87.

<sup>73</sup> Global Warming Prevention Headquarters, *Guidelines for Measures to Prevent Global Warming - Measures Towards 2010 to Prevent Global Warming*, 19 June 1998, <<http://www.env.go.jp/en/earth/cc/gw/index.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010. The Kyoto Protocol Achievement Plan revised in March 2008 states that 3.8% of the reduction will be achieved by sinks (two thirds of Japanese territory is covered by forests, although these are declining), 1.6% by the Kyoto mechanisms and 0.6% by actual domestic reduction of emissions. *Kyoto Protocol Achievement Plan*, revised March 28, 2008, <<http://www.env.go.jp/en/earth/cc/kptap.pdf>>, last accessed 28 March 2010.

<sup>74</sup> K. G. Begg, "Implementing the Kyoto protocol on climate change: environmental integrity, sinks and mechanisms," *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 12, n° 4, 2002, p. 334.

Japanese domestic actors skillfully use *gaiatsu* (foreign pressure) to advance their own interests. Indeed, Isao Miyaoka explains that Japanese efforts to conciliate with the US and engage its ally on climate change issues have, of course, to do with the particular relationship between the two countries, but also that

*MITI used "conciliation" with the United-States as an excuse to make proposals that would emasculate the climate change regime and as a means of receiving support<sup>75</sup> from the United States to differentiate national targets.*

Japan was hugely disappointed by the US retreat from the Kyoto Protocol in March 2001, however, it decided to side with the EU to try to bring Washington back in the treaty.<sup>76</sup> At first, the new pro-American Prime Minister Koizumi (2001-2006), aware that the reduction target would mean a very costly effort for Japanese industry especially in the absence of the US (Japan's number one trading partner), appeared very reluctant to engage in the treaty. Supporting his stance, *Keidanren* issued a "request for calm and patient negotiations" in June 2001 and urged the government to establish an international framework involving the US.<sup>77</sup>

At the same time, the perception of the Kyoto Protocol "as a symbol of Japanese leadership in tackling a major global problem as opposed to a symbol of costly economic cutbacks,"<sup>78</sup> was widely shared by diverse actors, such as the green *zoku* lobby in the Diet, the opposition parties, and both MOFA and MOE who expressed their disapproval of Koizumi's hesitations.

Koizumi eventually decided to move on and strike a deal with the EU to save the treaty. Indeed, a Japanese failure to commit on a treaty named after a Japanese ancient capital would have been considered a huge diplomatic setback for the

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<sup>75</sup> I. Miyaoka, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>76</sup> Prime Minister Mori expressed in a letter addressed to President Bush his concerns about the US decision. "Letter from Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori to President George W. Bush concerning Negotiations on the Framework Convention on Climate Change," March 30, 2001, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2001/3/0330-2.html>>, last accessed 16 December 2009.

<sup>77</sup> T. Imai, Chairman, Keidanren, "Request for Calm and Patient Negotiations on the Issues of Global Warming," Tokyo, 15 June 2001, <<http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/speech/20010615.html>>, last accessed 22 March 2010.

<sup>78</sup> Y. Tiberghien, M. Schreurs, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

country. There are suspicions that Koizumi's tergiversations were also aimed at strengthening the Japanese hand in the negotiations pertaining to the practical implementation of the Kyoto target.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, most of the Japanese requests regarding the use of flexible measures were granted at the COPs in Bonn and Marrakech.

Symbolic as it may be, the Kyoto protocol has imposed a costly reduction target on Japan. The defection of the US and the rapid economic growth of the big developing countries further increased its costs in the eyes of the industry-led coalition. The next objective was thus to "win the second commitment period" of the Kyoto Protocol, by including all the major emitters in a framework whose rules would be much more equitable for Japanese economic and industrial interests.

*If measures to combat global warming are to be truly effective, it is essential for the United States and developing countries to participate in the framework for reducing emissions. I implore the representatives of the US business community here today to understand this vital point. Of particular note, as regards the second commitment period from 2013 and beyond, a suitable method of setting reduction targets acceptable to all countries - both industrialized and developing - must be studied at an early stage.*

The voice of the industry-led coalition became dominant during this period and served to advance a series of challenging norms.

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>80</sup> Speech by Chairman Hiroshi Okuda, Japan Business Federation, "The Political and Economic Situation in Japan," *The 39th Japan-US Business Conference*, Tokyo, Imperial Hotel, Monday, October 21, 2002, <<http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/speech/20021021.html>>, last accessed 15 April 2010.

## B. DESIGNING POST-KYOTO: AN ALTERNATIVE VISION

Japan attempted to propose an alternative vision to replace the Kyoto regime, seen as unfair by concerned domestic groups. The country now officially supports a post-2012 framework that basically matches the industrial sector's wishes. In particular, important efforts have been made to revise the understanding of the norm of "equity" from the Japanese standpoint. As this revisionist approach met harsh criticisms from some international actors, Japan tried to adapt its stance. Tokyo eventually attempted to regain leadership of the international initiative by lobbying for an ambitious long-term reduction goal for global emissions, but its resistance to providing an appropriate mid-term national target cast a shadow on its efforts.

### ***WINNING THE SECOND COMMITMENT PERIOD***

A report published in 2003 by METI lists the grievances of the industry and the economic sector toward the Kyoto Regime: from its ineffectiveness (all together, the countries bound by the treaty only represent  $\frac{1}{3}$  of total GHG emissions) to its lack of equity and the biased rationale of the differentiation calculus regarding emissions reduction.<sup>81</sup>

In addition, the report challenges the choice of 1990 as the reference year, considered unjust. As I have already mentioned, by 1990 Japan had already achieved a high rate of energy-efficiency while western European countries had still quite a bit of room for improvement. Furthermore Russia and eastern European countries saw their economies collapse, and the subsequent shrinking of their national emissions.

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<sup>81</sup> Environmental Committee, Industrial Structure, *Council Perspectives and Actions to Construct a Future Sustainable Framework on Climate Change*, Interim Report by Global Environmental Subcommittee, July 2003, <<http://www.meti.go.jp/english/report/downloadfiles/gClimateChange0307e.pdf>>, last accessed 1 December 2009. According to the report, "the reduction targets fell short of a scientific and objective basis of calculation," *ibid.*, p. 14.

Following this harsh assessment, the report lists four basic principles required for a sustainable, post-2012 framework:<sup>82</sup>

- a focus on technological solutions for the long-term,
- the simultaneous achievement of the 3Es (effectiveness, efficiency and equity),
- the advancement of both economic growth and environmental protection,
- and a multi-stakeholder participation (i.e., participation of the US and major emitters, but also of the private sector, NGOs and individuals).

In October 2005, *Keidanren* declared that a new international framework to prevent climate change was needed, one that would rely on the engagement of all countries, the use of the assets of each country, the dissemination of existing technologies and development of new innovative ones, and real equity ensured by diversified reduction targets.<sup>83</sup>

The *Cool Earth 50* initiative presented by Prime Minister Abe (2006-2007) in May 2007 reaffirmed these principles for a post-Kyoto framework.<sup>84</sup> Under these conditions, Japan tried to show its leadership by calling for a peak in the global emissions in the next 10 to 20 years (no baseline specified), and the halving of world emissions by 2050. This last reference corresponds exactly to the minimum global level of commitment recommended by the fourth report of the IPCC, which was released just a few days before Abe's announcement.<sup>85</sup> This event illustrates Japan's interest in grounding its policy in scientific reasoning.

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52-56.

<sup>83</sup> Nippon Keidanren, *The Need to Develop a New International Framework to Prevent Climate Change*, Tokyo, 18 October 2005.

<sup>84</sup> The three principles of the initiative are: "1) *All of the major emitting countries will participate in the framework and emissions are reduced in the world at large*; 2) *The framework will be flexible and diverse with consideration given to the realities of each country*; 3) *Environmental protection and economic development will be made well compatible with each other by making use of energy saving technologies and other means.*" See: METI, *FY 2008 Annual Energy Report (Outline)*, Tokyo, 2009, p. 39 <<http://www.enecho.meti.go.jp/english/report/outline.pdf>>, last accessed 30 March 2010.

<sup>85</sup> See IPCC, "2007: Summary for Policymakers," in B. Metz, O. R. Davidson, P. R. Bosch, R. Dave, and L. A. Meyer (eds), *Climate Change 2007: Mitigation. Contribution of Working Group*

Tokyo introduced its grand proposal for a global long-term target at COP 13 held in Bali. Japan actually attracted considerable criticism as it, along with the US and Russia, rejected explicit references to a mid-term target. For this reason, Tokyo was very often singled out as the “fossil of the day” by the green NGOs in Bali.<sup>86</sup> This came as a shock to the Japanese government, which, seeing its legitimacy broaden on the international stage, was becoming increasingly sensitive to NGOs’ opinions.

### **REVISING EQUITY: PROMOTING THE SECTORAL APPROACH**

The shock of the Bali conference led the new Prime Minister Fukuda (2007-2008), also facing low popularity, to hammer out, through several speeches in 2008 (Davos, Hokkaido), what he labeled “the Fukuda vision”:<sup>87</sup> the transition to a low-carbon society in Japan, thanks to the technological innovation that would enable the energy-efficiency of each sector (industry, transportation, housing etc...),<sup>88</sup> and through the

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III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, <<http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/wg3/ar4-wg3-spm.pdf>>, last accessed 13 December 2009.

<sup>86</sup> See the webpage devoted to the “Fossil of the Day” awards granted by the Climate Action Network at <<http://www.fossiloftheday.com>>, last accessed 15 April 2010.

<sup>87</sup> Domestically, climate policy has become part of a policy package that would lead Japan to become a sustainable, low-carbon society. Y. Kameyama, “The ‘Beyond 2012’ debate in Japan,” in Y. Kameyama, A. P. Sari, M. H. Soejahmoen and N. Kanie (eds), *Climate Change in Asia, Perspectives on the Future Climate Regime*, Tokyo, United Nations University Press, 2008, p. 130.

<sup>88</sup> There is an objective to further increase energy efficiency by 30% before 2020. In 2007, the National Institute for Environmental Studies in Tokyo launched a research project to design scenarios that would allow Japan to become a low-carbon society and achieve the emissions reduction of 60-80% by 2050. To this end, the study envisions a possible 30%-40% reduction in energy demand in the industrial sector through structural transformation and energy efficient technologies, 80% in passenger transportation, 50% in freight transportation, and 40 to 50% in the residential sector. See: website of the research project, <[http://2050.nies.go.jp/project\\_e.html](http://2050.nies.go.jp/project_e.html)>, last accessed 6 May 2010; Japan Scenarios and Actions towards Low-Carbon Societies (LCSs), “2050 Japan Low-Carbon Society” scenario team, National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), Kyoto University, Ritsumeikan University, and Mizuho Information and Research Institute, June 2008, pp. 19-20.

introduction of a future GHG emissions “cap and trade” system that would be tested starting in January 2009.<sup>89</sup> This way, Japan should be able to reduce its emissions by between 60 and 80% by 2050, from the 2005 level. However, at that time no mid-term reduction target for 2020 was announced.

The sectoral approach was confirmed as an innovative solution to ensure the equity of the allocation of emissions reduction goals among countries.

The G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit Leaders Declaration notes that

*[Article 22] Sectoral approaches are useful tools among others for achieving national emission reduction objectives. [...] [Article 25] Sectoral approaches can be useful tools to improve energy efficiency and reduce GHG emissions through dissemination of existing and new technologies in a manner compatible with economic growth*

The Japanese interpretation of the sectoral approach is that this bottom-up, energy-driven approach allows the setting of mid-term national targets by calculating emissions reduction potentials in sectors such as power-generation, transport, and other energy intensive industries. The aggregation of these reduction potentials would replace a top-down national target. This method allows the setting of fair targets, addresses the competitiveness concern and also allows for immediate emissions reduction.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> This system works on a voluntary basis and with flexibility on the methodology: the cap can be applied either to the global emissions of a company or on emissions per unit of production, which could allow the actual increase of emissions if the production rises. This system has been a failure in terms of participation: it gathers several hundred participants, when the government expected thousands. See: The Current Status of the Emissions Trading Scheme in Japan, Office of Market Mechanisms, Climate Change Policy Division, Ministry of the Environment, Tokyo, November, 2009, <[http://www.env.go.jp/en/earth/ets/mkt\\_mech/current\\_ets.pdf](http://www.env.go.jp/en/earth/ets/mkt_mech/current_ets.pdf)>, last accessed 9 May 2010.

<sup>90</sup> G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit Leaders Declaration, Hokkaido Toyako, 28 July 2008.

<sup>91</sup> J. O. Meckling and G. Y. Chung, “Sectoral Approaches to International Climate Policy: A Typology and Political Analysis” Discussion Paper 2009-02, Cambridge, MA, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, January 2009, p. 7.

Tokyo also argues that the sectoral approach is a useful tool to accelerate mitigation actions by the most advanced developing countries, as it helps to identify best practices and technologies.<sup>92</sup>

This Japanese interpretation competes with other propositions and understandings of what constitutes a “sectoral approach,” resulting in real confusion about the nature of the approach. Meckling and Chung identify three types of “sectoral approaches” (see chart below). The first type, “government targets and timetables,” is the setting of sectoral emissions reduction targets for countries through an intergovernmental process. This is usually reserved for developing countries in order to promote their reduction efforts. The second type, “industry targets and timetables,” designates global voluntary emissions reduction commitments by industry sectors. The third option, “transnational technology cooperation,” is supported by developing countries and includes research into and transfer of clean technologies.<sup>93</sup>

Japan defends the first option in two ways: as a bottom-up method of calculation to set a national reduction target for developed countries, and as a way to commit developing countries to sector-based reduction targets.<sup>94</sup> Japan is also a proponent of the second option that calls for industry voluntary reduction efforts by setting commitments by sectors. It effectively reflects its domestic practice of voluntary environmental agreements.

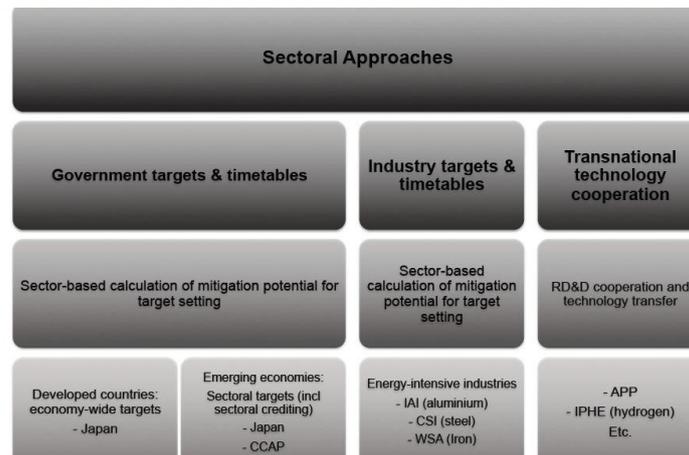
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<sup>92</sup> See: Government of Japan, *Submission on Sectoral approach*, 2008, <[http://unfccc.int/files/kyoto\\_protocol/application/pdf/japan\\_sectoralapproach\\_rev.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/kyoto_protocol/application/pdf/japan_sectoralapproach_rev.pdf)>, last accessed 28 April 2010.

