

Kiko Network

Annual Report 2024



Greeting

Looking back on FY2024

The Aims of Youth Climate Litigation

Breaking 2023's records, this year has been the hottest on record in Japan and all throughout the world. Air conditioners have finally been installed in classrooms to protect children from life-threatening heat. However, due to the poor insulation of school buildings, the air conditioners are ineffective, and children are also unable to play outdoors during the long summer months. A growing number of people realize we've entered the era of "global boiling," and recognize the urgent need to and feasibility of limiting the temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, rather than just trying to prevent heatstroke.



We're already halfway through the "critical decade," a term we've used since the end of 2021 in Glasgow, following warnings from the IPCC about the importance of decisive action in this decade. Believing there is still time to act, on August 6, 2024, 16 young people aged 14 to 29 from Hokkaido to Kyushu filed a lawsuit with the Nagoya District Court. They demanded that major power companies, which are responsible for 30% of Japan's energy-related CO₂ emissions, raise and implement more ambitious reduction targets. The requested emission reductions are those specified by the IPCC to meet the 1.5°C target: a 48% reduction by 2030 and a 65% reduction by 2035, both compared to 2019 levels. The plaintiffs named their lawsuit "Youth Climate Case Japan". By sharing personal stories from their lives about why they are taking time away from their studies and jobs to file this lawsuit, they have garnered so much public attention that courtroom seats were allocated by lottery. As more people come to understand the necessity of this legal action, Kiko Network will continue to provide full support.

Lawsuit Calls for a Shift in Japan's Energy Policy

As renewable energy has become economically viable, it is understood globally that the power generation sector should be the first to transition away from fossil fuels. However, Japan is showing the strongest resistance to phasing out thermal power generation. Efforts are being made to extend the lifespan of coal-fired power plants through ammonia co-firing, and new gas-fired power plants are currently being planned. In February 2025, Japan adopted the 7th Strategic Energy Plan under its GX (Green Transformation) strategy. This plan not only intensified the existing policy but also signaled a return to nuclear power. Consequently, these policies became the basis for Japan's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which established reduction targets for 2035 and 2040. However, the "Japanese reduction pathway," a straight line connecting the peak emissions year of 2013 to the net-zero target year of 2050, is inconsistent with the 1.5°C target. Furthermore, the recent "reduction trend" has been driven by the expansion of solar power and a decrease in economic activity, highlighting the continued deficiencies in Japan's renewable energy policies. This approach is also incompatible with economic growth.

With the lack of effective emissions reduction policies unaddressed, Japan introduced a new emissions trading system (ETS) in May 2025. Included in the GX Promotion Law, this system is called the "allocation of emission allowances to decarbonization-growth-oriented investors." While cap-and-trade has been a cornerstone of carbon pricing internationally, this Japanese version conspicuously lacks a cap. The new ETS, a decade behind South Korea's, is merely a namesake system that risks justifying further delays in reducing emissions and providing financial support to the very companies that need to cut them. Throughout FY2024, Kiko Network held seminars to highlight the importance and challenges of Japan's NDCs and the Strategic Energy Plan. We intend to position youth climate litigation as a continuation of these efforts.

Kiko Network President

浅岡美恵

Kiko Network Annual Report 2024: Contents

Greeting: Looking back on FY2024	2
Our Achievements in 2024	
As the world reaches a turning point, Japan's unique 'decarbonization strategy' takes shape	3
Our Activities	
Building an International Framework	4
Promoting Climate Action in Japan	5
Decarbonizing Communities, Building Capacity	6
Financial Report & List of Board Members	7

As the world reaches a turning point, Japan's unique 'decarbonisation strategy' takes shape

From the cabinet decisions in February 2024 on the Hydrogen Society Promotion Act and the CCS Business Act, as well as the "GX2040 Vision: Revised Strategy for Promoting the Transition to a Decarbonized Growth-Oriented Economic Structure," to the cabinet decision on the 7th Strategic Energy Plan in February 2025 and the subsequent submission of the NDC, the Japanese government has systematically laid the groundwork to advance its own unique decarbonization strategy. Amid this critical juncture in global climate action, we are dismayed that the Japanese government is pushing forward with these policy decisions without public participation. Through various activities, Kiko Network is working to encourage civil society to view climate change as a personal issue and to continue raising their voices.

