



Talanoa Japan

- A portal of best practices to shape the future on climate change

The Eco-First Promotion Council

Unless the Private Sector Acts there will be No Decarbonized Society

<https://www.eco1st.jp/>



Question 1 – Where are we?

The commitment (planned and/or announced) as well as the actions taken so far that are in line with aims of Paris Agreement, the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and the transition towards a net-zero emission society by this mid-century

Forty companies (as of July 2018) from a wide range of business fields, each of which has been certified by the Ministry of the Environment as an Eco-First company, voluntarily formed and now operate the Eco-First Promotion Council.

The 40 members of the Council are Eco-First companies in their respective industries within Japan and together account for 1% or more of Japan's CO₂ discharge volume, which means that the Council has a certain degree of influence.

Utilizing the business networks that link together the different industries, the Council is engaged in improving and strengthening environmental conservation activities, including cutting-edge and original climate change countermeasures, with a view to achieving the twin goals of global environmental conservation and global implementation of sustainable development, both of which are increasing in importance.

Progress made so far against the above commitments, including success stories, case studies and gaps

Since its establishment in 2009, member companies have gone beyond the confines of their own industries to actively share information regarding climate change to society in general, and have likewise applied their technology and efforts for the same purpose, examples of which are shown below.

- Eco-Life Fair Exhibits (Environmental awareness events for the general public)
- Ecotowaza (Eco Proverb) Contest (Environmental awareness events for primary and junior high school students)
- Sustainable Café (A place for interaction and sharing information with university students who have a high degree of environmental awareness)
- Collaboration with NPOs engaged in environmental activities
- Participation in symposia hosted by the Ministry of the Environment (Sharing information to the general public and enterprises about examples of cutting-edge environmental measures)
- Support and backing for measures regarding climate change carried out by the Ministry of the Environment
- Talanoa Dialogue submissions and support activities

Furthermore, the Council and its member companies are of the opinion that when it comes to efforts to tackle environmental problems, progress cannot be expected without profitable activities, and have been conscious of the fact that progress must be achieved through the creation of profit. There are many examples of member companies having expanded their own business activities while playing a leadership role in terms of climate change countermeasures.

During the period between 2013 and 2017, 60% or more^{*1} of companies expanded their own business and since 2017, 57% or more^{*2} of companies have sought to do so.

^{*1} Of the 40 companies that are members of the Council, replies were received from 33, which was used as the denominator in calculations.



*2 Of the 40 companies that are members of the Council, replies were received from 33, which was used as the denominator in calculations. 19 companies reported an increase, 12 companies were unclear or did not release data, and two companies reported a decrease.

Quantitative impact so far with respect to mitigation, adaptation, resilience and/or finance

The member companies of the Council have made both quantitative and qualitative voluntary promises to the Ministry of the Environment regarding greenhouse gas emissions and environmental conservation in general, and those promises are among the highest targets in their respective industries, the achievement of which will make them forerunners. In order to achieve these high goals, the Council facilitates the sharing of information between companies, and functions as a place of co-creation.



Question 2 - Where do we want to go?

Vision of the future for your organization and/or sector in terms of its possible role in achieving the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and a net-zero emission world by this mid-century

Looking toward the future, the Council recognizes that it is necessary to be able to offer something that contributes to not only the alleviation of climate change, but also the growth of member companies for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Firstly, the Council plans to take up the challenge of tackling the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (decoupling), with member companies continuing with corporate expansion through profit creation while playing a leading role in the popularization of climate change countermeasures.

The Council also believes that spreading the Eco-First philosophy within Japan and overseas will promote the use of technologies and know-how concerning greenhouse gas emission control in Asia and beyond, thereby achieving even greater goals that would be impossible for the member companies of the Council to achieve by themselves.

Possible and potential new commitments and pledges of to achieve the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and a net-zero emission world by this mid-century

The Council believes that it is possible to increase the number of stakeholders by balancing the economic growth of the companies involved with measures to alleviate climate change. In the future, we believe that as we seek to bring benefit not just to our own members but to a much wider audience, the Eco-First attitude will come to be adopted by people across global communities, leading to the realization of ZET (Net-Zero Energy Towns or Zero Emission Towns), which is an extension of the concepts of ZEH^{*3} and ZEB^{*4}, and that this will ultimately lead to the further development of society.

^{*3} Net Zero Energy House: Houses that are built with the aim of achieving a net balance of Zero in terms of the total amount of primary energy used on an annual basis.

^{*4} Net Zero Energy Buildings: Buildings that are built with the aim of achieving the net balance of Zero in terms of the total amount of primary energy used on an annual basis.



Question 3 - How do we get there?

Ways in which the UN Climate Change process can help you achieve your vision and goals, and how your actions can help in expediting sustainable transitions to climate neutral societies

We believe that proactive sharing of information and education regarding the risks associated with climate change through the UNFCCC process can cause changes in the awareness of individuals and the direction taken by companies, and that such changes will greatly impact the value of the Council in a positive way. It can be expected that increasing the value of the Council will lead it to more effectively influence and communicate with others, which in turn will indirectly promote the transition to a decarbonized society.

Concrete solutions that have been realized while implementing your commitments, including lessons learnt from success stories and challenges, and case studies that are in line with the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and can support the Parties in achieving their NDC goals, enable higher ambition and inspire engagement of other non-state actors

One of the strong points of the Council is that it is a group consisting of companies that have a certain degree of influence over their respective industry in Japan.
Each member company is aware of their responsibility to be a leader to not only other companies but also society as a whole, increasing awareness regarding the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the movement to a decarbonized society.
Even in the context of this submission to the Talanoa Dialogue the Council is aware of this role. In light of this responsibility, the Council will seek to actively contribute to measures that go beyond the commitments embodied in Japan's NDC goals, rather than just be content with the status quo.
The Council also plans to work with industries that produce a large volume of greenhouse gas emissions in Japan to help them to take environmental measures, such as those that seek to deal with climate change.

Collaboration models with other stakeholders and, in particular, between non-Party stakeholders, national governments and the UN Climate Change process that have been successful in helping you, or can help you, achieve your commitments

The Council exchanges information with the Ministry of the Environment at least twice a month and uses such information to gain a deeper understanding of the Japanese government's climate change countermeasures and to actively participate in such measures.
For example, the Ministry of the Environment is deploying the Cool Choice national campaign to achieve the greenhouse gas emission reduction goals committed to by Japan, and the Council and member companies are engaged in the promotion and support of this campaign.
The Council also participates in the Eco-Life Fair hosted by the Ministry of the Environment every year, and is set up to actively cooperate and collaborate with the Ministry of the Environment in its efforts to promote Talanoa JAPAN.



Through government-private sector partnerships, we share information regarding environmental conservation, including climate change countermeasures, to raise awareness in society as a whole.

Opportunities to further scale up action and means to address barriers that can enable even further action by non-Party stakeholders based on the actions you have taken to implement your commitments. (“We’ve made progress and have made new commitments as described above. This is what I need from national governments, other non-Party stakeholders and the UN Climate Change process to take even further action...”)

- *Collaboration/cooperation opportunities*

- We created opportunities for the member companies of the Council to work together.
- We took the lead in supporting the effort of the Ministry of the Environment to promote a decarbonized society.
- We cooperated with environmental NPOs.

- *Lessons learned based on the experience and progress so far*

In the global efforts to tackle climate change, what one small group of companies can achieve is rather limited. Therefore, the Council recognizes the need to increase the number of stakeholders that can be involved in these activities and create a much greater movement.