

Japan Environment Quarterly

News from the Ministry
of the Environment

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Climate Progress at COP6 bis



Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, Environment Minister for Japan at COP6 bis

This summer, negotiators made significant progress in international negotiations on measures to address climate change. The resumed sixth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP6 bis) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was held in Bonn, Germany, from 16 to 27 July 2001. Japan was represented by Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, Environment Minister for Japan.

A key turning point after years of negotiations, the meeting aimed to resolve critical issues that remained after COP6, held in The Hague in November 2000, and reach an agreement that could lead to entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. Negotiators' groups met from 16 to 19 July and prepared the way for the high-level segment of the meeting from 19 to 22 July, which resulted in the Bonn Agreement. This was followed by more discussions on the details of texts until the final day.

Japan's Messages

Throughout the meeting, Japan's messages included the following points:

1. Japan will exert its utmost efforts to make it possible to ratify the Protocol and entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol by 2002.
2. To have the US participation is the best scenario in order to ensure the effectiveness of measures against global warming, Japan is pro-actively engaged in consultations with the US. At the same time, Japan does not intend to delay the progress of the negotiations in this Session due to this consultation.
3. Japan will intensify domestic measures to achieve the reduction target of the Kyoto Protocol. We are determined to further actively address the task of combating global warming both domestically and internationally, and invite other countries to do the same.

(cont'd pg.2, Climate Progress at COP6 bis)

Outcome: Bonn Agreement

Negotiations were held in four groups, structured to reflect the four main clusters of issues needing agreement: developing country issues, Kyoto mechanisms, sinks, and compliance. The president of the meeting, Jan Pronk (Dutch Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment), played a major role in making progress by formulating what became known as the Pronk Paper, which served as an important tool for discussions. After revision of the section on compliance, the paper “Implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action” was adopted as the Bonn Agreement. (See Table 1)

Toward COP7

After the high-level segment, participants proceeded to the discussion of detailed rules of legal documents. As a result, agreement was reached on developing country issues, which will be presented at COP7 for adoption, but other issues (Russian carbon sinks, Kyoto Mechanisms and compliance) will require more discussions before aiming for adoption at COP7. (See Table 2)

Significant progress was made in negotiations and decisions at COP6 bis and “Bonn Agreement” was successfully adopted. This agreement is a vital step forward towards realizing the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol by 2002. Based on the “Bonn Agreement”, Japanese

government will make most efforts to reach final agreement at COP7.

It is important for all countries to act under one single rule. The participation of the United States, the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases, is important in order to ensure the effectiveness of measures against global warming. Through Japan-US high-level consultations, Japan will continue its efforts to participate the United States. In addition, Japan will make greatest efforts to prepare for domestic system to reach the reduction target of Kyoto Protocol.

COP7 will be held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 29 October to 9 November 2001. 

TABLE 1: MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE BONN AGREEMENT	
Assistance to developing countries	A special climate change fund and a least developed countries fund shall be established based on the Framework Convention, and an adaptation fund shall be established under the Kyoto Protocol.
Kyoto Mechanisms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supplementarity—the use of Kyoto Mechanisms shall be supplemental to domestic action to meet reduction targets of developed countries, and domestic action shall constitute a significant element of the effort to meet their commitments. [Note: quantitative restrictions will not be established]. 2. Joint implementation/CDM—Parties included in Annex I are to refrain from using emission reductions from nuclear facilities to meet their commitments.
Sinks	Regarding sinks from forest management, maximum limits will be created on a country-by-country basis. (For Japan the maximum limit will be 13 million t-C (3.86% of reduction target) and it is expected that 3.7% will be obtained.). Afforestation and reforestation shall be the only eligible LULUCF activities under the CDM.
Compliance	<p>Compliance involves measures that would be taken if a country cannot meet reduction targets.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was agreed that 1.3 times the amount exceeding the emissions limit will be subtracted from emissions units of the next period. 2. The question of whether or not compliance will be legally binding was left to the first COP/MOP to decide.