Japan's NDCs are not ambitious, and its decarbonization measures are fraught with problems

Japan has submitted its NDC, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2035 and 73% by 2040 (both relative to 2013 levels). However, specific emission reduction measures remain vague. Within the G7, Japan's power system decarbonization policies are widely seen as the most lagging. For example, on September 30, 2024, the United Kingdom shut down its final coal-fired power plant, ending its 142-year reliance on coal and becoming the first G7 nation to completely exit coal. The UK also announced a new emissions target at COP29: an 81% reduction from 1990 levels by 2035. Compared to these actions, even when adjusting for the difference in base years, Japan's targets cannot be considered ambitious. Moreover, as we highlighted in our statement, there are significant problems with how the NDCs are decided, the discussion process, and the lack of public participation. We will continue to demand not only an increase in reduction targets but also improvements in these processes. The Japanese government has identified the use of hydrogen, ammonia, and carbon capture and storage (CCS) as key decarbonization measures, but these technologies face significant challenges.

The Japanese government is promoting the use of hydrogen, ammonia, and CCS as key measures for decarbonization, but all of these technologies face significant hurdles. When the relevant legislation was approved by the Cabinet, Kiko Network issued an opinion paper highlighting several concerns. We pointed out that an over-reliance on hydrogen and ammonia co-firing—a currently uncertain technology—as well as monofiring in the future could delay the phase-out of coal-fired power and hinder the growth of renewable energy. We expect that the role of hydrogen and ammonia in the transition away from thermal power generation will be further emphasized, as preparations are already underway to subsidize the price difference between hydrogen and ammonia (said to "contribute to decarbonization") and existing fossil fuels. It is crucial that we continue to delve into the issues associated with creating an environment for the widespread use of these fuels.

Young People in Japan Join the Movement: Youth Climate Litigation

The climate litigation movement, which began in Europe, is now spreading to East Asia. In a first for Asia, in August 2024 South Korea's Constitutional Court ruled that a portion of the country's Carbon Neutrality Act, which sets the government's greenhouse gas reduction targets, was unconstitutional. The same month, young people in Japan also took action, filing a civil lawsuit against ten major power companies to protect their future from the growing climate crisis by demanding a reduction in CO₂ emissions. The first and second oral arguments for the "Youth Climate Case Japan" were well-attended by supporters. To continue this momentum, we hosted a seminar in Kyoto in March 2025, inviting plaintiffs and supporting lawyers from Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. We will continue to facilitate opportunities for this kind of information exchange and collaboration, and we will support climate litigation efforts in Japan by monitoring similar movements around the world.

Changing Demands in Shareholder Proposals: Calling for Stronger Governance

Shareholder proposals requesting climate action have been on the rise since 2020. Previously, our proposals focused on a company's business plans, risk assessments aligned with the Paris Agreement and 2050 net-zero targets, and capital expenditures consistent with these goals. In 2024, responding to a recent increase in corporate governance-related proposals, we shifted our focus to enhancing the competency of board members, specifically concerning climate change governance. Although our proposals did not secure the two-thirds majority required for approval, some proxy advisory firms recommended voting in favor of the proposal, and the importance of creating a net-zero transition plan is now more widely recognized, with a growing understanding that strong governance and oversight are crucial for successful implementation. Moving forward, we plan to continue our engagement efforts, calling for greater transparency on how transition plans are executed and how their progress is managed and overseen.

Even if global climate action slows in 2025, the urgency of the matter remains, and so we will continue to expand regional decarbonization activities and support climate litigation. By sharing our vision that climate action is essential, we will work to ensure that more effective policies and concrete emissions reductions are put into practice.