<sup>93</sup> J. O. Meckling and G. Y. Chung, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

(Figure 3) Three Types of Sectoral Approaches



*Source:* J. Meckling and G. Y. Chung, "International Climate Policy for a Post-Kyoto World-Understanding Sectoral Approaches," Presentation at Energy Technology Innovation Policy (ETIP) Seminar, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 27 January 2009, <[http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/18778/international\\_climate\\_policy\\_for\\_a\\_postkyoto\\_world.html](http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/18778/international_climate_policy_for_a_postkyoto_world.html)>, last accessed 9 May 2010. Reproduced with the kind autorisation of the authors.

The Japanese proposal to use the sectoral approach as a method of calculation for national targets is original because it associates the two logics of bottom-up (sectoral reduction potential) and top-down (setting of a global, aggregated target for the achievement of which the government is responsible) approaches.

The Fukuda proposal nevertheless spurred criticism from the EU, green NGOs, and developing countries on the grounds that the sectoral approach would allow industrialized countries to evade national targets.<sup>95</sup> Besides, according to certain

<sup>95</sup> See "Blurred 'Fukuda Vision'," *ECO*, vol. 115, n° 8, 10 June 2008, (*ECO* has been published by Non-Governmental Environmental Groups at major international conferences since the Stockholm Environment Conference in 1972), <<http://www.climatenetwork.org/eco>>, last

NGOs, this bottom-up approach is not efficient because it only functions on a pledge and review basis and does not give enough incentive to make more ambitious progress.<sup>96</sup>

The bottom-up approach promoted by Japan actually reflects its own domestic practices with respect to climate change. Programs that closely associated public incentives and industrial innovative capacity like the Top-runner approach, introduced by MITI in 1999, in which the Japanese government sets the highest efficiency standard as the minimal requirement for a given sector, has a positive impact on the standards of energy efficiency.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, the Voluntary Action Plan set up by *Keidanren* is based on sectoral reduction targets.

Japan has been very active in promoting sectoral and voluntary approaches in parallel forums, such as the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate Change, which aims to foster regional cooperation on emission reductions through voluntary efforts in the industrial and power-generation sectors (see *infra*).

The Fukuda Vision promoted a national *long-term* reduction target based on a sectoral approach, but failed to set a midterm target for the country. The announcement of national midterm target by Annex I countries was seen as a precondition to seriously discuss a post-Kyoto regime in the COPs.

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accessed 8 November 2009.

<sup>96</sup> Interview with Yurika Ayukawa, Executive Director, Office Ecologist, Tokyo, 15 January 2010.

<sup>97</sup> This approach sets the highest fuel energy efficiency standards as a minimum for each type of product (cars and electric appliances), with regard to the level of best available technologies on the market. Supporting measures are provided to ensure that the products meet the standards. The standard setting for each branch is a participatory process. It is a supply-side program and it is not targeting the user (like green tax). In case of non-compliance, three types of sanctions are planned: from the confidential "advice" communication from the Ministry to the company, to the public "name and shame" process, and finally a public order to comply with a fine attached. However, no sanctions have been reported so far, maybe because in Japan the prospect to face a public shame is strong enough to deter inappropriate behaviours. J. Nordqvist, *Evaluation of Japan's Top Runner Approach*, Energy Intelligence for Europe programme, 3 July 2006.

### **REVISING EQUITY: CALCULATING A MIDTERM TARGET FOR JAPAN IN POST-KYOTO FRAMEWORK**

In 2008, Tokyo was very active in promoting its own agenda on climate change and designating the issue as a priority of the G8 Summit held in Toyako on Hokkaido Island. Fukuda was quite satisfied with the agreement reached at the G8 regarding “the goal of achieving at least [a] 50% reduction of global emissions by 2050.”<sup>98</sup>

However, Japan still struggled to set a mid-term target. The question was all the more pressing since the goal to achieve the Kyoto Protocol target seemed to move away: in 2007 the national emissions had actually *increased* by 9%.

In this context, the then new Prime Minister Aso (2008-2009) established a Mid-Term Target Committee in October of 2008 under the supervision of the Cabinet. The establishment of this Committee was the first attempt to overcome the conventional bureaucratic battle on the global warming issue.<sup>99</sup> The report issued by the committee in May of 2009 proposed six options for Japan’s mid-term target, ranging from -25% (by 2020, below the 1990 level) to +4%. These model scenarios were designed by research institutions, among these, three were related to METI, one was related to MOE, and one was an independent think tank.<sup>100</sup>

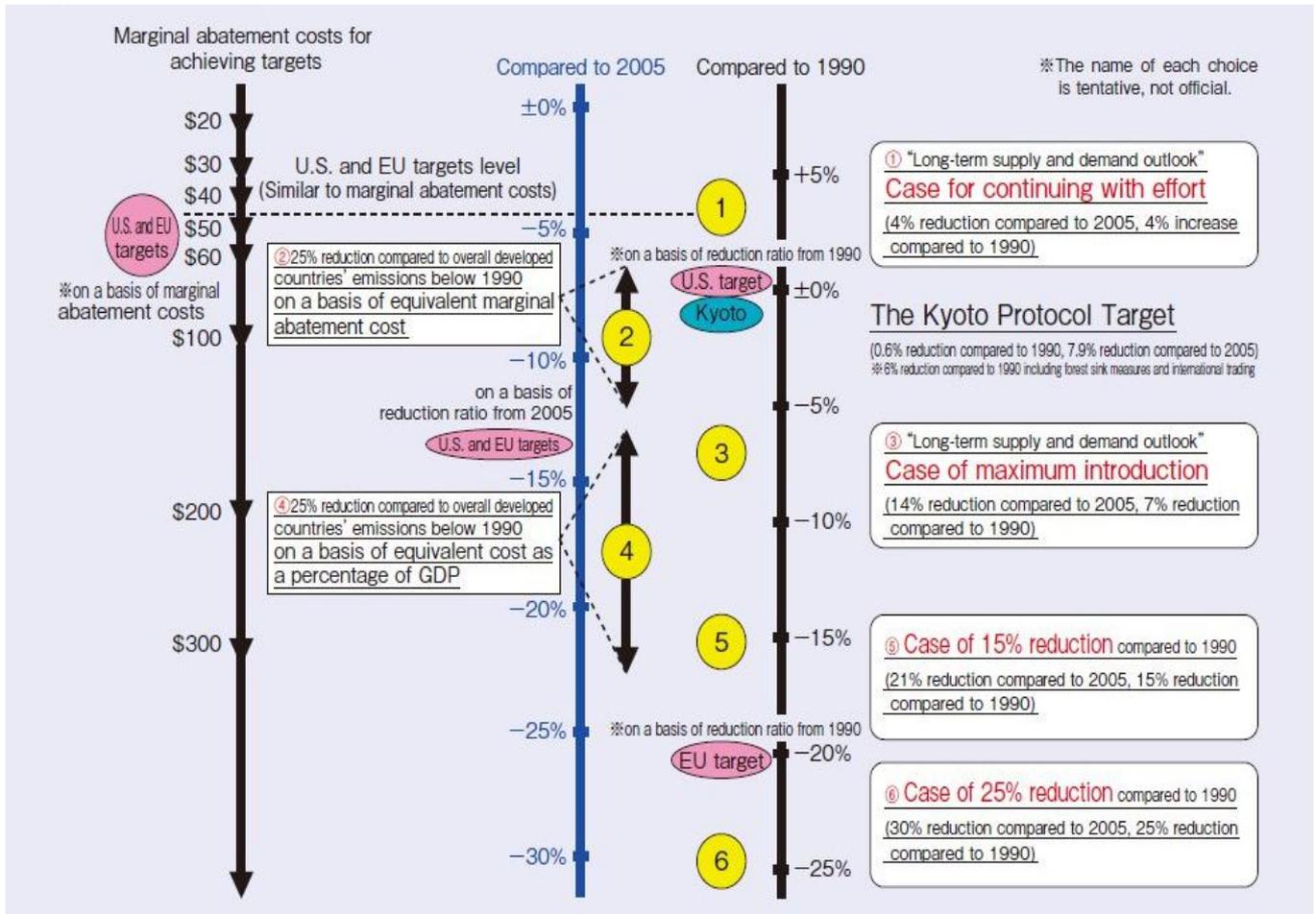
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<sup>98</sup> Press Conference by Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, Toyako, 9 July 2008, <[http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/news/press-conf\\_080710.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/news/press-conf_080710.html)>, last accessed 15 April 2010.

<sup>99</sup> My thanks to Norichika Kanie for pointing this out.

<sup>100</sup> Interviews with Yurika Ayukawa and Mika Ohbayashi, *Office Ecologist*, Tokyo, January 2010.

(Figure 4) Options for Mid-Term Targets



Source: Ministry of Environment, Annual Report on the Environment, the Sound Material-Cycle Society and the Biodiversity in Japan 2009, Tokyo, p. 21, <[http://www.env.go.jp/en/wpaper/2009/p1\\_chpt3-s1.pdf](http://www.env.go.jp/en/wpaper/2009/p1_chpt3-s1.pdf)>, last accessed 4 May 2010.

The Aso administration's attempt to ground its policy in scientific reasoning is very interesting as this exercise provides us with several scenarios that are useful to understand the Japanese approach in terms of costs and performance. The graph presents the six scenarios envisioned, from the most lenient to the most stringent, in terms of reduction objectives compared to 1990 and 2005, and in terms of the

marginal abatement costs (MAC) of further emission reductions to achieve the target. According to these scenarios, the option of a -14% reduction target by 2020 compared to 2005 looks already very costly for Japan in terms of MAC (around 200 dollars compared to 50 dollars for the EU and the US for the similar reduction effort). The most ambitious option, n° 6, that proposes a reduction target of 25% compared to 1990 seems almost impossible to achieve considering the lofty MAC (more than 300 dollars). The fact that these reduction objectives for Japan do not include emissions credit purchase from other countries should be kept in mind.<sup>101</sup> If these credits were taken into account, and if Japan continues to buy hot air after 2012, the total cost of the Japanese reduction effort would actually appear lower.

The government also conducted public hearings and an internet survey in order to give its decision some legitimacy. As several experts and members of various NGOs indicated in their interviews, the results of the survey were very biased as a large number of respondents voted for the least ambitious plans, contradicting other broad surveys on climate change conducted by the Office of the Prime Minister. This showed the great influence of *Keidanren* and industry lobbies who, in the meantime, had conducted a vast defamation campaign targeted at the setting of a mid-term goal and emphasizing the social costs that would be borne by Japanese households and the importance of getting the participation of the major emitters in the next climate change framework.<sup>102</sup>

In his "Speech on the Environment" in June 2009, Aso announced his decision on a national middle-term target based on the Mid-Term Target Committee's report's results. He decided to commit Japan to an emissions reduction target of 15% below 2005 by 2020. This target, being actually higher than the EU (13% below 2005) and US (-14%) targets, demonstrated Japanese leadership, he argued.<sup>103</sup> The proposal

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<sup>101</sup> Prime Minister Taro Aso, *Speech on the Environment*, Prime Minister's Office, Tokyo, 10 June 2009, <[http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asospeech/2009/06/10kaiken\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asospeech/2009/06/10kaiken_e.html)>, last accessed 9 November 2009.

<sup>102</sup> H. van Asselt, N. Kanie, M. Iguchi, "Japan's position in international climate policy: navigating between Kyoto and the APP," *International Environmental Agreements*, vol. 9, n° 3, 2009, p. 324. "Keidanren panned over climate plan," *Japan Times*, 19 May 2009.

<sup>103</sup> A reduction of 14% of GHG emission also represents the maximum target reachable through government subsidies and incentives alone, and voluntary policy to expand solar power without compulsory regulation. Prime Minister Taro Aso, *Speech on the Environment*, Prime Minister's Office, Tokyo, 10 June 2009, <<http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asospeech/2009/06/>

was deeply criticized by the Ministry of Environment and NGOs for not being based on scientific reasoning, but rather resulting from political choices.

Moreover, by providing a target based on a reference year of 2005 rather than 1990, Japan was trying to change the rules of the game by challenging one of the core norms of the climate change regime, namely the use of 1990 as a base year. Brought back to the 1990 baseline, Aso's target represents only a reduction of -8% for 2020 (i.e., just 2% above the Kyoto target), lagging well behind the mid-term target announced by the EU (-20% by 2020).

Derek Hall argues that the vagueness of the norms regarding environmental protection and the prevention of climate change allowed Japan to commit strongly on the issue. However, he goes on to say that,

*This vagueness [...] meant that there was substantial leeway for Japanese actors to frame the nature of the contribution that Japan could make to the environment at the global level.*<sup>104</sup>

This framing drew heavily on the narrative of Japan's experience tackling industrial pollution on a domestic level, and largely reflected the interests of its economic sector. As a result, Tokyo made several attempts to redefine the Kyoto Protocol's core principles. Though this stance has not been popular in the international negotiations process, the Japanese approach and initiatives have found enthusiastic followers in other Asian countries.

The Japanese effort to promote the norm of climate change prevention is thus twofold: on the one hand, Japan attempts to shape the perception of the climate change issue, both at the international and the regional or national level, through the redefinition of some of the principles that constitute it – such as the norm of equity. On the other, Japan works to spread its own model of climate change prevention at the regional level through development aid and cooperation.

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[10kaiken\\_e.html](#)>, last accessed 9 November 2009.

<sup>104</sup> D. Hall, "Japanese lessons and transnational forces: ODA and the environment," in D. Leheny and K. Warren (eds.), *Japanese Aid and the Construction of Global Development: Inescapable Solutions*, Routledge Contemporary Japan Series, New York, 2010, p. 168.



## 4. JAPAN SETS THE GREEN AGENDA IN ASIA

Japan, a large donor of Official Development Assistance (ODA)<sup>105</sup>, is actively funding the efforts of developing countries to mitigate or adapt to climate change. In this field, Tokyo is considered a real leader in Asia, where its developmental and technical assistance with regards to energy efficiency cooperation projects helps to advance the climate change agenda. Moreover, Japan is developing new tools to improve its own practices.

