

# JEO

## JAPAN Environment Quarterly

The leaf which turns  
yellow in autumn  
Ginkgo



Vol.11 September  
2015

### Feature

- P.2 Minamata Convention  
on Mercury and Mercury  
Management Efforts in Japan

### Current topics

- P.4 Japan Submits the Intended Nationally Determined  
Contribution (INDC)
- P.5 Environmental Issues Addressed at the G7 Summit in Elmau
- P.6 Eco-Life Fair 2015  
The Major Event of the Environment Month

### Relay Column

- P.7 Project for Capacity Development for Solid  
Waste Management in Tiznit Municipality and  
Neighboring Communes
- P.7 Green Alliance Japan Formed to Ensure a  
Sustainable Future

### National Parks of Japan

- P.8 Shiretoko National Park's  
50th Anniversary and its  
10th Anniversary as a  
World Heritage Site

### Voice of MOE Family in the World

- P.8 Paris, the World Centre  
of the Environment



# Minamata Convention on Mercury and Mercury Management Efforts in Japan

## Minamata Convention on Mercury and Japan's contribution

Since 2001, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has conducted research studies and alerted the world to the state of the global mercury pollution. In 2009, responding to the issue, UNEP Governing Council decided on the need for further action on mercury, including the preparation of a global legally binding instrument, and after the series of inter-governmental negotiations, the "Minamata Convention on Mercury (hereinafter Minamata Convention)" was finally adopted at the Diplomatic Conference in Kumamoto Prefecture in October 2013. We have contributed to the adoption of the Convention since the negotiating stage including hosting the second Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee (INC2).

The Minamata Convention is based on the concern owing to its persistence and long-range transport once introduced to the environment, and the adverse effects on human health and the environment that may be resulted through bioaccumulation. Recognizing the substantial lessons learned of Minamata disease, the Minamata Convention aims to reduce the risks to human health and the environment from emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.



Laying flowers at the Memorial Cenotaph for Minamata Disease Victims in the diplomatic conference



Heating amalgam to evaporate mercury (Province of Quezon, Philippines)

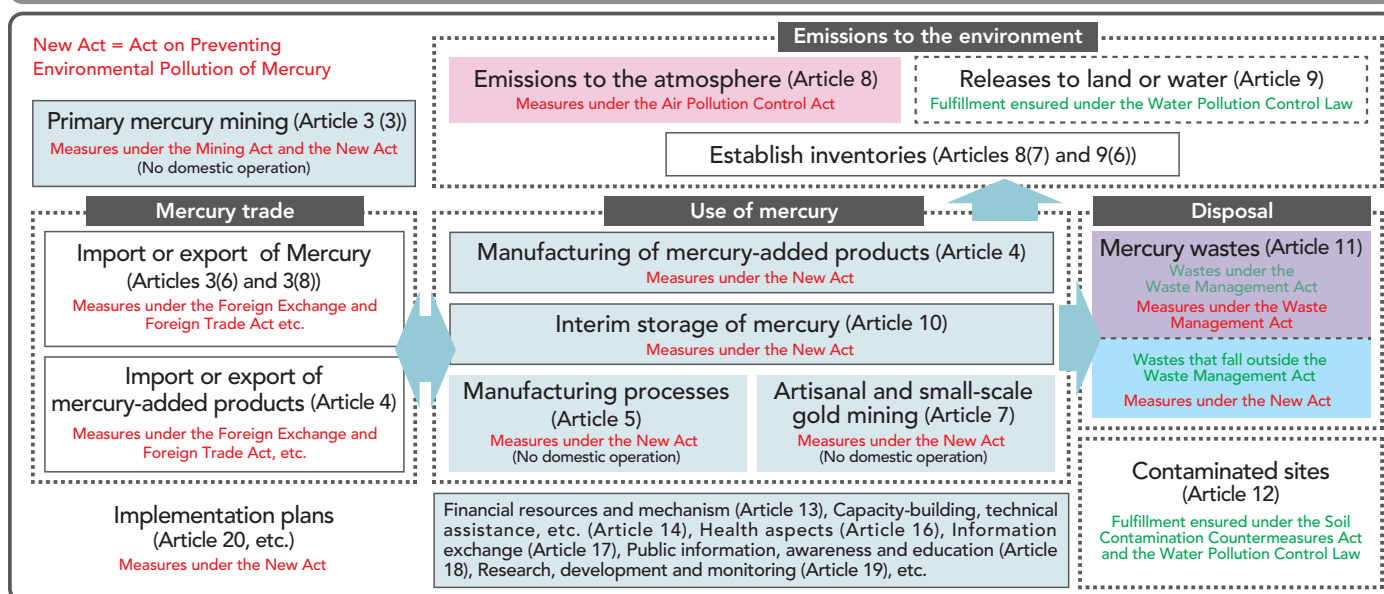
## Act on Preventing Environmental Pollution on Mercury and the amendment of the Air Pollution Control Act