TABLE 2: OUTCOMES AND REMAINING WORK ON DETAILED TOPICS FROM COP6 BIS

<p>Topics on which negotiations have been concluded, general agreement has been reached, and adoption of legal documents is expected at COP7</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity building (developing countries) 2. Capacity building 3. Additional guidance on funding mechanisms 4. Fund contributions under the Framework Convention on Climate Change 5. Fund contributions under the Kyoto Protocol 6. Technology transfers and development 7. Responses to adverse effects of global warming and impacts of implementation of countermeasures 8. Mitigating adverse effects of implementation of measures 9. Single projects (special treatment for projects in countries with low emissions, such as Iceland) 10. Activities implemented jointly (AIJ)
<p>Items on which progress was made in negotiations but general agreement was not reached. After further discussions at COP7, adoption of legal documents will be sought.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sinks 2. Kyoto Mechanisms 3. Compliance 4. Articles 5, 7 and 8 of the Protocol (reporting requirements, communication of information, review of information—relating to emissions, policies and measures) 5. Policies and Measures

Headquarters for the Promotion of Efforts to Prevent Global Warming

As reported in this issue, delegates attending COP6 Part II agreed on the core items of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, with minor alterations. International momentum is now building toward the Kyoto Protocol's entry into force during 2002. In response to this Bonn Agreement, Japan's Prime Minister Koizumi committed to do his utmost to ensure final agreement in Japan before COP7.

Based on this situation the Ministry of the Environment

established the Headquarters for the Promotion of Efforts to Prevent Global Warming to coordinate various departments within the Ministry. In order for Japan to ratify the Kyoto Protocol in 2002, it is essential to have domestic structures in place to achieve its emission reduction targets. Accordingly, the major issues facing the new headquarters include building domestic systems to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promoting various measures, with the full cooperation of all

departments within the Ministry.

The chair of the Headquarters is the state minister for the environment, Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi. The first meeting was held on 7 August and the chair is authorized to convene the council whenever needed. Moreover, as necessary, the chair may request additional key individuals to attend this meeting. 

“Environmental Compass” Website

On 5 June (World Environment Day) a new Internet website, “Kankyo Rashinban” (meaning “environmental compass”), was launched in Japan to support the exchange of information among non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, industry and the government and to increase the making of environmental partnerships. It is hoped that many organizations will register with the system and actively use it to post and find information. The website is managed by the Global Environmental Information Center (GEIC), and staffed by personnel from the Ministry of the Environment

and NGOs. The website consists of the following five components.

1. Environmental Calendar

Organization may post the details of activities such as seminars and other events, volunteering, staff hiring, internships, eco-tours, petitions and funding available. Users can search the information by keyword or from a calendar.

2. Organizational Information

This system allows organizations to post information about their missions and activities, and users can use the search engine.

3. NGO Publications

This system can be used to publicize and search for NGO and NPO publications.

4. Environmental Centers

This section offers a list of venues and meeting places nationwide that serve as centers for environmental information and learning.

5. Communication Forum

Here organizations can provide information or exchange opinions on a range of topics.

The Kankyo Rashinban website can be viewed at <http://plaza.geic.or.jp/>. 

National Air Quality Info by Internet—“Soramame-kun”

Soramame-kun



The Ministry of the Environment launched a new system to provide the public up-to-date information about air pollution and photochemical oxidant warnings through the Internet on 28 June this year. This system is called Atmospheric Environmental Regional Observation System (AEROS)

and nicknamed “Soramame-kun,” meaning to observe the sky constantly.

Already for some time, the condition of air pollution has been continually monitored in cities all over Japan based on Article 22 of the country’s Air Pollution Control Law. However, because photochemical oxidants expand beyond cities to the surrounding countryside, a system was necessary for observing and distributing information about the status of air pollution over a broader area.

The aim of “Soramame-kun” is to gain better public understanding and support for actions to control air pollution. A trial system started in the Kanto region around Tokyo in 2000, and since this summer the website covers nationwide

data. Recently, this system proved its worth when it revealed the elevated concentrations of sulfur dioxide coming from the volcanic eruption on Miyake Island. It has received good reviews from the public, industry and researchers.

“Soramame-kun” provides the following information:

1. Atmospheric conditions and concentrations of air pollutants such as sulfur dioxide (SO₂), photochemical oxidants (O_x), and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). Measurements are taken once each hour.