### A. MAINSTREAMING CLIMATE CHANGE IN ODA: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN SECURITY

According to the core principle of “common but differentiated responsibility,” industrialized countries must lead the process of reducing GHG emissions. They also have to assist developing countries in their efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This cooperation is important in order to engage these actors as much as possible in the common efforts to curb GHG emissions. This objective will be complicated to achieve, as developing countries do not form a homogeneous group. The most advanced developing countries, such as China, India, South Africa, and

<sup>105</sup> Japan is the fifth largest donor of ODA in terms of gross amount. However, the ODA budget represented only 0.18% of Japan’s GNI in 2008 according to the OECD, which is very low when compared with the objective of 0.7% considered necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. OECD, *OECD-DAC Secretariat Simulation of DAC members’ net ODA Volume in 2008 and 2010*, Paris, 30 March 2009, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/56/42458719.pdf>>, last accessed 5 May 2010.

Brazil, have become big emitters of GHG in the past few years due to their rapid economic growth. On the other hand, the Least Developed Countries and Small Islands Developing Countries have much lower emissions and a limited capability to develop in a sustainable way. Furthermore, they are very vulnerable to the adverse effects of global warming.

ODA has been the main instrument of the Japanese government for international environmental cooperation. Unable to send military forces abroad, Tokyo has used its economic power as its main diplomatic tool in order to advance its interests.<sup>106</sup> ODA has been part of the so-called “resources diplomacy,” which aims at securing energy and natural resources, opening new markets for Japanese products, and developing relationships with the countries of the region.<sup>107</sup> Japan has developed an original practice of ODA that reflects its own experience as a recipient of World Bank loans for its reconstruction up until the 1960s. It is for this reason that Tokyo promotes the principle of self-help and ownership when providing its ODA: the aid is given based on a request from the recipient country and usually takes the form of a loan. In fact, these loans make up two-thirds of Japan's total ODA. Japan's development assistance is mainly used in Asian countries (60%), and it is generally directed towards economic infrastructure projects.<sup>108</sup>

When the issue of the global environment emerged as a new possible focal area, Japan was the largest ODA donor in the world (it was ranked first from 1990 to 2000).<sup>109</sup> One of the major ways the Japanese chose to present their leadership on this issue was therefore to pledge a record amount of ODA to support the sustainable development of developing countries. The total pledged by the Japanese at the Rio Summit in 1992 came to 1 trillion yen (more than \$7 billion) over five years, which was

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<sup>106</sup> R. M. Orr, *The Emergence of Japan's Foreign Aid Power*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1990.

<sup>107</sup> S. Kim, “Translating Sustainable Development: The Greening of Japan's Bilateral International Cooperation,” *Global Environmental Politics*, vol. 9, n° 2, May 2009, pp. 24-51.

<sup>108</sup> MOFA, *Japan's Official Development Assistance, Accomplishment and Progress of 50 Years*, Tokyo, 2005, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/POLICY/oda/cooperation/anniv50/pamphlet/>>, last accessed 30 March 2010. The steady increase of the Japanese ODA budget is one of the three pillars of the “International Cooperation Initiative” introduced by Prime Minister Takeshita in 1998 to raise the international contribution of the country. MOFA, *Diplomatic Bluebook*, Tokyo, 1998.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

then provided one year ahead of schedule, making clear Tokyo's willingness to assume leadership in this field.<sup>110</sup>

Its success in overcoming its domestic pollution problems as well as its economic prosperity put Japan in a "unique position" to play a leading role in international environmental cooperation.<sup>111</sup> The "greening" of its ODA also enabled the country to counter harsh criticisms regarding the environmentally damaging impacts of its cooperation activities abroad, mainly focused on infrastructures building and sources of heavy pollution and deforestation.<sup>112</sup>

Japan is today the largest donor for climate change-related aid, having given \$1.3 billion in assistance in 2007.<sup>113</sup> The "assistance to developing countries regarding environment and climate change issues" is listed as the first priority for the promotion of the international cooperation in the 2009 *Diplomatic Bluebook*.<sup>114</sup>

The problem of climate change has been successfully integrated into the main concerns of Japanese ODA, along with efforts to promote sustainable development, tackle global problems, and address human security.<sup>115</sup> This solid background helped

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<sup>110</sup> S. Asuka-Zhang, "Greening and Decarbonizing: Japan's Development Assistance," *East Asia*, vol. 18, n° 2, 1 July, 2000, pp. 75-96.

<sup>111</sup> Y. Peng, "The Earth Summit and Japan's Initiative in Environmental Diplomacy," *Futures*, vol. 25, n° 4, May 1993, pp. 379-391.

<sup>112</sup> The term "greening" refers here both to the increasing share of ODA budget dedicated to environmental projects, and also the taking into account of environmental protection when conducting ODA work, through the implementation of environment-friendly guidelines. Also see: J. Taylor, *op.cit.*, pp. 546-553.

<sup>113</sup> OECD, *Aid targeting the objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, Paris, November 2009, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/8/44187916.pdf>>, last accessed 26 January 2010.

<sup>114</sup> The *Diplomatic Bluebook* is the annual report of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan, *Diplomatic Bluebook 2009*, Tokyo, 2008, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2009/index.html>>, last accessed 22 September 2009.

<sup>115</sup> Japan's use of ODA has been based on the principle of sustainable development since its 1992 ODA Charter, which states that, "*Environmental conservation and development should be pursued in tandem.*" The new ODA charter, published in 2003, lists global warming as one of the key international issue to address: "*As for global issues such as global warming and other environmental problems, infectious diseases, population, food, energy, natural disasters, terrorism, drugs, and internationally organized crimes, further efforts must be given*

the climate change issue to make sense for Japanese cooperation activities, and be perceived as “appropriate.” The growing worry about environmental protection and the prevention of global warming has helped the ODA maintain a large budget, especially in light of current problems of global “donor fatigue” and a sluggish domestic economy.

While the ODA budget has gradually declined, the share of environmental projects has actually increased to take up about 30% of ODA expenditures. Special environmental programs have thus been launched, promoting ODA dedicated to climate change mitigation. They focus on supplying concessional yen loans for infrastructure-type projects and transfer of Japan's technology and expertise.

Under the 1997 Kyoto initiative, Japan's ODA support helped to train 15,000 people, and loans totaling 1,140 billion yen advanced projects in energy conservation, development of new and renewable energy sources, and forest protection and forestation.<sup>116</sup> In 2002, prior to the Johannesburg Summit, Japan launched the Environmental Conservation Initiative for Sustainable Development (EcoISD) in order to support human resource development within environmental disciplines for 5,000 people over a five-year period.<sup>117</sup> Reflecting the general system of Japanese ODA

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*immediately and in a coordinated manner by the international community. Japan will address these issues through ODA and will play an active role in the creation of international norms.”* This comes from Japan's *Official Development Assistance Charter*, August, 2003. The concept of human security has been at the core of the Japanese ODA philosophy since 2003. This concept emphasizes the individual dimension of security rather than the security of a nation or its people, and aims at achieving freedom from fear and want, in order to strengthen world peace. It widens the security concerns to non-military threats, previously considered part of development or environmental protection. See J. Ikeda, “Creating the human security discourse and the role of the academic-policy complex: international relations as ‘Japanese social science’?”, *Interdisciplinary Information Sciences*, vol. 15, n° 2, 2009, pp. 197-209.

<sup>116</sup> See Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *ODA White Paper 2006*, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/white/2006/ODA2006/html/honpen/hp102030000.htm>>, last accessed 27 January 2010.

<sup>117</sup> Its specific components included: (1) human resource development for a total of 5,000 people in the environmental field; (2) loan aid under concessional terms; (3) expansion of grant aid for the global environment (currently grant aid for water resources and the environment); (4) promotion of wide-ranging cooperation with international organizations and other players; and (5) evaluations of environmental ODA projects. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Environmental Conservation Initiative for Sustainable Development – Summary*, Tokyo, 2002, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/environment/wssd/2002/kinitiative3.html>>, last accessed 22 April

allocation, environmental programs are request-based, dominated by loans (which represent approximately 80% of environmental ODA funding),<sup>118</sup> and targeted primarily at Asian countries and mitigation projects.<sup>119</sup>

## **B. REGIONAL COOPERATION ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND POLLUTION-CONTROL**

There are a lot of incentives for Japan to assist other Asian countries on climate change projects. The issue of climate change prevention has been framed within the already intense Japanese activities related to environmental protection in the region, and focused on tackling transboundary pollution and improving energy security. Such initiatives are also aimed at promoting regional cooperation, developing markets for Japanese green technology, and finally, through the Clean Development Mechanisms, helping Tokyo achieve its Kyoto reduction target.<sup>120</sup>

Japan has displayed multifaceted efforts in the region, with and without ODA funding, aimed at heightening awareness about environmental and climate issues, promoting the exchange of ideas, advancing the green agenda, and addressing environmental problems in effective ways. The table below offers a general summary of the major Japanese regional initiatives.

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2010.

<sup>118</sup> Calculation by the authors on the basis of statistics gathered by Derek Hall. D. Hall, 2010, *op.cit.*, p. 174.

<sup>119</sup> In 2003, 74% of Japanese bilateral ODA was disbursed within the Asian region. OECD, *Japan–Peer review-Development Assistance Committee*, Paris, 2004, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/63/32285814.pdf>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>120</sup> S. Asuka-Zhang “Transfer of environmentally sound technologies from Japan to China,” *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, vol. 19, n° 5-6, September-November 1999, pp. 553-567.

Most of these initiatives aim to engage political interest in environmental issues so as to encourage Asian countries to make more requests for environmental ODA.<sup>121</sup> From this perspective, the establishment of networks and dialogue complement the supply of the Japanese green ODA in the region.

Such discourse appears in scientific networks such as the Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change (1991), the Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research and Monitoring (1991), or the East-Asia Acid Deposition Monitoring Network (1997). Policy dialogues, have also emerged from Japan's efforts, for example, the annual Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meetings (TMM) between Japan, South Korea and China, (since 1999). These attempts, however, have had limited concrete outcomes.

**Main Japanese initiatives at the regional level on environmental protection and climate change (outside of ODA)**

(\* Starting year, Japanese institution involved)

*	Project Description
1991 (EA)	Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change  Annual meetings of regional experts, policy-makers and representatives of civil society to promote a common understanding and cooperation on climate change
1991 (EA)	Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research and Monitoring (APN)  Inter-governmental network for the promotion of global change research and links between science and policy making in the Asia-Pacific Region.
1991 (EA)	Environmental Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO-Asia)  Annual meeting of the Environment Ministers or Senior Officials in Asia (information gathering and forecasting).

<sup>121</sup> J. Graham, "Japan's Regional Environmental Leadership," *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 28, n° 3, September 2004, p. 294.

<p>1993 (EA)</p>	<p>Northeast Asian Subregional Program of Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC)</p> <p>Japan, Republic of Korea, China, Russia, Mongolia, and Democratic People's Republic of Korea hold a Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia every year to exchange opinions and information and to build a regional cooperative relationship toward solving environmental problems at both global and regional levels through cooperation transcending national borders.</p>
<p>1997 (MOFA-EA)</p>	<p>East-Asia Acid Deposition Monitoring Network (EANET)</p> <p>Annual intergovernmental meetings on cooperation to monitor and tackle Asia's acid rain problem.</p>
<p>1999</p>	<p>Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP)</p> <p>Regional Sea Programs have been implemented under the UNEP initiative for the environmental protection of sea areas shared by several countries. In 1994, NOWPAP was adopted by Japan, China, Russia, and the Republic of Korea for the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea.</p>
<p>2001 (EM)</p>	<p>Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development</p> <p>A regional group of experts aiming to address critical issues facing Asia and the Pacific region and propose new models for equitable and sustainable development.</p>
<p>2004 (EM)</p>	<p>Asian Network for Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste</p> <p>The aims of the Network are to facilitate the exchange and dissemination of information on transboundary movement of hazardous waste in Asian countries, to assist participating countries in formulating appropriate legislative responses under each country's system as required by the Basel Convention, and to provide useful information that can contribute to capacity development and the implementation of the Convention.</p>

2007	<p>“Towards a Sustainable East Asia”- Japan’s Environmental Cooperation Initiative announced at the 3<sup>rd</sup> East Asia Summit</p> <p>This initiative presents a number of key proposals for strengthening the regional cooperation on environmental protection, including the establishment of an “Asia 3Rs Research and Information Network,” which would help to develop new and more sustainable living and consumption practices in Asia, the initiation of an “ASEAN-Japan Dialogue on the Environment,” the establishment of a network among environment-related graduate courses in East Asia to foster future environmental leaders in the region, and the launching of a GHGs Observation Satellite (GOSAT) in FY2008 whose observation data would be shared with countries in the region.</p>
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*Sources: Kawashima Yasuko, “Challenges to Regional Cooperation: Climate Change Issues in Northeast Asia,” Social Science Japan, n° 16, August 1999, pp. 20-23; Kameyama Yasuko, “Will Global Warming Affect Sino-Japan Relations?,” in H. G. Hilpert and R. Haak (eds.), Japan and China: Cooperation, Competition and Conflict, pp. 140-157; J. Asuka-Zhang Shouchuan, “Greening and Decarbonizing: Japan’s Development Assistance,” East Asia, vol. 18, n° 2, 1 July 2000, pp. 75-96; Website of the Japanese Ministry of Environment: <<http://www.env.go.jp>>, last accessed 20 May 2010.*

Beyond tackling transboundary pollution and increasing environmental awareness, Japanese diplomacy also aims at improving energy efficiency in Asian countries. The Green Aid Plan led by METI is a central initiative in this regard. Partly funded by ODA and launched in 1992, this program aims to support projects in six Asian countries (China, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and India) that facilitate the use of clean coal technologies in order to curb sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emissions and energy-saving technologies for polluting industries like steel or cement.

*The Green Aid Plan's approach of government dialogue and demonstrating retrofits enjoyed some success during the 1990s. In China, which has hosted roughly 80 per cent of the GAP's projects, 18 energy efficiency demonstration projects and 11 CCT demonstration projects were completed. This effort, representing a few hundred million US dollars during the 1990s, is the world's largest bilateral cooperation effort on industrial energy efficiency to date, and is yielding energy savings of roughly 4,200 TJ [terajoules]/year.*

More recently, a Japanese proposal to set country goals on energy efficiency and formulate action plans was included in the Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security (2007), during the Second East Asian Summit.<sup>123</sup> Japan also pledged to provide \$2 billion in assistance over three years to eradicate energy poverty in the region. As a leader on clean technology and techniques for energy efficiency, Japan has been eager to promote energy conservation in the region. It also participates to enhance its own energy security by easing the international competition for energy sources. In the *2008 Annual Energy Report* produced by METI, Japan states its aim to influence the international market and other countries' energy policies in order to improve global energy efficiency by 30% by 2020.<sup>124</sup>

The Japanese involvement in the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (APP) also advances this goal. The APP, founded in 2005 at the initiative of the US gathers Japan, Australia, China, the Republic of Korea, and India. The APP was created

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<sup>122</sup> S. Ohshita, "Cooperation Mechanisms: A Shift Toward Policy Development Cooperation," in T. Sugiyama and S. Ohshita, *Cooperative Climate: Energy Efficiency Action in East Asia*, Central Research Institute of Electric Power Industry, University of San Francisco and International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2006, pp. 63-78.