The Minamata Convention requires its parties to take action for the environmentally sound management of mercury throughout its entire life cycle. The legislative system in Japan regulates mercury in various ways, and the domestic measures to ensure the fulfillment of our obligations involve a number of laws. Here, I would like to give an outline of the Act on Preventing Environmental Pollution on Mercury and the amendment of the Air Pollution Control Act promulgated in June 2015.

Through the deliberations at the Central Environment Council in 2014, the Act on Preventing Environmental Pollution on Mercury and the amendment of the Air Pollution Control Act were passed at the Diet session in June 2015. The Act on Preventing Environmental Pollution on Mercury requires the government to develop an Implementation plan for the Convention and prohibits primary mercury mining, manufacturing specific mercury-added products, utilizing mercury in specific manufacturing processes and gold mining. The Act also regulates the storage of the specific mercury, specific mercury compounds and part of mercury waste. The amendment of the Air Pollution Control Act requires a notification of

Since 2001, intensive discussions have been focused on the global mercury management to reduce the risks to human health and the environment from emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds. In October 2013, the “Minamata Convention on Mercury” was adopted at the diplomatic conference held in Kumamoto Prefecture. In June 2015, to implement the Convention, Japan promulgated the Act on Preventing Environmental Pollution on Mercury that regulates mercury pollution throughout its lifecycle and the amendment of the Air Pollution Control Act that regulates mercury emission to the atmosphere.

## Relationship between the Structure of the Minamata Convention and Measures to Ensure the Fulfillment of the Convention Requirements in Japan



establishment of the facility, coal-fired power plant for instance, that emits mercury. It also stipulates the obligation of such facilities to comply with the emission standards.

Further developing necessary Cabinet Orders and Ministerial Ordinances, Japan will implement the most advanced mercury management beyond the level required by the Convention so that we will lead global mercury management. The measures include the strengthening of the regulatory standards for the specific mercury-added products of which manufacturing, importation or exportation will be banned under the Convention (e.g. batteries and lamps) by lowering the mercury content thresholds and imposing an early phase-out date.

### Japan's international cooperation on mercury management

Various parties in Japan have made efforts to promote mercury-free alternatives or reduce mercury usage under the voluntary cooperation among public, private and civil sectors. As a result, Japan has

become a country with excellent technologies and systems for the mercury management. We believe that such technologies will also be beneficial to other countries to improve their mercury management and eventually contribute to the early and effective implementation of the convention.

At the Diplomatic Conference in 2013, Japan launched “MOYAI initiative” to support developing countries and promote information and human exchange from Minamata. MINAS (the MOYAI Initiative for Networking, Assessment and Strengthening) will further strengthen our support to developing countries through establishing a mercury monitoring network in Asia-Pacific region and conducting surveys on development needs and capacity building in developing countries, etc.

### Akiko INAGOYA

Section Chief  
Environmental Health and Safety Division  
Environmental Health Department



# Japan Submits the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)



The 30th Meeting of the Global Warming Prevention Headquarters

According to the decision at the Conference of the Parties (COP), every party is required to submit its INDC that sets the reduction target of greenhouse gas emissions after 2020.

Japan finalized the INDC at the meeting of the Global Warming Prevention Headquarters on July 17 and submitted it to the secretariat of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

In its INDC Japan sets the target of 26% reduction by FY2030 compared to FY2013 (25.4% reduction compared to FY2005) based on the amount of domestic emission reductions and removals assumed to be obtained (the reduction target of energy-originated CO<sub>2</sub> in commercial and residential sectors by FY2030 is 40% compared to FY2013).

This is a feasible target, ensuring consistency with its energy mix, making bottom-up calculation with concrete policies and measures, and taking technological and cost constraints into adequate consideration. Moreover, considering the rate of reductions, the reductions per GDP/Capita etc. in a comprehensive manner, Japan's target is ambitious enough and bears comparison with the other parties' targets.

Japan will continue to make a major contribution to the agreement on the new international framework at COP21, which will be held at the end of this year.

Also, in accordance with the agreement on the new international framework at COP21, Japan will formulate the national Global Warming Prevention Plan at the earliest time and implement measures based on the plan.