2. Announcements about photochemical oxidant conditions and warning when standards have been exceeded.

The website (Japanese only) can be found at <http://w-soramame.nies.go.jp/>. 

Top page

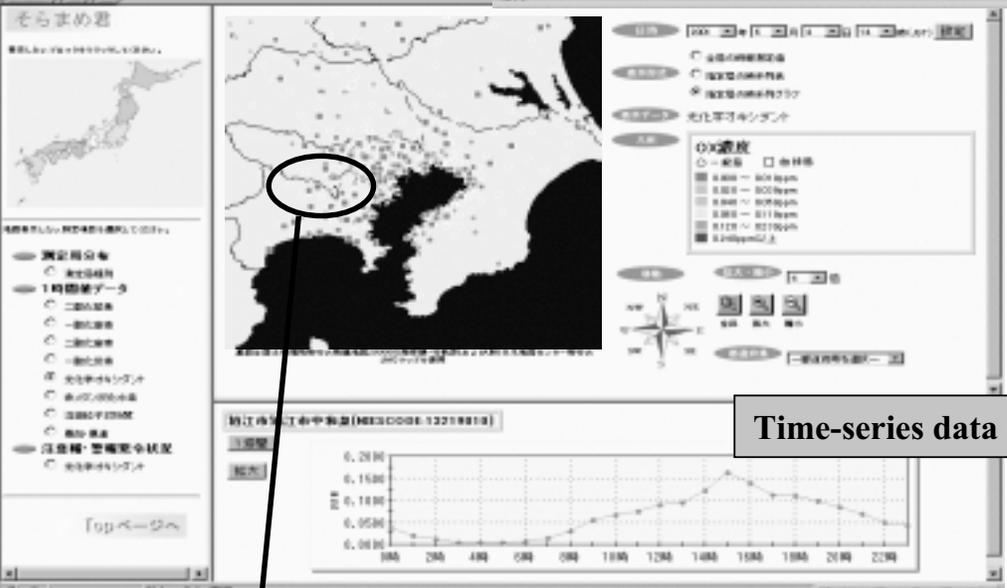


Announcements about conditions of photochemical oxidants alarms and warnings



Status of air pollution

Pollution warnings



Time-series data of pollution

Expanded map

Preliminary figures by regional block



自治体名称	名称	SO2	NO2	NO	NOx	CO	O3	PM10	PM2.5	PM10	SP
		ppm	μg/m ³								
千葉県	中央	0.088	0.000	0.028	0.001	0.045	1.24	0.180	0.06	0.082	
千葉県	大塚	0.008	0.022	0.027	0		0.00	0.187	0.48	0.013	
滋賀県	海津南	0.082	0.002	0.017	0.015	0.088	0.47	0.188	0.28	0.088	
滋賀県	びわこ中央	0.008	0.021	0.028	0		0.00	0.180	0.20		
栃木県	市役所	0.083	0.000	0.008	0.001	0.1				0.044	
栃木県	宇都宮立基	0.008	0.008	0.012	0		0.00	0.180	0.70		
佐賀県	市役所	0.084	0.001	0.011	0.004	0.184	0.18	0.180	1.88		
福岡県	市役所	0.015	0.007	0.048	0						
東京都	市役所	0.088	0.001	0.008	0.008	0.090	0.77	0.180	0.21	0.064	
東京都	市役所立基	0.008	0.000	0.008	0		0.00	0.184	0.28		
日光市	市役所	0.007	0.000	0.004	0.005						
千葉県	市役所	0.088	0.001	0.008	0.004	0.082	0.23	0.180	0.24	0.066	
千葉県	市役所	0.084	0.004	0.004	0.000	0.080	0.23	0.180	0.24	0.088	
千葉県	市役所立基	0.007	0.008	0.048	0	0.77	0.178	0.28	0.080		
千葉県	市役所	0.082	0.008	0.008	0.088	0.00	0.00	0.180	0.14	0.080	
東京都	市役所	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	

4th Annual Green Purchasing Awards

On 25 June the Green Purchasing Network (GPN) presented the 4th Annual Green Purchasing Awards. These prizes are awarded to organizations on the leading edge of promoting green purchasing, which gives priority to the purchasing policies that have less environmental impact. This year's winners are described below.