<sup>123</sup> IEA, *Energy Policies of IEA Countries, Japan: 2008 Review*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>124</sup> METI, 2009, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

*to meet [...] increased energy needs and associated challenges, including those related to air pollution, energy security and greenhouse gas<sup>125</sup> intensities, in accordance with national circumstances*

through international cooperation on the development, diffusion, deployment and transfer of clean, efficient technologies.

For Japanese industry, joining the APP seemed like a means to develop new mechanisms from which Japan would reap the results of work previously undertaken to increase the rate of its energy efficiency.<sup>126</sup> Joining the partnership lives up to its former expectations for the establishment of a strong post-2012 international regime on climate change mitigation, public-private partnership, and the use of existing industrial networks.

The question posed by the existence of the APP is whether or not it undermines the UNFCCC. There is no clear answer. This voluntary, non-legally binding framework for cooperation addresses certain flaws of the UN regime, some of which contributed to the US's decision to not ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Some authors even see the APP as

*[a] "counter-norm" to the dominating approach of climate governance rooted in hard law, [and], a "discursive contestation" of the international regime.*

However, the APP could be a good laboratory in which to experiment with sectoral, bottom-up approaches that bring together branches of industrial sectors to implement emissions reduction. It is particularly useful in helping to design methodologies to calculate emissions reduction by sector. By chairing the task force on the cement and steel industries, Japan can draw on its own good practices and experience as it

<sup>125</sup> *Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate Charter*, paragraph 1.1, Adopted, Inaugural Ministerial Meeting, Sydney, 11-13 January 2006, Amended, Second Ministerial Meeting, New Delhi, 14-15 October 2007, <<http://www.asiapacificpartnership.org/pdf/resources/charter.pdf>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Miki Yanagi, Institute of Energy Economics (IEE), Tokyo, 14 January 2010. The steel task force has already reached a consensus on a method of calculating energy consumption. Japanese experts were also dispatched to advise good practices in Chinese plants. Regarding the cement sector, data collection and definition of a common benchmark to measure energy efficiency is currently being conducted. International Energy Agency (IEA), *Energy Policies of IEA Countries, Japan, 2008 Review*, Paris, 2008, p. 36.

<sup>127</sup> S. I. Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, H. van Asselt, *op.cit.*, p. 205.

develops norms related to best practices, standards, and benchmarking on the energy consumption in these sectors.<sup>128</sup>

While sometimes challenging the core principles defined within the UNFCCC, the sectoral approach and pledge-and-review voluntary commitments can also be useful complimentary tools that engage the advanced developing countries and elaborate and harmonize methods for measuring energy efficiency. From this perspective, Japan has been working toward establishing links between the UNFCCC and the APP in order to develop synergies between the two frameworks.<sup>129</sup>

## C. AN INTENSIVE AND SUCCESSFUL COOPERATION WITH CHINA

Among numerous activities in Asia, Japanese programs directed toward China are the most ancient and developed. Cooperation between the two countries was instigated by Japanese concerns regarding cross-border air pollution and acid rain (starting in the late 1980s) caused by the pollution of coal-burning power-plants and yellow sand due to desertification in China. At the beginning of the 1990s, Tokyo began conditioning its loans for the construction of thermal power stations in China on the integration of desulphurization equipment in power plants. The two countries concluded the 1994 Environmental Conservation Cooperation Agreement in which Beijing acknowledged for the first time the role of its industry in the formation of such air pollution.<sup>130</sup> Since then, the bilateral dialogue on environmental issues has been institutionalized and strengthened, thanks to Japan's activism in putting the issue on the agenda.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Interview with Miki Yanagi, Institute of Energy Economics (IEE), Tokyo, 14 January 2010.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> N. Armitage, "From crisis to Kyoto and beyond: The evolution of environmental concerns in Japanese official development assistance," *Discussion Paper*, GSID, Nagoya University, n° 176, November 2009, pp. 20-21, <<http://www.gsid.nagoya-u.ac.jp/bpub/research/public/paper/article/176.pdf>>, last accessed 22 April.

<sup>131</sup> K. Morton, *International Aid and China's Environment. Taming the Yellow Dragon*

The shift to environmental aid was also a way of continuing to provide ODA to Beijing, at a time when criticism concerning the amounts of money transferred was mounting. It did not sit well with the public opinion that China remained the largest recipient of Japan's ODA from 1997 to 2007 even though Japan's economy was suffering from sluggish growth and budgetary restrictions, and China was emerging as a world economic and political power.<sup>132</sup>

In 2001, Tokyo decided to give priority to issues that would have direct or indirect benefits on Japan's national security. The resolution of environmental problems that affected Japan's territory was thus listed as a priority for future cooperation.<sup>133</sup> Accordingly, the share of green ODA rapidly grew, reaching up to 90% of total aid.<sup>134</sup> In 2008, Japan decided to officially cut aid to its neighbor. Environmental cooperation, in the form of "special yen loans," technical assistance, and research coordination, replaced traditional ODA.<sup>135</sup>

Environmental assistance to China has focused on two priorities: tackling air pollution and enhancing energy security. Several types of cooperation have taken place with China, beginning with the modernization of coal power plants.<sup>136</sup> The second type of program is related to technology transfers in the energy sector, especially on methods for power plant desulfurization.<sup>137</sup> The third type program is centered around institution-building and the replication of project models (like the Japan-China

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(Routledge Studies on China in Transition), USA and Canada, Routledge, 2006, p. 59.

<sup>132</sup> MOFA, *ODA White Paper*, Tokyo, 2008.

<sup>133</sup> MOFA, Economic Cooperation Program for China, Tokyo, October 2001, <[http://www.mofa.go.jp/POLICY/oda/region/e\\_asia/china-2.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/POLICY/oda/region/e_asia/china-2.html)>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>134</sup> See the projects funded in the last year of Japanese ODA to China (2007): MOFA, *FY2007 Japan ODA Loan to China*, 5 December 2007, <[http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2007/12/1176563\\_840.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2007/12/1176563_840.html)>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>135</sup> M. Masuda, "Japan's Changing ODA policy toward China," *China Perspectives*, May-June 2003, <<http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/document358.html>>, last accessed 23 September 2009. See also the website of the Beijing office of the Institute for Global Environment Strategies, <<http://www.iges.or.jp/en/beijing/outline.html>>, last accessed 30 March 2010.

<sup>136</sup> Asuka-Zhang Shouchuan, 2000, *op.cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>137</sup> The desulfurization is a process that aims at removing sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) from the flue gases of fossil fuel power plants. Sulfur dioxide is responsible for acid rain formation.

Environment Model Cities program). Among other schemes, China has particularly benefited from MITI's Green Aid Plan (GAP).<sup>138</sup>

A case study shows that the Japanese engineering approach toward environmental protection is functioning well in China as it matches the country's needs.<sup>139</sup> Furthermore, it seems that Japanese assistance has helped to reduce air pollution in cities. It has also been successful in increasing local political commitments on environmental issues in China. However, questions remain about the long-term effects of the projects and effectiveness of technology-transfer.

The issue of climate change has recently been integrated into cooperation regarding air pollution and energy efficiency.<sup>140</sup> The Japan-China Environment Model City Plan designed in 1999 primarily to fight acid rain was later reframed as a program contributing to tackle global warming. In the relations between Japan and China, and more generally in Japanese development cooperation in Asia, the "co-benefits" approach is widely spoken of as a win-win strategy between pollution control activities and climate change mitigation measures.

Despite their cooperative relationship, policy dialogue between Japan and China on measures to confront climate change is much more recent and modest. Traditional Japanese reluctance to interfere in recipient countries' domestic politics makes it difficult to gain important leverage on Chinese policies. The first China-Japan dialogue on climate change was held in Beijing in 2004, when two delegations led by MOFA officials exchanged their views on climate change policy. The exchange basically focused on implementation of the Clean Development Mechanisms (China is by far the largest supplier of carbon credits acquired through CDM (CERs) to Japan, amounting to 14 million tons, out of the total 25.4 million tons of CERs bought by

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<sup>138</sup> S. Ohshita, *op. cit.*

<sup>139</sup> K. Morton, *op.cit.*

<sup>140</sup> See for example: "Japan decided to provide support through yen loans for the construction of small hydroelectric and pumped-storage power plants in Shandong, Hubei, Gansu, and Shanxi provinces. In Shanxi Province, a project for the construction of four 300MW pumped-storage power generation facilities is expected to result in a 260,000 ton-per-year reduction in the use of coal fuel. These new facilities also promise to curb emissions of air pollutants, reducing sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) by 6,100 tons a year and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) by 3,000 tons a year, and decreasing emissions of greenhouse gases, thus contributing to preventing global warming." MOFA, ODA White Paper 2006.

Tokyo) and the sharing of climate-friendly technologies. The dialogue on climate change was upgraded in December 2007 and integrated as a major topic in the first China-Japan high-level economic dialogue.

In spite of this, the 2008 joint statement on climate change highlighted the difference in the policy orientations of the two countries. China did not formally rally the Japanese proposition to halve global greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The statement also reflects a different understanding of Tokyo's sectoral approach:

*Japan expressed a view that the sectoral approach has important meanings in setting a quantified national target for emissions reductions. China expressed a view that the sectoral approach is an important tool<sup>141</sup> to implement emission reduction standards or actions.*

For now, these dialogues have not led to a concrete political rapprochement with respect to climate change and a post-2012 framework.

Despite the extensive cooperation on environmental protection and climate change considered a "success story" by some, strong divergences still persist between the Japanese and Chinese approaches.

Of course, this does not necessarily mean that bilateral cooperation will suffer. The two countries depend on each other, China for the transfer of technologies and Japanese companies for the Chinese market. Bilateral cooperation based on energy efficiency and pollution control measures, which has the potential to engage the private sector, is sustained by a positive regional environment.

Thanks to all its initiatives regarding the improvement of energy efficiency in Asia, Japan is considered a leader in the field. The report of the International Energy Agency (IEA) praises Japan's leadership: an "active member of the APP," Japan is showing "leadership of steel and cement task forces." It goes on to note that,

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<sup>141</sup> Joint Statement on Climate Change Between Japan and China, 7 May 2008.

*The government is also driving energy R&D collaboration and technology transfer in Asia and throughout the globe. [...] World leader in R&D funding and energy technology[,] Japan is taking a leadership role in the Asia Pacific region by encouraging countries to set energy efficiency goals and formulate action plans.*<sup>142</sup>

Even if, most of the time, policy dialogues did not lead to concrete rapprochement on the climate change issue, it is important to emphasize that Tokyo managed to create and maintain bilateral and regional discussions on environmental issues that are seen as particularly sensitive in Asia as they touch on the question of territorial and political sovereignty.<sup>143</sup>

If the Japanese practice of climate change cooperation seems well adapted to the Asian region, some consider it controversial and not in line with the international norms regarding environmental cooperation. A report and a recent Japanese initiative have aimed at addressing these flaws.<sup>144</sup>

## **D. ADRESSING THE FLAWS OF JAPANESE CLIMATE CHANGE COOPERATION**

Japanese practices on climate change cooperation are quite peculiar, and reflect the country's specific use of its ODA.

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<sup>142</sup> IEA, *op.cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>143</sup> N. Armitage, *op.cit.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>144</sup> Central Environmental Council, *The Direction of International Environmental Cooperation*, Ministry of the Environment, July 2005.

*Japan's environmental ODA has continued to be subjected to extensive criticism on the grounds that it does not in fact comply with some of the more fine-grained transnational norms surrounding development assistance for the environment.*<sup>145</sup>

For example, other donors are opposed to the amount of Japanese “environmental ODA” that focuses on hardware and technologies.<sup>146</sup> Another Japanese contested practice is the financing of CDMs through the ODA budget.

The CDM is a market-based scheme introduced under the Kyoto Protocol. It is used to mitigate the costs of reducing GHG emissions in developed countries by allowing them to fund clean development projects in developing countries and count such actions as GHG reductions.

Japan is an enthusiastic promoter of CDM use but it also takes a unique stance regarding its practice. Tokyo has always advocated the right to fund the CDM projects with its ODA budget. The Marrakech Accord in 2001 approves such activities, unless the practice results in aid diversion. This idea raised questions, as it seemed to counter the core principle of the additionality of CDM funds, and more generally of funds dedicated to environmental projects. To be registered under the CDM scheme, the submitted projects must fulfill the conditions of environmental and financial additionality, meaning that the project should lead to real additional GHG emission reductions, and should be supported by new and additional funds.<sup>147</sup>

This condition was set up in order to prevent the diversion of the ODA to fund lucrative environmental-oriented activities. This shift is highly feared by developing countries, especially the poorest ones, who may see a reduction of the overall received amount of ODA. Another problem is the huge geographic imbalances regarding the beneficiaries of CDM projects, as four big countries (China, India, Mexico, and Brazil) account for 80% of generated credits, while less than 5% come from African

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<sup>145</sup> D. Hall, 2010, *op.cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>146</sup> N. Armitage, *op.cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>147</sup> See the UNFCCC webpage on CDM: <<http://cdm.unfccc.int/about/index.html>>, last accessed 30 March 2010.

countries.<sup>148</sup> This is explained by the potential to reduce GHG emissions in big industrialized developing countries in greater quantities and more cheaply.

Japan succeeded in getting the approval to use ODA to fund CDMs, under the additionality condition. The Japanese argument is firm, based on the practice of the CDM Board:<sup>149</sup> ODA can be used for CDM projects if both donor and recipient countries agree that it does not lead to the diversion of ODA.<sup>150</sup> This condition would also encourage the implementation of more CDM projects in Least Developed Countries, where such projects are much less beneficial.<sup>151</sup> However, some experts and NGOs point out that this could very easily be used as blackmail against developing countries.<sup>152</sup>

There is still considerable debate over the question of financial additionality and Japan is not the only country to fund its CDM projects with ODA. Funding CDMs with ODA money can be beneficial in financial terms, for it helps attract private investments that would be lacking otherwise. The Michaelowas' study introduces the Danish example in which

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<sup>148</sup> M. Krause, "CDM Experiences and Lessons," AWG on Further Commitments In-session workshop on means to reach emission reduction targets, UNDP, Bangkok, 1 April 2008, <[http://www.unfccc.int/files/meetings/.../awg.../bkk\\_krause\\_undp\\_ji\\_cdm.pps](http://www.unfccc.int/files/meetings/.../awg.../bkk_krause_undp_ji_cdm.pps)>, last accessed 30 March 2010.