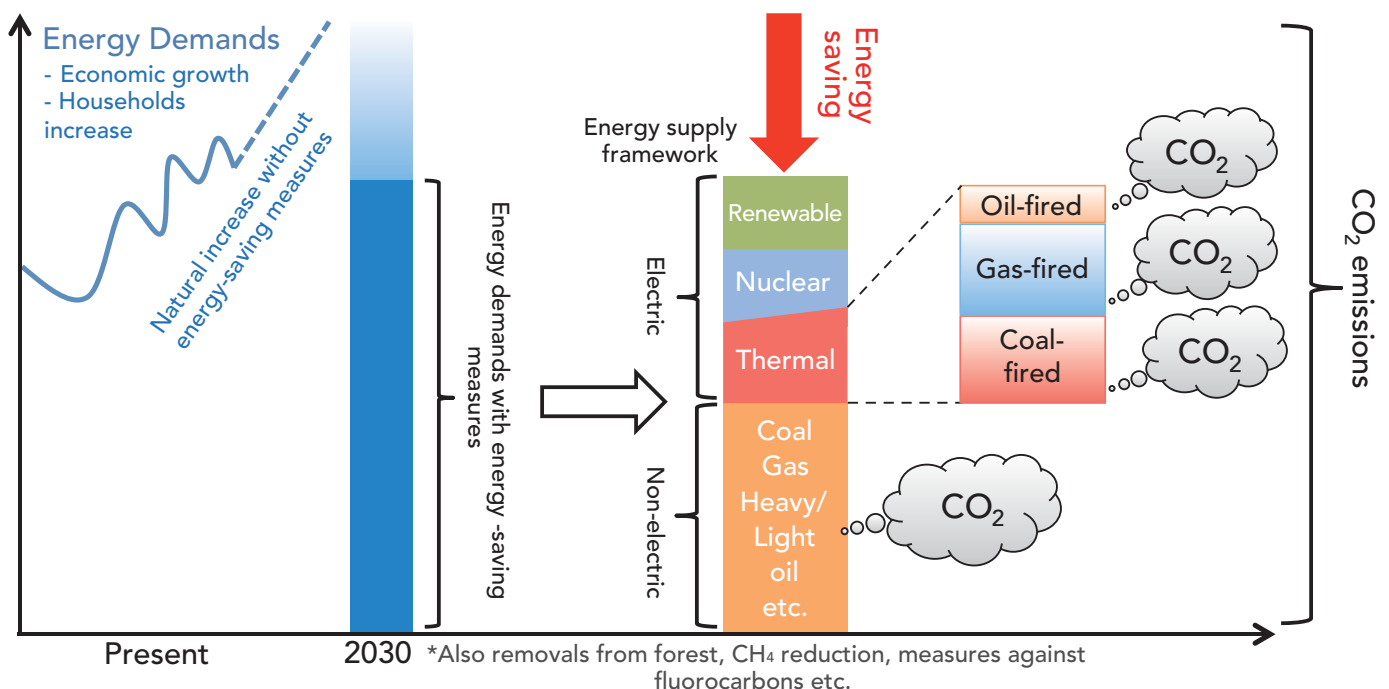
### MORE Information

UNFCCC website

<http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/indc/Submission%20Pages/submissions.aspx>

### Ryo ARAKAWA

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERT  
Low-carbon Society Promotion Office  
Global Environment Bureau



# Environmental Issues Addressed at the G7 Summit in Elmau



Schloss Elmau main entrance (Photo: Wikipedia)

In June, the G7 summit was held in Elmau, Germany to address complex international, economic and political issues on hand, and the environmental issues were high on the agenda. Regarding climate change, the G7 leaders affirmed their strong determination to adopt at the Climate Change Conference in December in Paris this year (COP21) a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed out come with legal force under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

They also emphasized on the need to decarbonize the global economy and to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions at an upper end of the latest IPCC recommendation of 40-70% by 2050 compared to 2010.

They also reaffirmed their commitment to the elimination of inefficient fossil fuels subsidies and to the effective implementation of policies and actions including

carbon market-based and regulatory instruments.

We consider these commitments by the G7 leaders as a major step forward for solving climate change problems.

They also mentioned the Post 2015 Development Agenda and affirmed their commitments to achieving this Agenda, which will be adopted at the UN Summit this September and integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development - environment, economic and social - in a balanced manner.

The importance of improving the resource efficiency and the establishment of the G7-Alliance on Resource Efficiency as a forum to share knowledge and create information networks and the marine litter were also addressed.