Municipal Government Category – Kanagawa Prefecture

Kanagawa Prefecture started on the idea of green purchasing as far back as 1980. The prefecture cooperated with a paper company to develop the “Yamayuri” recycled paper brand. Today, the prefecture's procurement of office supplies is based on a recommended list of 149 items. In the year 2000, it formulated the Basic Green Purchasing Policy, which includes green procurement, green delivery, and green tender (calling for tender on government work), and actual implementation started in 2001. For citizens, the prefecture is running an awareness-raising campaign with cooperation from 11,000 stores, using special booths and events as well as publicity through advertisements.

Business Category – Seiko Epson Corporation

Seiko Epson received second prize last year and first prize this year in the business category. This company has been effective in awareness-raising and promoting environmentally friendly

businesses through its “green vender” accreditation program. It has promoted green purchasing not only in Japan but overseas as well, by on-site presentations, investigating the environmental impacts of parts and materials, and other activities. Seiko Epson has attained a high level of green purchasing through the company's own system that uses on specific procurement guidelines for each type of item, including office equipment, supplies, appliances, and vehicles. Incidentally, this company has also received the Environment Minister's Award for its exemplary work in promoting green purchasing in Japan and overseas.

Medium- and Small-Sized Business Category – Aburato Shoji Company

Aburato Shoji, a company that operates gas stations in Shiga Prefecture, promotes green purchasing in its operations, including office supplies, paper and soap. It also collects recycled waste such as packaging containers, as well as dry cell and automotive batteries. Notably, Aburato Shoji also collects used kitchen oil, which is then made into soap; the company then purchases the soap for use as a cleaner in their car wash machines. Their efforts have influenced and educated not only their direct customers but also the local community. Aburato Shoji has demonstrated a new business style that makes use of the synergies of green purchasing, recovery and recycling.

Citizen Organization Category – Chubu Recycle Citizen Council

Chubu Recycle Citizen Council in Nagoya City is a citizen's organization that works locally to promote environmentally sound material cycles. The organization has developed and now distributes recycled paper with a high level of used newspaper content under the slogan “recycling by collecting and using.” It has also cooperated with a credit card company to set up a system whereby three percent of the purchase price goes to support activities promoting green consumerism. In addition, Chubu Recycle Citizen Council has promoted the “E's card” green consumer's card which cardholders can use to shop at environmentally friendly stores and receive three times the normal number of points in a point system—this encourages consumers to use the shops that have higher environmental standards. Other activities include publication of a shopping guide of Nagoya City, and development of the plan for a system where people serve as monitors to enhance communication between green consumers and companies.

Awards for outstanding performance were also presented to Jyouetsu City, Shiga Bank, Sony Corporation, Akashi Hifuku Kogyo Company, Eco-net Jyouetsu, and Gurikon Club Anjo. An award for special contributions was presented to NEC Corporation. 

Launched: Internet Nature Institute

The Ministry of the Environment launched a new website, the Internet Nature Institute, on 20 July this year. The site provides real-time images of natural landscapes all over the country and a variety of information about the nature of Japan.

The main purposes of this system is to provide the public with useful and interesting natural information, in order to raise awareness about the current state of the natural environment and measures being taken to conserve it. It is hoped that this site will help people get closer to nature.

This site provides information in an accessible and easy-to-understand format by using the Internet, remote-control cameras, geographic information systems (GIS), global positioning systems (GPS), next-generation mobile telephones and “multi-vision” large screen displays. It is expected to be a useful tool not only for the general public, but also for students to learn about the Internet and the natural environment at schools and other places of education. The Internet Nature Institute website consists of the following contents.

1. Live images of nature nationwide

Users can view updated images of the scenery in national parks or the condition of wildlife such as Japanese cranes and the Iriomote cat come from forty-

three fixed cameras of nationwide through the Internet. The images are refreshed once an hour and are stored for five years for users to search at any time.