<sup>149</sup> "The UNFCCC Secretariat has informed the DAC Secretariat that, according to its understanding, the CDM Board, at the time of considering a proposed a CDM project that includes ODA financing, would seek an affirmation (project by project) from the donor that public financing does not result in the diversion of ODA. Moreover, it is the host Party's prerogative to confirm whether a clean development mechanism project activity assists it in achieving sustainable development. Thus, the recipient country will need to approve each project, including the source of financing." OECD-DAC, Office of the DAC Chair, ODA Eligibility Issues for Expenditures under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), 30 April 2004, Article 9.

<sup>150</sup> MOFA, *ODA White Paper 2007* and interview with Tomonori Sudo, JICA, Tokyo, 12 January 2010.

<sup>151</sup> The Zafarana Wind Power Plant Project (Egypt) was approved in June 2007 as Japan's first ODA project eligible for CDM. MOFA, *ODA White paper*, Tokyo, 2007, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/white/2007/ODA2007/html/box/bx01001.htm>>, last accessed 30 March 2010.

<sup>152</sup> Interview with Shouchuan Asuka-Zhang, Professor, Tohoku University, Tokyo, 13 January 2010.

*Increasingly, ODA activities to support renewable energy and energy efficiency projects have been used to “graft” CDM programs.*<sup>153</sup>

However, this arrangement comes with the inherent risk that funding earmarked for “traditional” development projects gets diverted, or in other words, funds are used for environmental projects that are not additional to existing financial aid flows. In 2004, the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD allowed for the possibility for countries to fund CDM projects through ODA, however, the value, in monetary terms, of the emissions credits gained by a government through a CDM project should subsequently be deducted from its official ODA budget.<sup>154</sup>

Still, as the criteria to use ODA to fund CDM can be tricky (requiring the donor and recipient countries’ approval that there has been no ODA diversion), and as the DAC approach to the issue is only related to the accounting of CERs, the actual practices are very diverse as there is almost “no limitation to the use of ODA funds for climate related activities.”<sup>155</sup>

Recently, Japan has adopted a normative discourse on the “co-benefits” approach to justify the use of ODA to fund CDM projects that address climate change concerns and development needs.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> A. Michaelowa and K. Michaelowa, “Climate or Development: Is ODA Diverted from its Original Purpose?”, *Paper n° 2 by the HWWI Research Programme on International Climate Policy*, Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI), Hamburg, November 2005, p.20.

<sup>154</sup> OECD-DAC, 30 April 2004, *op. cit.*, Article 11.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>156</sup> See B. Metz, O. R. Davidson, P. R. Bosch, R. Dave, L. A. Meyer (eds), 2007, *op.cit.* Also, JICA, *Initiative for Clean Development in LDCs*, 1 December 2009, <[http://www.jica.go.jp/english/news/field/2009/pdf/20091201\\_01\\_01.pdf](http://www.jica.go.jp/english/news/field/2009/pdf/20091201_01_01.pdf)>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

### **TOWARD A NEW, POLICY-ORIENTED COOPERATION MECHANISM**

Japan recently made efforts to improve its assistance policy on climate change.<sup>157</sup> A report published by the Central Environmental Council (CEC) on the future orientations of Japanese environmental cooperation provides a useful evaluation of Japanese environmental cooperation in 2005.<sup>158</sup> The Ministry of Environment asked the CEC to consider the shape of future international environmental cooperation corresponding to changes in and outside of the country and drawing on environmental conservation in recent years. The Council established an International Environmental Cooperation Technical Committee composed of academics and representatives of the private sector that released a report in July of 2005. It concludes that:

*it has been observed that less emphasis is placed on capacity building, including support for planning, implementing, and evaluating policy, compared to support for technical transfers and infrastructure building in specific environmental fields. Also, in some cases equipment and infrastructure for environmental conservation have been provided but not properly maintained, which is sometimes caused by budget shortfalls in the recipient country or lack of ownership.*<sup>159</sup>

The report explains that the international thinking on environmental aid includes such concerns as:

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<sup>157</sup> These efforts include the revision of the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations in 2004 and of the Guidelines for Confirmation of Environmental and Social Considerations for JBIC. These guidelines cover screening, environmental review and monitoring of ODA projects. N. Armitage, *op.cit.*, pp. 30-32.

<sup>158</sup> See Central Environmental Council, *The Direction of International Environmental Cooperation*, Ministry of the Environment, July 2005.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

*securing good governance at national and local levels; strengthening partnerships between governments and between governments and other entities; expanding corporate social responsibility.*<sup>160</sup>

The report then calls on the Japanese government to reorient its practice in order to align it with international expectations.

Focusing on policy development rather than the funding of projects would clear the way to a more comprehensive vision and a broader impact on the recipient country's climate change policy:

*Regarding the environmental issues, however, ODA has been implemented on a project basis, without full consideration of the scenarios for environmental management mechanisms and capacity development. [...] In the future, when preparing ODA plans aimed at improving the mechanism for environmental management in the Asia-Pacific region, it is expected that these<sup>161</sup> plans incorporate a more strategic viewpoint.*

The report also calls on Japan to focus on East Asia, by taking leadership to build a framework for environmental cooperation in the region.

The Cool Earth Partnership launched in 2008 is designed to answer to the shortcomings pointed out by the report. It is a new financial mechanism aimed at providing \$10 billion (1,250 billion yen) over a 5 year-period to help developing countries that have already made efforts to reduce their emissions and increase their energy efficiency.<sup>162</sup> Of the money provided, 80% is dedicated to mitigation activities and the rest to adaptation programs.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.* p. 29.

<sup>162</sup> A "Climate Change Japanese ODA Loan" with preferential interest will be created to provide loans amounting to JPYen 500 billion for the purpose of implementing programs to address global warming in developing countries. Through capital contributions and guarantees by JBIC (JBIC Asia and Environment Facility), trade and investment insurance by NEXI, and government support (projects to be implemented through NEDO), together with private funds, up to JPYen 500 billion will be provided for projects to reduce GHGs emission in developing countries. In this context Asian Clean Energy Fund (at ADB) will also be utilized to promote energy conservation in the Asian-Pacific region." MOFA, *Financial Mechanism for "Cool Earth*

This program is based on policy consultations held with recipient countries in order to

*reach common understandings of policies regarding climate change (e.g., Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve economic growth<sup>164</sup> in a compatible way to contribute to climate stability).*

The ultimate aim is to “facilitate the negotiation process to formulate an effective framework beyond 2012, in which all countries participate.” One of the steps of the bilateral discussion is indeed to agree on a memorandum of understanding between Japan and the host country on a post-Kyoto strategy.<sup>165</sup>

Indonesia was the first country to receive a loan, worth \$300 million, under the Cool Earth Partnership, to support the implementation of its National Action Plan Addressing Climate Change.<sup>166</sup> In their 2007 joint statement, Japan and Indonesia pledged to cooperate to build a post-2012 regime in which major emitters would be included. They also recognized the importance of

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*Partnership*,” November 2008, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/wef/2008/mechanism.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>163</sup> The classification of the Cool Earth Partnership funds is 60% ODA. All of the grant money is ODA (which constitutes 20% of the Partnership Fund) and about half of the loan money is considered ODA.

<sup>164</sup> S. Tanaka, “Financial mechanism: ‘Cool Earth Partnership’,” *Accra Climate Change Talks 2008*, 22 August 2008, <[http://unfccc.meta-fusion.com/kongresse/AWG\\_08\\_Ghana/download/080822\\_Ghana\\_AWG\\_SE\\_1300\\_Shuichi\\_Takana.pdf](http://unfccc.meta-fusion.com/kongresse/AWG_08_Ghana/download/080822_Ghana_AWG_SE_1300_Shuichi_Takana.pdf)>, last accessed 22 February 2010.

<sup>165</sup> Climate Funds Update, <<http://www.climatefundsupdate.org/listing/cool-earth-partnership>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>166</sup> MOFA, *Climate Change Program Loan*, July 2008, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/wef/2008/loan.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

*the long-term target to cut global emissions by half from the current level by 2050, fully taking account of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.*

Jakarta and Tokyo agreed to cooperate in Copenhagen.<sup>168</sup> Indonesia set a carbon dioxide reduction target of -26% by the year 2020 and associated itself with the Copenhagen accord.<sup>169</sup>

Japan also seeks to coordinate its efforts with other donors: in Indonesia, JICA is cooperating with its French counterpart, AFD, which has provided Indonesia with \$500 million for the first two years (2008-2009) of its triennial plan.<sup>170</sup>

Through this initiative, Japan is taking steps to harmonize its approach with that of other OECD-DAC donors, especially regarding the conditionality of aid with good governance.<sup>171</sup> The Japanese approach, based on self-help, makes it indeed more difficult for Japan to interfere in domestic politics of host nations to monitor projects.

Japan has shown a real political willingness to promote the climate change norm through its environmental assistance. The Japanese approach which focuses on simultaneous economic growth and environmental protection reflects the priorities of

<sup>167</sup> They also reached a common understanding on climate change policies, including the “enactment of laws and regulations for high level environment protection and their effective enforcement”; “effectiveness of integrated approach, such as regional anti-pollutions measures and global warming counter measures”; and “the promotion of cooperation between the two countries in various fields, such as energy efficiency and conservation, renewable energy and clean coal technology.” *Joint Statement by Japan and The Republic of Indonesia on the Enhancement of the Cooperation on Climate Change, Environment and Energy Issues*, Jakarta, 20 August 2007, <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0708/joint.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>168</sup> Joint Press Conference by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia on the Occasion of the *Bali Democracy Forum II* in Bali, Indonesia, 10 December 2009.

<sup>169</sup> Indonesia Association with Copenhagen Accord, <<http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/application/pdf/indonesiacphaccord.pdf>>, last accessed 30 March 2010.

<sup>170</sup> AFD, *L'AFD et le "Climate Change Program Loan" (CCPL)*, <[http://www.afd-indonesie.org/jahia/webdav/site/afd/users/admin\\_indonesie/public/Fiche\\_AFD\\_CCPL\\_fr.pdf](http://www.afd-indonesie.org/jahia/webdav/site/afd/users/admin_indonesie/public/Fiche_AFD_CCPL_fr.pdf)>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>171</sup> N. Armitage, *op.cit.*, p. 30. See also the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, Paris, France, 2 March 2005.

developing Asian countries. However, some dimensions of the Japanese stance on climate change have been criticized for being non-orthodox. This ambivalence of Japanese diplomacy casts shadows on the country's bid to be a leader on the issue. In the next chapter, I will analyze and assess Japanese diplomacy in terms of leadership style and discuss the implications of the Democratic Party's newfound power on national climate change policy.

## 5. ASSESSMENT OF JAPANESE CLIMATE CHANGE DIPLOMACY

Japan's ambivalent diplomacy has been diversely appreciated. While at the forefront in terms of energy efficiency and green assistance towards Asian countries, Japan has also consistently resisted committing to a high reduction target. I nevertheless argue that it has attempted to play the role of a "directional leader"<sup>172</sup> on the climate change issue. This leadership role seems to have been strengthened with the change of government, as the recently elected Democratic Party has been adopting ambitious objectives to tackle the issue of climate change. Nevertheless, the Cabinet faces important challenges in order to implement this policy and reestablish Japan's role after the Copenhagen conference. Several recommendations can be drawn from the Japanese case study, which can provide insight for Japan on ways to improve its leadership in the post-Copenhagen context.

### A. MEASURING THE EFFICIENCY OF JAPANESE DIPLOMACY ON CLIMATE CHANGE: WHAT KIND OF LEADER?

Bluntly speaking, the image of Japan in the climate community is mixed. While it is considered central to the management of the climate change issue – as one of the largest economic powers to achieve high levels of energy efficiency, the fifth GHG emitter and the largest donor of green ODA<sup>173</sup> – Japan has sometimes been a disappointment in international conferences. Furthermore, at the time that this report

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<sup>172</sup> See description from Gupta and Grubb in the following pages.

<sup>173</sup> OECD, November 2009, *op.cit.*

is being written, Tokyo has not been able to achieve its Kyoto emissions reduction objective.

Japan's primary goal when committing to the international objective of preventing climate change was to increase its international profile and be recognized as a leader on this issue (See Chapter I). How are we to understand the gap between this objective, and its mixed results?

Japan was able to make a highly visible international contribution to the discourse on climate change prevention by hosting COP 3 in Kyoto. The problems at hand resonated quite effectively with several key domestic concerns such as national and energy security, economic growth, the national struggles against industrial pollution, and cultural values, so that the problem of climate change could become an "appropriate" objective of national interest.<sup>174</sup>

However, the fact that symbolic commitments are made at the international level does not necessarily mean that all the players on the domestic level share a single approach to the issue of climate change prevention. While the public opinion consistently supports more stringent efforts, the arguments of actors in the industrial and energetic sectors, relayed by the industry, METI, and most of the LDP, remain prevalent. The influence of this unified camp have led to the soft, "cheap" measures currently being taken to tackle climate change and achieve the Kyoto target.

It is important to note, however, that Japanese action on the issue of climate change prevention has had a positive impact regionally in that it has moved the issue higher up on the agendas of neighboring states. Finally, Japanese diplomacy on climate change has become more and more proactive and innovative with time, even if sometimes it seems to challenge some of the core principles of the Kyoto Protocol. Because of these contrasting results, the Japanese policy on climate change appears ambiguous and contradictory.

The gap between its objectives and its actual position and influence within the climate change regime originates mainly in Japan's inability to frame a consistent policy on

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<sup>174</sup> "Kyoto came to represent Japan's new global leadership, the reinvention of its international image and the transformation of domestic politics away from a pure battle of interests," Y. Tiberghien and M. Schreurs, op.cit., p. 81.

climate change. A report written by a research committee of the Japanese House of Councillors even acknowledges the lack of a strategic vision:

*Japan should maintain an unwavering foothold based on such scientific rationales as the findings of the IPCC. It should correct its practices of adopting different stances according to its perceived distance from the other countries.*

This attitude is typical of the diplomatic practice of “middle-powers,”<sup>176</sup> who usually seek to play the role of mediator on the international stage, and attempt to exert their influence in diplomatic niches that fit their interests, skills, and power.<sup>177</sup> If Japan does not perfectly fit the “middle-power” categorization, due to its economic might and its central role in the politics of the Asian region, one could argue that the practice of Japanese diplomacy resembles that of a middle-power because of the domestic political constraints to which it is subjected. Japan’s constrained diplomacy is a characteristic that can help explain the lack of consistency of Japan’s climate change policy.

While Japan has difficulties playing a strong and visible leadership role in international climate change negotiations,<sup>178</sup> it is nevertheless very active in promoting and

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<sup>175</sup> Research Committee on International Affairs and Global Warming Issues, House of Councillors Japan, *Research Report on International Affairs and Global Warming Issues, Interim Report*, Tokyo, November 2009, p. 27.