In 2016, Japan will lead global-level discussions by hosting and chairing the G7 summit in Ise-Shima and the G7 Environment Ministers' Meeting. As the summit chair and a member of G7, Japan will be committed to solving these issues.



**G7 GERMANY**  
2015 | Schloss Elmau  
Logo: Wikipedia

## MORE Information

### G7 Homepage

[https://www.g7germany.de/Webs/G7/EN/Home\\_en/home\\_node.html](https://www.g7germany.de/Webs/G7/EN/Home_en/home_node.html)

## Hiroki KITAIUE

Officer  
International Strategy Division  
Global Environment Bureau



## G7 Summit Leaders' Declaration

### Climate Change

- Strong determination to adopt at COP21 a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under UNFCCC
- Decarbonisation of the global economy over the course of this century
- The upper end of 40 to 70 % GHG reductions by 2050 compared to 2010
- To make GCF fully operational in 2015

### Resource Efficiency

- Establishing the G7-Alliance on Resource Efficiency

### Protection of the Marine Environment

- G7 Action Plan to Combat Marine Litter

### Post-2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- To integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development - environmental, economic and social - in a balanced manner

## Eco-Life Fair 2015

### The Major Event of the Environment Month



Participants trying to make Furoshiki (Japanese wrapping cloth) bags: People at all ages enjoyed the workshop.

June 5 is the Environment Day, and the entire month of June is also designated as the Environment Month in Japan. During this period, the national government, prefectures and government-designated cities held about 1,400 environment-related events in total. Eco-Life Fair, a major event of the month, has been held through the cooperation between the Ministry of the Environment, related local governments, related corporations, industrial groups, companies and NGOs since 1990.

This year, the Fair was held in Tokyo for two days on Saturday, June 6 and Sunday, June 7 under the theme “We want to protect this beautiful Earth.” The goal of the event

was deepening visitor’s understanding and awareness of the environmental issues including the global warming measures, conservation of biodiversity, promotion of 3R and restoration and recovery from the earthquake and encouraging the visitors to take action to address such issues. This year’s event recorded 116,000 visitors, which were the most in the event history.

Environmental Minister Mochizuki joined a live talk show which was open to the public and broadcasted on radio, and he emphasized the importance of environmental conservation activities saying, “We should be more conscious of the fact that human beings receive benefits from a variety of organisms, and we need to protect our beautiful earth for the next generation.”

At over 80 exhibition booths, the visitors at all ages enjoyed hands-on exhibits and learned about the environmental conservation.

We will continue to promote similar events that people can learn about the environment with enjoyment in every part of the country.



Large crowd at the Fair: The event was a huge success.

#### Daiki KAI

Regional Environmental Affairs office



## Project for Capacity Development for Solid Waste Management in Tiznit Municipality and Neighboring Communes

In Morocco, it is estimated that the annual amount of waste, most of which is generated in urban areas, will reach approximately 7 million tons in 2015 due to economic development. Since the main method of waste disposal is open dumping without sanitary treatment, pollution from the final disposal sites such as leachate and odor has serious impacts on residents' lives and the surrounding environment.

The Moroccan government regards implementation of proper waste management as an important challenge, and it has developed the National Program of Household Wastes (Programme National des Déchets Ménagers, PNDM) in 2008. In the 15-year plan, the Government attempts to increase the

waste collection rate from 70% to 90%, to improve the final disposal sites, and to introduce separate collection and recycling system. However, improvement of waste management in small and medium cities is delayed due to the weak financial capacity in these areas.

As part of the effort to improve waste management in the small and medium cities, JICA launched a 3-year technical cooperation project in April 2013 with the objective to improve solid waste management in Tiznit and the surrounding communes, located in the southern region of Morocco. EX Research Institute Ltd., has been engaging in the implementation of this project as the consultant contracted with JICA.

The project is expected to improve collection, transport, and disposal of wastes in the area as well as develop a regional system for waste management (inter-communal management).

The final goal of the project is to establish a waste management model for the other small and medium cities in Morocco.

### MORE Information

EX Research Institute Ltd.

<http://www.exri.co.jp/english/index.html>



Notice board for residents about the rules of waste disposal  
Summary: "Please throw out only the designated types of wastes (household wastes) during the designated hours (19:00-22:00) in the designated area by the designated method (in plastic bags or buckets)!"

### Hiroshi KATO

Senior Consultant  
Overseas Environmental Consulting Group  
EX Research Institute Ltd.