2. Real-time survey of seasonal changes

Since ancient times the people of Japan have celebrated the signs of the four seasons as they come and go each year. This Internet and cell phone-based system allows people to report or watch these signs, such as the front lines of cherry blossoms or rice planting as they move northward day-by-day in the spring. The first survey started this September, with the topics being autumn colors of the leaves and the blossoming of the cluster-amarillis flower (*Lycoris radiata*) as they move southward.

Users can post messages and attach photos or voice messages. The data is managed as a database, with locational information managed by GIS. It is hoped that users will learn about nature as well as enjoy a greater awareness of nature through participation in this survey.

3. “Multi-vision” big-screen displays

These large screens will display stunning live images of nature from around the country. This system makes use of the Internet to show the images on large electronic displays made

of four one hundred-inch screens. The first model system has been set up at the Yakusugi Museum located at the World Heritage Site of ancient cedars on Yakushima Island, in collaboration with the town of Yaku-cho in Kagoshima Prefecture.

4. Self-guiding system to view nature

A new system is being developed, using the Shinjuku Imperial Gardens in Tokyo as a model, to allow visitors to receive information via mobile phone about nature at their exact location. It integrates the sophisticated communications capabilities of next-generation mobile phones with positioning information of GPS. After testing in September, this system will be launched the next month.

5. A wealth of nature information

The website also provides a wide range of other information about nature in Japan, including endangered species noted in the Red Data Book, Japan’s World Heritage Sites such as the forests of Yakushima and Shirakami-sanchi, birds of prey, and national parks.

The Internet Nature Institute site (text in Japanese only) can be viewed at <http://www.shizenken.biodic.go.jp/>. 



Annual White Paper for Children

The Ministry of the Environment has prepared two versions of the Ministry's annual White Paper on the Environment for primary, junior high and high school students. Schools all over Japan will receive a copy of the materials, one written in simple terms for children and the other illustrated extensively with figures for mainly young people.

The aims of these materials are to develop the awareness for environmental conservation. Through them, young people will learn about key issues and environmental policies needed to solve them. Especially for the young who will lead the next generation, having a good environmental awareness will be important. Because the regular version of the White Paper is too difficult for children to understand, it was decided to publish children's version for the first time. The illustrated version is published in Japanese and English every year. It has been used widely for training program not only in school but also in many companies. Both Japanese versions may be obtained from Gyosei Company (tel: 81-3-5349-6654), for 150 and 200 yen, respectively (excluding postage). The illustrated version in English is free of charge. For more information about these materials please contact to hakusho@env.go.jp. 



White Paper on the Recycling-Based Society

The 2001 edition of the White Paper on Recycling-Based Society was submitted and disclosed to the Diet after a cabinet decision on 26 June. It is Japan's first white paper based on the Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-Based Society that was passed last year. This paper emphasizes the importance of fundamentally reconsidering the one-way flow of material in socio-economic systems today from

mass production, to mass consumption, to mass disposal. It stresses the need for full-scale efforts to establish recycling-based societies, with an awareness of the proper roles of different sectors in society. The main components of the paper are as follows.

Section 1. Report (2000) on the status of efforts to establish a recycling-based society

Introductory Chapter: The path toward a recycling-based society

Chapter 1. Generation of recyclable resources, and the current status of material cycles and disposal

Chapter 2. Status of institutional preparations for establishing a recycling-based society

Chapter 3. Status of initiatives to reduce waste generation and to promote reuse and recycling

Chapter 4. Promotion of appropriate disposal

Chapter 5. Infrastructure for establishing a recycling-based society

Conclusion

Section 2. Report (2001) on measures for the establishment of a recycling-based society

For more information about events and articles in JEQ please contact the Global Environment Bureau.

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2001

October

29-Nov.9 COP7, UNFCCC (SABSTA15, SBI15) (Marrakech, Morocco)

November

11-16 9th International Conference on the Conservation and Management of Lakes (Otsu, Japan)

19-22 The 5th International Conference on the Environmental Management of Enclosed Coastal Seas (Kobe, Awaji Island, Japan)

27-29 The Regional Prepcom for Asia and the Pacific (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)

2002

January

9-11 OECD/EPOC/WPEP Working Party on Environmental Performance (Paris, France)

16-18 ASEM Environment Minister's Meeting (Beijing, China)