<sup>176</sup> Although there is no single definition, the phrase “middle-power” generally refers to a state holding a middle-ground position in terms of economic and military power, and whose diplomacy aims at stabilizing the international system by favoring multilateral cooperation and advancing normative agendas. The middle power theory has been established to assess the influence of countries like Canada, the Netherlands, and later, Australia. See for example: N. Kanie, “Middle-power Leadership in the Climate Change Negotiations: Foreign Policy of the Netherlands,” in P.G. Harris (ed.), *Europe and Global Climate Change: Politics, Foreign Policy and Regional Cooperation*, Cornwall, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2007, pp. 87-112.

<sup>177</sup> See A. F. Cooper, *Niche Diplomacy: Middle Powers after the Cold War*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1997, p. 221.

<sup>178</sup> This practice suits Japanese diplomacy since discussions and negotiations are usually conducted behind closed doors. This is the characteristic of the Japanese “quiet diplomacy”: “Japanese leadership and presence in the world does not conform to the criteria of other powers, as the US, as few traces of the same sorts of overt military power and leadership emerge in the case of Japan. [Japan’s leadership concentrates on] consensus-building, facilitating, patient diplomacy and agenda-setting,” G. Hook, J. Gilson, C. W. Hughes, H.

diffusing the norm of climate change prevention in its region. This is also a characteristic of middle-powers diplomacy:

*The middle-power[s] role is to affirm the principle of adherence to acceptable rules of conduct by all powers, great and small.*

Despite its reluctance to accept some of the core principles of the international regime related to the prevention of climate change, I argue that Japan has attempted to act as a “directional leader,” making an important contribution to the advancement of the climate change prevention agenda domestically, regionally, and to a lesser extent, internationally.

Gupta and Grubb propose a typology of actor leadership in multilateral negotiations.<sup>180</sup> Among the different types outlined, they single out three: (1) *structural leadership*, characterized by the use of “carrots and sticks” as a way of constraining other actors to act in certain ways, (2) *instrumental leadership*, which involves “crafting structures and apply[ing] diplomatic skill to create winning coalitions,”<sup>181</sup> and (3) *directional leadership*, which implies “the development of perceptions and solutions [and] their dissemination internationally.”<sup>182</sup> Japan’s ambition to lead by example on the climate change issue, and its willingness to disseminate its “model,” is representative of this kind of leadership.

A number of elements throw the success of Japan’s attempt to act as a “directional leader” into question. First, Japan is far from reaching its Kyoto emissions reduction targets. Second, Japan has been very reluctant to commit to a high reduction target, and has attempted to unravel some of the core principles of the climate change regime. Finally, Japan has resisted the introduction of cost-effective measures such as market instruments and taxes to curb its GHG emissions at the domestic level.

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Dobson, *Japan's International Relations, Politics, Economics and Security*, Sheffield Center for Japanese Studies/Routledge Series, London and New York, 2005, p. 82.

<sup>179</sup> R. W. Cox, “Middlepowermanship, Japan and Future World Order,” *International Journal*, vol. 44, n° 4, Autumn 1989, p. 834.

<sup>180</sup> J. Gupta and M. Grubb, “Leadership,” in J. Gupta and M. Grubb (eds.), *Climate Change and European Leadership. A Sustainable Role for Europe?*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000, pp. 15-24.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

That said, Japan has made an important contribution as a directional leader to the prevention of climate change, by putting forward alternative visions and solutions. Because some of these provisions have not been considered by NGOs and frontrunner countries as “appropriate” ones for the development of a strong and ambitious climate change regime, Japan has not managed to emerge as a natural leader on this issue. However, the policies promoted by Japan have been acknowledged as useful tools by several international institutions. The OECD and the IEA, for example, issued a report on the sectoral approach as a tool to measure and promote the reduction of GHG emissions.<sup>183</sup> Japan's policies might also help to engage new players on the climate change issue by making alternative and flexible approaches available in the struggle against global warming.

Even if Tokyo has not always acted in line with the core principles of the climate change regime enshrined in the UNFCCC, the broader concern for climate change prevention resonates deeply and is embedded in Japanese politics and society.<sup>184</sup> The Japanese commitment on climate change prevention has actually led to significant developments, including the increase in media coverage on issues of climate change, the growth of a dynamic epistemic community, and the proliferation of innovation strategies within the industrial sector. The objective of climate change prevention has become highly significant in Japan. This can partly account for the political breakthrough made by the Democratic Party of Japan last September as it committed itself, unlike the LDP, to an ambitious reduction target of -25% by 2020.

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<sup>183</sup> OECD, *Sectoral Approaches for Greenhouse Gas Reductions*, 9 November 2006, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/17/37897024.pdf>>, last accessed 16 April 2010; OECD, IEA, *Sectoral Approaches and the Carbon Market*, R. Baron, B. Buchner and Jane Ellis, Paris, June 2009, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/8/7/42875080.pdf>>, last accessed 16 April 2010.

<sup>184</sup> An opinion poll conducted on August 2007 by the Prime Minister office shows that more than 92% of the respondents demonstrates a strong or relative interest in the climate change issue. Office of the Prime Minister, 地球温暖化対策に関する世論調査[Opinion poll related to the measures toward global warming], August 2007, <<http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h19/h19-globalwarming/3.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

## **B. TOWARDS A GREATER CONVERGENCE ON CORE NORMS: PERSPECTIVES ON THE DPJ BREAKTHROUGH AND THE POST- COPENHAGEN STRATEGY**

On August 30<sup>th</sup> 2009, a political earthquake hit Japan as the main opposition party, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), won a large majority at the Lower House of the Diet. This meant that for the first time, aside from a brief interlude in the 1990s, the LDP was no longer in the driver's seat. During the first days of his mandate, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama delivered a speech at the United Nations Summit on Climate Change in which he detailed the DPJ breakthrough approach to Climate Change: he proposed a national reduction of 25% from 1990 levels by 2020.

Hatoyama referred to the IPCC recommendations in order to set, for the first time, a reduction target that would be "consistent with what the science calls for in order to halt global warming."<sup>185</sup> This statement signifies the growing attention paid by the government to the linking of climate change prevention and mitigation policy with scientific findings. He put one important condition in place for the achievement of such an objective however, namely that all the major economies participate in the effort to reduce GHG emissions. This mention refers to the US, but also to China and India, which have become industrial giants and whose share of GHG emissions have increased to the point where they represent one third of world emissions today.<sup>186</sup>

In his policy speech at the Diet, Prime Minister Hatoyama stated his readiness to

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<sup>185</sup> Statement by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama at the United Nations Summit on Climate Change, New York, 22 September 2009. The 2007 Report of the IPCC calls for the reduction of emissions of the developed countries by between 25 and 40 per cent by 2020 compared to the level of 1990, the world emissions peak by 2015 at the global reduction from 50 to 85% by 2050.

<sup>186</sup> China accounts for 26% of world emissions, India releases 6.9%.

*mobilize all available policy tools. These will include the introduction of a domestic emission trading mechanism and a feed-in tariff for renewable energy, as well as the consideration of a global warming tax.*

The government plans to put a trading system in place by 2011, and an environmental tax within four years when a wider reform of the Japanese tax system is implemented.

So, what enabled the DPJ to take such bold steps? A first part of the answer lies in the fact that the DPJ has less links to and shared interests with the bureaucracy and the industrial sector than the LDP, which gives the party more leeway to implement this policy reorientation.<sup>188</sup> The priority of the DPJ's program is the reform of Japan's political system. Their objective is to refocus decision-making processes around the government and politicians, as a way of decoupling such processes from the interests of the bureaucracy and the industrial sector.

A second element that explains the DPJ's position on climate change is its strong links within Japanese civil society. This close relationship makes clear the reasons for DPJ's focus on adopting a more ambitious emissions reduction target. At their demand, NGO delegations accompanied Okada Katsuya (now Minister for Foreign Affairs) and the Japanese delegation to the Bali Conference. His Secretary of State, Fukuyama Tetsuro, is a former NGO representative who participated in the "Kiko Forum 97," a large conference that gathered all of the parts of Japanese civil society interested in climate change.<sup>189</sup> When the party was in the opposition, its members in parliament often relayed the concerns and questions of NGOs to the government during the weekly question sessions in the Diet.<sup>190</sup>

A third element is the consideration shown by the DPJ with respect to public opinion during the policymaking process. The DPJ often claims that it strengthens Japanese democracy through its systematic consultation of citizens and local communities. An

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<sup>187</sup> Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, *Policy Speech by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama at the 173<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Diet*, 26 October 2009, <[http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/hatoyama/statement/200910/26syosin\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/hatoyama/statement/200910/26syosin_e.html)>, last accessed 9 November 2009.

<sup>188</sup> This argument is supported by Norichika Kanie who was interviewed on 12 November 2009.

<sup>189</sup> Y. Tiberghien, M. Schreurs, *op.cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>190</sup> Interview with Yurika Ayukawa and Mika Ohbayashi, Office Ecologist, Tokyo, January 2010.

opinion poll conducted on October 2<sup>nd</sup> reveals that 70% of Japanese people back Hatoyama's pledge on GHG emissions reduction.<sup>191</sup>

However, the genuine interest of the DPJ members toward the climate change issue should not be overstated. If some politicians do hold strong ties with green NGOs and are sensible to the environmental concerns, most of DPJ members still have "traditional," rather conservative ideas about the issue.<sup>192</sup> The announcement of an ambitious emissions reduction target was also an opportunistic move that allowed the DPJ to capitalize on the popularity of the issue amongst the electorate and clearly differentiate the Hatoyama government from the preceding one.

Implementing such an ambitious policy on climate change will be a daunting task for the new, inexperienced government. Within the administration, METI and MOFA regret the lack of "classic consultations with the interested parties."<sup>193</sup> As one official explained, the DPJ turned the policy-making process upside-down: political options are traditionally formulated by the bureaucracy and proposed to the politicians (bottom-up), and seldom the reverse. This explains some of the resistance and misunderstanding that has emerged between the political leadership and the administration on the management of the climate change issue.

What's more, because of the difficult economic context, the introduction of a "carbon tax" has been delayed.<sup>194</sup> Such a tax is expected to raise 3 trillion yen a year to fund mitigation efforts. The implementation of a cap-and-trade system is also still under consideration. The Hatoyama administration has delayed such projects for fear they would provoke negative feelings in the population. The prospect of elections in the coming month of July does not leave much hope for such a policy to change until then, nor for the quick implementation of market based measures.

The government also attempts to accommodate the interests of the Japanese industrial sector, which reacted quite strongly to the DPJ's new climate change policy.

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<sup>191</sup> E. Johnston, "70% of Japanese back Hatoyama's pledge: survey," *Japan Times*, 2 October 2009.

<sup>192</sup> Interview with Yurika Ayukawa, Executive Director, The Office Ecologist, Tokyo, 15 January 2010.

<sup>193</sup> Interviews with officials from the two administrations, Tokyo, January 2010.

<sup>194</sup> The bill to introduce the tax is ready and is just waiting to get introduced. Interview with Marutei Tsurunen, member of the house of Councillors (DPJ), Tokyo, 21 January 2010.

At the beginning of December, nine major industrial groups — representing the steel, cement, oil, chemical and electronics sectors — joined together to oppose any new carbon tax, arguing it would damage what was already the world's most energy-efficient economy. However, it should be noted that *Keidanren* is increasingly divided on the climate change issue. Divisions emerge among its members, as those in direct contact with consumers increasingly wish to take advantage of the opportunities opened up by green business to improve their images. For example, seven firms joined together to create the Japan Climate Leader's Partnership (Japan-CLP) to support the proposal of halving global emission by 2050 and reaching a peak in GHG emissions as early as possible.<sup>195</sup>

Despite this division, and the recent difficulties encountered by industrials to lobby politicians,<sup>196</sup> the weight of *Keidanren* is still important, particularly in the context of the economic crisis.

In mid-March, the government approved a basic law on climate change that makes significant concessions to the private sector. It does not specify the modalities by which the ambitious emissions reduction target would be achieved by 2020. The bill was also criticized by NGOs because it mentioned the introduction of a mandatory cap and trade system, within which the “cap” will be applied either to the global emissions of a company or to its emissions *per unit of production*, which could allow for the increase in emissions in the case of an increase in production.<sup>197</sup>

Japan won international praise for showing political leadership in reaching a scientifically meaningful target. However, the fundamentally reactive nature of Japanese diplomacy, and the timing of the Hatoyama electoral success, did not allow the new government to take the lead in the Copenhagen conference.

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<sup>195</sup> Japan-CLP's website, <<http://japan-clp.jp/en/index.html>>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>196</sup> A. Kashiwagi, “LDP bedfellows out; no biz as usual,” *Japan Times*, 15 December 2009.

<sup>197</sup> “Japan Climate Bill Seriously Flawed,” *Oxfam International*, 11 March 2010, <<http://www.oxfam.org/fr/pressroom/pressrelease/2010-03-11/japan-climate-bill-seriously-flawed>>, last accessed 28 March 2010.

## **THE COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE**

Japan adopted a low profile at Copenhagen, as the Japanese chief negotiator under the Aso government remained unchanged in the new administration.<sup>198</sup> It defended the principles for a post-2012 framework that had been developed since 2008: a binding treaty in which all countries would commit to emissions reductions; fair emissions reduction targets calculated on the basis of a sectoral approach; a halving of global GHG emissions by 2050 through technological innovation. Japan, much to the dismay of the developing countries, tried to steer clear from negotiations that would not include the US.<sup>199</sup>

Moreover, Japanese diplomacy suffered from a lack of visibility due to an inadequate communication strategy: no press conferences were open to all media and most information was released in Japanese.<sup>200</sup>

Only on the financing issue was Japan visible, announcing it would provide \$15 billion as an aid package for short term climate mitigation and adaptation projects, which amounted to half of the sum required by the IPCC.<sup>201</sup> Out of this sum, however, only \$1 billion is additional. Indeed, of the \$14 billion, only 11 are counted as ODA (the 4 remaining billion come from private sources), and 10 of these had already been earmarked for the Cool Earth Partnership in 2008.

After the disappointing result of COP 15, Japan acknowledged the crisis of the UNFCCC framework and, despite a traditional attachment to UN-centered diplomacy, seems ready to discuss the possibility of developing an alternative framework of negotiation.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Two representatives from NGOs have been included for the first time in the official delegation to COP 15, with restricted access to meetings and policy documents.

<sup>199</sup> Interview with Yurika Ayukawa, Executive Director, The Office Ecologist, Tokyo, 15 January 2010.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>201</sup> *Support for developing countries under the "Hatoyama Initiative,"* 16 december 2009, <[http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/topics/2009/1216initiative\\_e.pdf](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/topics/2009/1216initiative_e.pdf)>, last accessed 22 April 2010.