## Green Alliance Japan Formed to Ensure a Sustainable Future

On the Environment Day, June 5th of this year, Japanese environmental groups gathered to form "Green Alliance Japan (GAJ)." Under the situation that the Japan's environmental policies do not make progress, environmental NGOs and NPOs will hold regional activities and put forth policy recommendation. These activities will cover the issues of climate change and energy, nuclear power plants, chemical substances, soil, air and water pollution, waste management and the gener-

al conservation of the natural environment. We aim to build strong cross-cutting horizontal connection, keep an eye on environmental policies in Japan and progress towards the establishment of a sustainable society.

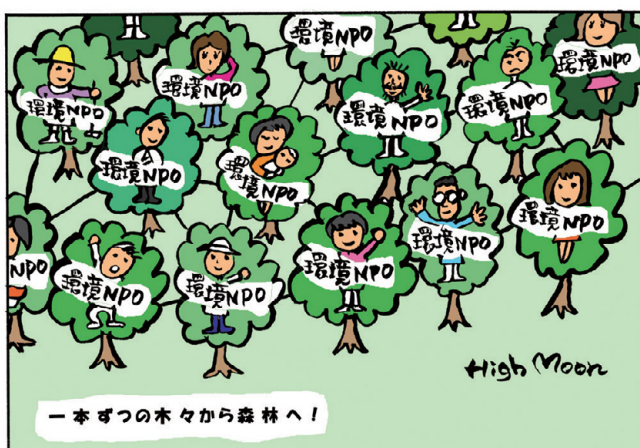
GAJ currently consists of 65 environmental groups. At the kick-off symposium, 8 Japanese parliament members were in attendance and expressed that they had great expectations for the GAJ. We hope to garner more attention in the future by attracting more members and increasing our influence in environmental fields in Japanese civil society.

Our first goal is to release the citizen's environmental white paper (Green Watch) at the beginning of FY 2016. We will also hold regular meetings between parliamentarians, government officials and the media and will encourage to interact with environmental groups. Please keep a look out for our activities.



### Takako MOMOI

Public Information Officer  
Green Alliance



"The establishment of Green Alliance Japan" illustrated by High Moon.  
"Each tree makes a forest"

## Shiretoko National Park's 50th Anniversary and its 10th Anniversary as a World Heritage Site

Shiretoko National Park



Shiretoko National Park was established about half a century ago in 1964 as the 22nd National Park in Japan.

The Park is characterized by its primitive landscape of the peninsula formed by volcanic activities and drift ice. 60% of the area is classified as "Special Protection Zone" which receives the highest level of protection,

and this means that the Japanese Government has been placing a special emphasis on its protection. Shiretoko's local communities also have high motivation for the conservation of nature, so they led the National Trust activities to protect Shiretoko's nature.

In addition to the conservation efforts, Shiretoko area is highly evaluated with its biodiversity including endangered raptors and large mammals such as brown bears (higuma) and killer whales and the interconnected ecosystems of the sea, rivers and forests. Thus, Shiretoko National Park was inscribed as a World Heritage site in 2005.



In the last ten years since the inscription, advanced efforts have been made in the area including the introduction of the regulated utilization system for major tourist attractions. In order to leave the beauty of Shiretoko to the next generation, the sustainable use of the nature that allows us to coexist with the natural environment is required.



A Steller's sea eagle watching its prey on drift ice

### MORE Information

#### Shiretoko National Park

<http://www.env.go.jp/en/nature/nps/park/parks/shiretoko.html>

### Naohiro MAEDA

Ranger  
Utoro Ranger Office, Kushiro Nature Conservation Office,  
Hokkaido Regional Environment Office  
Ministry of the Environment



## Voice of MOE Family in the World

### Paris, the World Centre of the Environment

On a sunny day in March, I was at the Orly Airport waiting for a bus to Paris centre. As always, the ticket machines were inoperable, tourists were preparing to buy a ticket from the driver, which usually take time. My sinking feeling was betrayed when the bus

driver opened the door and shouted "It's free!"

During that weekend, due to heavy smog, all public transport in Paris was free in an effort to reduce pollution from cars. Air pollution in Paris was worse than great rivals such as Beijing and New Delhi.

Fashionable Parisians enjoy green movement in a smart way; Eco-cafes, bio marchés, LEDs for Champs-Élysées Christmas illumination, the Vélib', bike-rental program and Autolib', evolutionary automated electric-car rental program.

Two months to the Paris COP21. To combat the challenge of climate change may impose painful reforms. The world is watching how Parisians and EU citizens lead the planet. Paris should be the centre of the world in December again.

### Takahiro HASEGAWA

Administrator  
Environment, Health & Safety Division  
Environment Directorate  
OECD



COP banners along the Quai d'Orsay (near French Ministry of Foreign Affairs)