<sup>202</sup> Interview with D and F, Global Environment Affairs Office, METI, Tokyo, 13 January 2010.

The Japanese government is also aware that pressure should be put on China and the US in order to get a real commitment from them, but seems reluctant to initiate this kind of move.

## C. CONCLUSION

The ownership process of the climate change prevention norm by Japanese actors has led the country to conduct an ambivalent diplomacy on this issue. Japanese actors strongly committed themselves to take action to prevent climate change, but had different perceptions of what this action should be. The importance for Japan to act as a leader pushed it to host COP 3, to accept a -6% target, and to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Japanese international cooperation on climate change, especially in the Asian region, is also significant and highly appreciated. However, the relative domination of the industry-led coalition on the elaboration of a climate change policy resulted in a heavy reliance on flexibility mechanisms and carbon offsets<sup>203</sup> to reach the set emissions reduction target, and on a strong lobbying strategy on part of the industrial sector to change the rules of the game of the Kyoto regime.

One can draw several lessons from the Japanese case regarding the ownership process of the norm of climate change prevention. The vagueness of the norm allows for a broad mobilization of domestic actors, who can all find an opportunity to advance their personal interests through an involvement on the issue. This vagueness also has

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<sup>203</sup> The Japanese plan is to get 100 million tons of carbon equivalents through carbon offsets by the end of 2012. In April 2010, the country brought 95.8 million tons of carbon credits from abroad. From this amount, 25.1 million tons are certified emissions reduction (CERs) acquired through CDM projects. The remaining 75% are composed of Assigned Amount Units (AAUs) of tradable sovereign emissions rights purchased from Ukraine (30 million tons in 2008), the Czech Republic (40 million tons in 2009) and Latvia (1.5 million tons in October 2009). Buying AAUs has been criticized and called "hot air" as most of the carbon credits emitted by Russia and Eastern Europe countries resulted from the collapse of Soviet-era industry, and do not originate in the implementation of any climate-related measures. R. Maeda, "Japan nears goal of buying 100 million Kyoto CO<sub>2</sub> credits," *Reuters*, 1 April 2010. R. Maeda, "Japan buys 41.5 million tons Kyoto credits in 2009-10," *Reuters*, 29 March 2010.

the effect of creating a space for the development of a variety of understandings and reinterpretations of the issue at hand. This multiplicity of perceptions heightens the difficulty in coming to an agreement on a common and coherent national position, to be defended in international arenas. The strong resonance of a norm within a domestic context is not sufficient to ensure a strict compliance with the principles attached to the norm. The domestic institutions and the political system are also important variables that influence the predominance of one or the other narrative on climate change prevention, and the policies associated with it. Most of the time, concerns that are not directly related to the protection of the global environment shape the national policy on climate change. In the Japanese case, these concerns are based on a desire to make an important contribution at the international level, and to promote a Japanese "model" for pollution control and energy security.

As a result of its ambivalent diplomacy, Japan does not seem like a frontrunner in the international negotiations, and has seldom been considered a leader in the COPs. However, the country has an excellent record regarding energy efficiency and clean technology. Tokyo is also an important provider of innovative and efficient approaches for climate change mitigation, and devotes a significant amount of money and energy to diffusing its model. As such, Japan, by attempting to act as a "directional leader," has made an important contribution to advancing the climate change prevention and mitigation agenda.

Japan provides innovative, bottom-up, voluntary approaches that resonate strongly with the requirements of new state actors, which are key to any efficient global solution on the prevention of climate change. The success of Japanese environmental cooperation in Asia demonstrates the importance of pragmatic and co-benefit solutions when addressing this issue. More attention should be devoted to these alternative approaches in order to broaden the scope of compliance with the international norm on climate change prevention.

The international governance on climate change issue has evolved. The Copenhagen conference confirmed the emergence of alternative norms, which are much more in line with Japan's own approaches for tackling global warming. This shift represents an opportunity for Japan to shine again on the international agenda. Reflecting on its experience and experiments, Japan should take the chance to shape preferences and norms of other countries within this new paradigm in ways that match its own firmly held ideals of using bottom-up, pragmatic solutions that bring together the government and industry, favor consensus between parties, and promote the feasibility and fairness of commitments.

At the same time, Japan should also quicken its pace at the domestic level in order to achieve its Kyoto reduction target and lead by example. The voluntary agreements

and the pledge and review approach have their limits in Japan as these systems alone seem unable to provide incentives to ensure further progress in terms of energy efficiency in sectors such as transport and housing. The introduction of economic instruments that put a price on carbon is necessary to improve the credibility of Japanese domestic climate change policy.

The challenge for future climate change governance is to develop innovative solutions that combine stringent environmental standards, flexible management, and the consideration of countries' specificities. Japan could make an important contribution in this regard by providing original solutions that work to achieve a synergy between bottom-up and top-down approaches.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to elaborate sound and effective climate change policies, and based on the Japanese example, the IFRI's Health and Environment programme formulates the following recommendations for decision makers, in Japan and elsewhere. In the current climate change global regime, states remain key actors whose policies and decisions have a major impact on the way we manage climate change.

### **AT THE DOMESTIC LEVEL:**

Foundations at the local level need to be strong in order to put forward a coherent position at the global one.

### **Strengthen the credibility of domestic policy**

The first step in the achievement of an effective policy on climate change is the implementation of strong and credible measures at the national level. The Japanese case gives some examples of the existing options for governments wishing to strengthen their climate change policies.

While voluntary approaches have proved quite effective in the Japanese context, they are showing their limits in terms of further improvement of emission reductions.<sup>204</sup> For

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<sup>204</sup> The NGOs blame the VEA and the Keidanren Voluntary Action Plan for their lack of transparency and ambition regarding targets and actual achievements: "*In the Keidanren Voluntary Action Plan, most industry groups have selected indices that have been increasing since 1990, artificially creating energy-saving records by manipulating the use of target indices at their own discretion.*" Kiko Network, *False or True? : The Keidanren Voluntary action Plan in*

this reason, it may be necessary for Japan to introduce market-based instruments, such as feed-in tariffs, cap-and-trade systems, and taxes, as soon as possible in order to give positive signals and incentives. This would increase the current momentum toward achieving the Kyoto reduction target. Moreover, the Japanese domestic policy on climate change would gain credibility by putting a price on carbon. And finally, this would allow better international comparison of efforts and achievements and facilitate coordination with other industrialized countries. That said, Japan may want to reflect on its unique experience regarding voluntary and bottom-up approaches. This could facilitate the process of designing a system suited to its domestic context in terms of energy performance and competitiveness

While studying the pros and cons of other international experiences, the Japanese government and other governments should think about how to reconcile their own traditional practices with the necessity to introduce an Emission Trading System and a taxation system on carbon.

With this in mind and focusing on the specific Japanese case, the DPJ government should not reject the previous government's policies and practices all at once, but should consider them closely and keep the most useful elements. For example, the DPJ should clearly state its position regarding the use of the sectoral approach. This approach could provide important elements to the protection of Japanese industrial competitiveness, while rebalancing the effort toward the transportation and housing sectors whose emissions have been steadily increasing and whose reduction potentials are greater than those of the industrial sectors.<sup>205</sup>

### **Improve climate change governance by enhancing governmental coordination**

Lack of intra-governmental communication and cooperation prevents the elaboration of a consistent and coordinated approach to tackle the issue of climate change. A

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*Japan. A Typical Example of "Pledge and Review" System*, Bali, COP 13/MOP 3, December 2007, p. 3, <[http://2050.nies.go.jp/3rdLCSWS/related/related2\\_KimikoHirata.pdf](http://2050.nies.go.jp/3rdLCSWS/related/related2_KimikoHirata.pdf)>, last accessed 5 May 2010.

<sup>205</sup> See introduction: Emissions profile of Japan.

significant lack of coordination among the ministries in charge of the climate change issue was confirmed by several experts and diplomats in Tokyo during the interviews conducted for this study, and pointed as a debilitating factor in the elaboration of a credible and effective climate change policy. Problems such as this one are often encountered by countries as they deal with multi-faceted issues like climate change. In this perspective, it is important to ensure that a supra-bureaucratic organ coordinates the different administrations.

In the Japanese case, the Prime minister's office (kantei) could play such a role. In 1997, the Global Warming Prevention Headquarters was specifically established inside the Cabinet to assist with the domestic implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and coordinate the diverging views emanating from the administrations in charge. This coordination role should be reassessed and strengthened. The current reform, which hopes to concentrate the political decision-making process within the Cabinet's hands, could help achieve this objective. Other propositions from a Japanese Upper house committee include the creation of a Ministry of Sustainable Development that would properly coordinate the functions of MOE and METI on the climate change issue.<sup>206</sup>

The establishment of an inter-ministerial coordinating task force could help improve coordination between the different bureaucracies of the executive. However, it is important to bear in mind that the introduction of a new player can sometimes further complicate internal negotiations focused on producing a single position.

### **Secure a working relationship with the industry**

It is crucial for decision makers to ensure a balance, in the interaction between the executive and the industry, between close relationships that secure the smooth elaboration and implementation of measures, and deeply intertwined interests that preclude reforms.

In the case of Japan, it is important to ensure that the DPJ's objective of reforming the Japanese political system, as a way of freeing politicians from the pressures of the bureaucracy and industrial interest groups, does not alienate the government from the

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<sup>206</sup> Japanese House of Councillors: Research Committee on International Affairs and Global Warming Issues, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

private sector. The latter's support is indispensable for the implementation of new directives.

While reassessing the necessity to introduce market instruments, the government should consult and coordinate as much as possible with the different industrial federations in order to work out satisfactory compromises that will ensure companies' cooperation. The failure of the trial voluntary emission trading system introduced in January 2009 in Japan demonstrates the industrial sectors' resistance to the idea of participating in such a system and the need for further close consultation with the government.

### **Empower decision-makers by promoting consultations with independent experts**

In order to improve the management of the climate change issue, more attention should be devoted to building the knowledge and action capacity of decision-makers. Researchers and practitioners should be associated more closely to the decision-making process.

The importance of scientific findings for basing policies on climate change has risen along with the increasing prominence of the climate change issue on the international agenda. This dynamic should be fostered unequivocally by governments, and this despite current controversies on the efficiency of the IPCC. Japan, who increasingly bases its policy on a scientific grounding, should pursue such efforts and continue to promote domestic research activities on the issue of climate change.

Improved consultations with independent experts should also target environmental NGOs. The representation of not-for-profit actors in the decision and policymaking process may vary according to countries. It is important, in all cases, to ensure that such actors are integrated, and have a voice, in order to secure the elaboration of a balanced and legitimate policy. It was obvious from interviews conducted as part of this study that the Japanese government does not take full advantage of the expertise of green NGOs, who could serve as dynamic and knowledgeable actors. This results in a lack of a balanced and clear vision on the climate change issue.

With this in mind, independent advisory committees could be established in order to give recommendations to governments. These committees would include researchers, practitioners and members of NGOs, as well as members of the industrial sectors. In the case of Japan, such a committee should be closely linked to the cabinet, and report to the Prime Minister directly. The set up of the committee, its reports and recommendations should be made publicly available in order for citizens to benefit

from full information on the policymaking process. These measures are expected to encourage the government to really take into account such recommendations.

Finally, relationships with think-tanks and research centers should be fostered, taking into particular consideration the preservation of the independence of such actors. In the Japanese case, most of the think tanks related to environmental and energy issues are linked at present either to MITI or MOE, and several interviewees expressed the wish that the epistemic community working on climate change were wider, and could work more independently. It is also crucial to invest in the development of a strong scientific expertise in Japan, and to encourage exchanges with foreign research institutions as much as possible to promote emulation and the cross-fertilization of research.<sup>207</sup>

### **Improve public communication and information campaigns**

Getting a consensus at the domestic level on policies on climate change is the first step towards the elaboration of an effective and ambitious policy at the domestic level, but also towards the constitution of a strong position at the international level. A delegation with the full support of its population benefits from more leeway in negotiations, and from more legitimacy: the propositions it will put forward at the negotiation table will be seen as credible because likely to be implemented.

More efforts should then be devoted to informing citizens about the complex dimensions of climate change. If this issue is perceived as a “trendy” topic, then efforts to deepen citizens’ knowledge on the issue are necessary to further strengthen popular support for bold policies and possibly broaden the public acceptability of green taxes.

In the Japanese case, the Japanese government should not let the industrial sector shape the people’s perception of climate change with arguments based on cost. The government should widely publicize the economic opportunities offered by the transition efforts toward a low-carbon economy. One recent study in particular shows

<sup>207</sup> The Central Environmental Council report of 2005 highlights this need: “Despite collaboration and exchange among researchers at research institutes, universities, and other organizations, participation by Japanese researchers is limited in international joint research on the environment in the Asia-Pacific region.” Central Environmental Council, *op.cit.*, p. 25.

that in the Japanese context, media coverage of climate change has only a temporary effect on public concern.<sup>208</sup> Public campaigns should therefore strive to maintain lengthier and more in-depth coverage of news related to global warming issues in mass-media in order to impact more permanently the public opinion.

### ***AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL:***

#### **Improve international communication about national actions**

Japanese diplomacy suffers structurally from inadequate international public communication. As a result, Tokyo's policy strategy is not always understood and its achievements can remain almost invisible. Japanese climate change diplomacy displays the same weakness. This issue can be applied to the great majority, if not all, of the players in the climate change negotiations. The Copenhagen conference provided a vivid illustration of this communication "gap" between policy-makers and constituencies, as decisions were made behind closed-doors.

It is therefore important for policymakers, if they cannot or are not willing to make the decision-making process more transparent, to inform their constituencies of their position and contributions in international climate change policy. The Japanese government should elaborate and implement a more effective public communication strategy to make its actions known. It should focus specifically on better explaining and promoting its unique experience regarding bottom-up approaches and voluntary agreements at the domestic level, as well as advertising its own understanding of the sectoral approach, which is not always well identified given the numerous possible interpretations of the concept.

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<sup>208</sup> Y. Sampei, M. Aoyagi-Usui, "Mass-media coverage, its influence on public awareness of climate-change issues, and implications for Japan's national campaign to reduce greenhouse gas emissions", *Global Environmental Change*, vol.19, n°2, 2009, pp. 203-212.

## **Bridge the gap between development and climate change communities**

There is a special need to integrate climate change assistance within existing development programs. In the Japanese case, and according to several interviewees, there is a lack of communication and exchange between the development community and experts on climate change issues. The climate change negotiators do not always know the current practices within the field of development cooperation, and the development community can be unaware of concerns related specifically to climate change. This leads to the elaboration of suboptimal policies.

Therefore, there is a strong need to bridge the gap between climate change negotiators and the development community in order to refine policies in both domains. In Japan, this problem is shared amongst national actors, as the climate change community made specific efforts to develop autonomously from the development community, in order to clearly dissociate the two issues and benefit from new and additional funds – this for economic but also ethical reasons.

The gap could be bridged either by establishing a pool of mixed experts on climate change and development that could act as an advisory organ on the establishment of ODA programs, or by institutionalizing the exchange of experts in order to promote information sharing. In Japan, the JICA has set up an office for climate change in which two experts work on ways of mainstreaming the climate change concern within ODA project design and implementation. There is a project to establish an advisory group of experts with JICA in order to support this policy.

## **Make efforts to provide additional funds to mitigation and adaptation**

One of the current challenges in the management of the climate change issue is the need to find and adopt innovative sources of funding in order to secure new and predictable funds to support developing countries' efforts on mitigation and adaptation. In this perspective, the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism proposed in January to introduce a global tax on maritime fuel.

This kind of initiative should be officially backed by the Cabinet and promoted at the international level.

Beyond this effort to promote innovative funding, the Japanese government should try to raise its declining ODA budget, whose level (per GNI) is well beneath the international standards.<sup>209</sup>

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT:***

We believe that Japan can play an instrumental role in the upcoming negotiations by reflecting on its own experience and achieving a synthesis between its particular bottom-up approach and ambitious emissions reduction objectives.

In particular, Tokyo should make special efforts to explain and promote its unique experience regarding bottom-up approaches and voluntary agreements at the domestic level. Furthermore, Japan should advertise its own understanding of the sectoral approach, which is not always well identified given the numerous possible interpretations of the concept.

### **Accept a more visible leadership role, take more risks**

Japan should develop a more ambitious strategy to appear as a frontrunner in international negotiations. Until now, the Japanese strategy seems best characterized by a “lead by example” approach. Some hopes were expressed that Japan could play a role to press both China and US to bridge the gap and commit more on the climate change issue. However, despite a traditional rhetoric about the role of Japan as a “bridge,” the Japanese government is still very reluctant to take this kind of risky move towards great powers and partners.

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<sup>209</sup> Japan's ODA budget represented only 0.18% of its GNI in 2008, according to the OECD, which is very low if compared with the objective of 0.7% of GNI dedicated to ODA that is considered as necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Beyond the climate change issue, it seems important to establish trust and international legitimacy through a consistent Japanese approach to environmental protection. In particular, Japan's stance on the whaling issue greatly damages its image on the international scene. Moreover, conflicting opinions on this issue could potentially harm diplomatic relationships, even with close countries such as Australia.

Despite the difficulty in moving on the issue, the DPJ should seize the opportunity given to it by its historic victory, to provoke new debate and find a way for Japan to adopt a less confrontational posture without losing face.

### **Consult and coordinate with like-minded partners**

Japan should conduct systematic and intensive consultations with its diplomatic partners on the climate change issue to develop synergies. There is a clear demand from the European countries to work more with Japan in order to advance common interests and increase their leverage in negotiations.<sup>210</sup> However, so far Japan has made only very small steps toward having a closer dialogue with the EU.

Reflecting on the limits of previous international negotiations and the failure to engage key actors, the EU should devote more attention to designing targets that would be achievable and also that will appear fair to each player.<sup>211</sup> In this process, the EU could find considerable benefit in consulting with Japan and learning the lessons of the Japanese experience tackling climate change. A common reflection between Japan and the EU as complementary partners could be instrumental in designing new norms that could combine the strengths of both the bottom-up and the top-down approaches and bridge the gap between developed and developing countries in the negotiations.

These recommendations of the Health and Environment Programme of IFRI aim at providing suggestions to the Japanese government to improve its leadership and strengthen its cooperation with the European Union in tackling climate change. We

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<sup>210</sup> Interviews with European and French diplomats based in Tokyo, January 2010.

<sup>211</sup> The report of Maité Jaureguy-Naudin also points at this : "Getting Carbon Out: Tougher Than It Looks. An Assessment of EU, US and Chinese Pledges", *Notes de L'Ifri*, Gouvernance européenne et géopolitique de l'énergie, February 2010, p. 2.

believe that Japan can play an instrumental role in the upcoming negotiations by reflecting on its own experience and achieving a synthesis between its particular bottom-up approach and ambitious emissions reduction objectives.

## ACCRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

**Adaptation:** Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.

**Annex I Parties:** Industrialized members of the OECD in 1992, countries with economies in transition, including the Russian federation, Baltic states and several Central and Eastern European States. Annex I countries committed, in accordance with Articles 4.2 (a) and (b), to reduce their greenhouse-gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000. They have also accepted emissions targets for the period 2008-12 according to Article 3 and Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol.

**APP:** Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate.

**Carbon equivalent:** A metric measure used to compare the emissions of the different greenhouse gases based upon their global warming potential (GWP). Global warming potentials are used to convert greenhouse gas emissions to carbon dioxide equivalents.

**Carbon intensity:** The relative amount of carbon emitted per unit of some other variable, often per unit of energy or quantity of fuel consumed.

**Carbon sinks:** Carbon reservoirs that take-in and store more carbon (i.e., carbon sequestration) than they release. Carbon sinks can serve to partially offset greenhouse gas emissions. Forests and oceans are large carbon sinks.

**Clean Development Mechanism (CDM):** A mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol through which developed countries may finance greenhouse-gas emissions reduction or removal projects in developing countries, and receive credits for doing so which they may apply towards meeting mandatory limits on their own emissions.

**Co-control benefit:** The additional benefit derived from an environmental policy that is designed to control one type of pollution where the emissions of other pollutants are simultaneously reduced. For example, a policy to reduce carbon dioxide emissions might reduce the combustion of coal, but when coal combustion is reduced, so too are the emissions of particulates and sulfur dioxide. The benefits associated with

reductions in emissions of particulates and sulfur dioxide are the co-control benefits of reductions in carbon dioxide.

**Conference of the Parties (COP):** The supreme body of the Convention. It currently meets once a year to review the Convention's progress.

**EA:** The Environmental Agency of the Japanese Government (after 2001: see MOE).

**DPJ:** Democratic Party of Japan.

**Energy efficiency:** The ratio of the useful output of services from an article of industrial equipment to the energy used by such an article.

**GHG-Greenhouse gas:** Any gas that absorbs infrared radiation in the atmosphere. Greenhouse gases include, but are not limited to, water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>).

**GNP:** Gross National Product.

**Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC):** Established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization and the UN Environment Programme, the IPCC surveys worldwide scientific and technical literature and publishes assessment reports that are widely recognized as the most credible existing sources of information on climate change. The IPCC also works on methodologies and responds to specific requests from the UNFCCC's subsidiary bodies. The IPCC is independent from the UNFCCC Convention on Climate Change (see below).

**JICA:** Japan International Cooperation Agency.

**JUSSCANNZ:** An acronym used to designate non-EU industrialized countries which occasionally meet to discuss various issues related to climate change. The members are Japan, the United States, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, Norway, and New Zealand. Iceland, Mexico, and the Republic of Korea may also attend JUSSCANNZ meetings.

**Kyoto Protocol:** An international agreement standing on its own, and requiring separate ratification by governments, but linked to the UNFCCC (see below). The Kyoto Protocol, among other things, sets binding targets for the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions by industrialized countries.

**Kyoto mechanisms:** Three procedures established under the Kyoto Protocol to increase its flexibility concerning the achievement of emissions reduction and reduce the costs of making greenhouse-gas emissions cuts; they are the Clean Development Mechanism, Emissions Trading and Joint Implementation.

**LDP:** Liberal Democratic Party.

**Mitigation:** In the context of climate change, a human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases.

**METI:** Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (before 2001: see MITI).

**MITI:** Ministry of International Trade and Industry (after 2001: see METI).

**MOE:** Ministry of Environment (before 2001: see EA)

**MOFA:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**NGO:** Non-Governmental Organization.

**Non-Annex I Parties:** Refers to countries that have ratified or acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that are not included in Annex I of the Convention.

**ODA:** Official Development Assistance.

**OECD-DAC:** Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee.

**Sustainable development:** Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Technology transfer:** A broad set of processes referring to the flows of know-how, experience and equipment for mitigating and adapting to climate change among different stakeholders.

**Umbrella Group:** A loose coalition of non-European Union developed countries formed following the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol. Although there is no formal membership list, the group usually includes Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and the United States.

**United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC):** The Convention on Climate Change sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenge posed by climate change. It recognizes that the climate system is a shared resource whose stability can be affected by industrial and other emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. The convention was adopted at the Rio Summit in 1992.

*Sources:* UNFCCC Glossary: <[http://unfccc.int/essential\\_background/glossary/items/3666.php](http://unfccc.int/essential_background/glossary/items/3666.php)>, last accessed 5 May 2010; UNFCCC glossary of climate change acronyms: <[http://unfccc.int/essential\\_background/glossary/items/3666.php](http://unfccc.int/essential_background/glossary/items/3666.php)>, last accessed 5 May 2010.

# ANNEX 1

## Energy-origin CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from power generation and steam generation are allocated on an end-user basis)

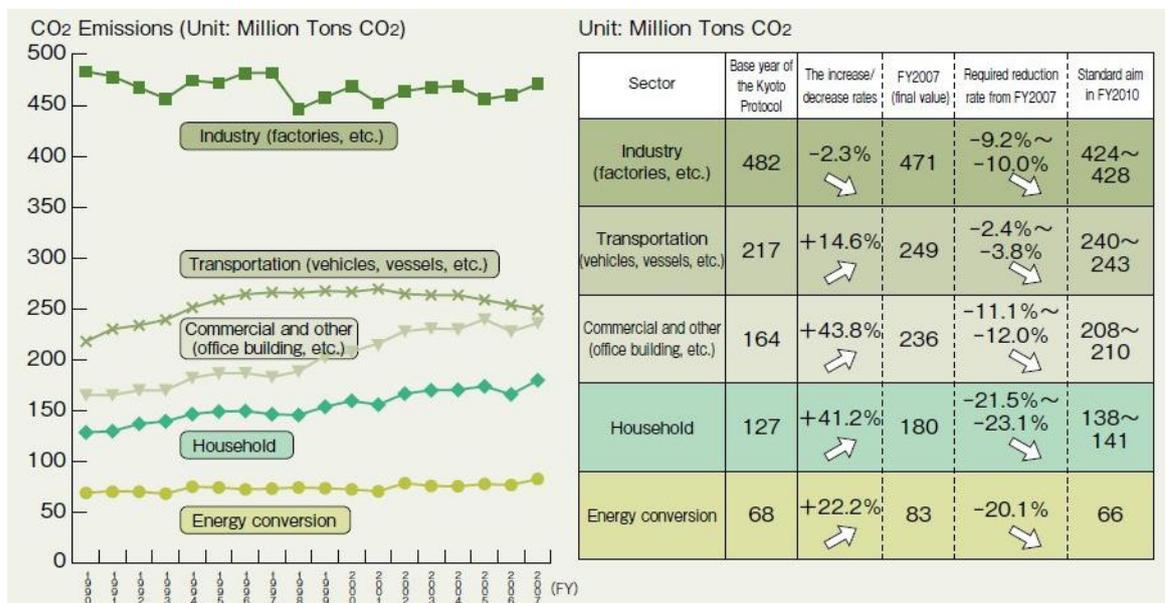
	Base year under Kyoto Protocol [Share]	FY2007 (Compared to base year)	Changes from FY2007	FY2008 (Compared to base year)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,059</b> [100.0%]	<b>1,218</b> (+15.1%)	→ <-6.6%> →	<b>1,138</b> (+7.5%)
Industries (factories, etc)	482 [45.5%]	467 (-3.0%)	→ <-10.4%> →	419 (-13.2%)
Transport (cars, ships, etc)	217 [20.5%]	245 (+12.9%)	→ <-4.1%> →	235 (+8.3%)
Commercial and Other (commerce, service, office, etc)	164 [15.5%]	243 (+47.9%)	→ <-3.3%> →	235 (+43.0%)
Residential	127 [12.0%]	180 (+41.1%)	→ <-4.9%> →	171 (+34.2%)
Energy Industries (power plants, etc)	67.9 [6.4%]	82.9 (+22.2%)	→ <-5.7%> →	78.2 (+15.2%)

(Unit: Mt-CO<sub>2</sub>)

Source: Ministry of the Environment, Japan's National Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Fiscal Year 2008 (The Final Figures) - Executive Summary, Tokyo, 15 April 2010, <[http://www.env.go.jp/en/headline/file\\_view.php?serial=356&hou\\_id=1314](http://www.env.go.jp/en/headline/file_view.php?serial=356&hou_id=1314)>, last accessed 4 May 2010.

## ANNEX 2

### Changes in CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions Resulting from Energy Uses by Sector and the 2010 Targets



*Source: Ministry of Environment, Annual Report on the Environment, the Sound Material-Cycle Society and the Biodiversity in Japan 2009, Tokyo, p. 55, <<http://www.env.go.jp/en/wpaper/2009/p2.pdf>>, last accessed 4 May 2010.*

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A, Delegation of the European Union to Japan, Tokyo, 18 January 2010.

Shouchuan Asuka-Zhang, Professor, Tohoku University, 13 January 2010.

Yurika Ayukawa, Executive Director, Office Ecologist, Tokyo, 15 January 2010.

B, Office of International Strategy on Climate Change, Climate Change Policy Division, Global Environment Bureau, Ministry of the Environment, Tokyo, 20 January 2010.

C, Southwest Asia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 20 January 2010.

D, Global Environment Affairs Office, Industrial Science and technology Policy and Environment Bureau, METI, Tokyo, 13 January 2010.

E, Climate Change Division, International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 19 January 2010.

F, Global Environment Affairs, Industrial Science and technology Policy and Environment Bureau, METI, 13 January 2010.

G, Office of International Strategy on Climate Change, Climate Change Policy Division, Global Environment Bureau, Ministry of the Environment, Tokyo, 20 January 2010.

Takashi Hattori, METI, Paris, 20 November 2009.

Takako Hirose, Senshu University, Tokyo, 12 January 2010.

Norichika Kanie, Graduate School of Decision Science and Technology, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Japan, Visiting Scholar, SciencesPo/IDDRI, France, Paris, 12 November 2009.

Hirofumi Kobayashi, Manager, WTO and EPA Office, Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, 15 January 2010.

Mika Ohbayashi, Director, Office Ecologist, Tokyo, 18 January 2010.

Tomonori Sudo, JICA, Tokyo, 12 January 2010.

Marutei Tsurunen, member of the House of Councillors (DPJ), 21 January 2010.

Toshio Yamada, member of the House of Councillors (LDP), Tokyo, 15 January 2010.

Miki Yanagi, researcher, Climate Change Policy Research Group, Global environment and Sustainable Development Unit, The Institute of Energy Economics (IEE), Tokyo, 14 January 2010.

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