Building an International Framework



Action at COP29, where demonstrators call for developed nations to provide financial support to developing countries

The 1.5°C Goal is In Jeopardy

While Japan experienced record-breaking heat waves in 2024, a report by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) revealed that the global average temperature rose by 1.55°C above pre-industrial levels, setting a new record. Furthermore, 2024 marked the largest annual increase in the global average concentration of carbon dioxide in the last 14 years. A number of climate-related disasters like droughts and wildfires were reported worldwide, with resulting loss and damage becoming increasingly severe.

As previously stated, while there has been global progress in phasing out coal-fired power and expanding renewable energy—such as G7 agreements and the closure of the last coal plant in the UK—the outlook for achieving the 1.5°C goal remains uncertain. This is especially true as the second Trump administration has reversed course toward a fossil fuel-dependent energy strategy and withdrawn from the Paris Agreement. Although the Japanese government submitted its new NDC to the UN in February 2025, the targets fall short of the ambition demanded by science and international agreements. Additionally, the direction of the 7th Strategic Energy Plan does not lead to the phase-out of coal-fired power, a step that is essential for significant emissions reductions. In this context, we undertook the following activities in 2024, in collaboration with domestic and international NGO networks.

Participating in International Climate Change Negotiation Meetings

In November 2024, three members from Kiko Network participated in the COP29 conference in Baku, Azerbaijan. They followed negotiations and, with support from staff back in Japan, published four issues of the newsletter “KIKO” to report on the latest developments and key negotiation points. Their activities also included collaborating with CAN-Japan and CAN International and engaging in dialogues with government delegations. Despite a number of unresolved issues, progress was made on key topics such as the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance post-2025 and Article 6 of the Paris Agreement (carbon markets). However, deeper discussions on the COP28 Global Stocktake outcomes—including the goals to transition away from fossil fuels and triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency by 2030—were deferred to COP30 and beyond. Although formal negotiations on these points stalled, the actions of various countries and non-state actors provided a clear signal that the world is indeed moving away from fossil fuels.

Collaborating with NGOs and Research Institutions in Japan and Abroad

Collaborating with domestic and international NGO networks and research institutions is essential for effectively communicating the global climate situation within Japan and sharing Japan's situation with the world. As the secretariat and member organization of CAN-Japan, Kiko Network hosted webinars, issued statements, and participated in dialogues with policymakers. We also engaged in information exchange and campaigns with overseas organizations and research institutions, worked with Fossil Free Japan and Beyond Coal campaigns in various countries, and collaborated with CAN-International. Our contributions also extended to providing input on various research and reports. We also participated in interviews with international media and in dialogues with foreign embassies and government officials. However, a growing disconnect between Japan and the rest of the world is undeniable. While international NGO networks are broadening their focus to prevent the expansion of LNG (liquid natural gas), Japan continues to prioritize policies that prolong the life of coal-fired power plants and promote LNG expansion. Additionally, concerns are mounting over the Japanese government's consideration of cross-border CO₂ transport and storage as it pushes forward with its CCS initiatives.

Towards 2025

Amidst an uncertain international climate outlook, 2025 will be a crucial year that tests global solidarity in upholding the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C target. As the host of COP30, Brazil has emphasized the importance of international cooperation and made it a priority to examine the bottlenecks that have hindered stronger climate action, hoping to pave the way for emission reduction targets that align with the 1.5°C goal. Throughout FY2025, Kiko Network will continue to collaborate with domestic and international networks, aiming to inform Japan about global developments and share Japan's situation with the world, and encourage a policy shift toward phasing out fossil fuels, conserving energy, and expanding renewables.

Reports Developed with Input from Kiko Network (sample)

Boom and Bust Coal 2025 (Global Energy Monitor)

<https://globalenergymonitor.org/report/boom-and-bust-coal-2025/>

No Clear Exit: Japan's resistance to a real coal phaseout (Reclaim Finance)

<https://reclaimfinance.org/site/en/2024/11/05/no-clear-exit-japans-resistance-to-a-real-coal-phaseout/>

Promoting Climate Actions in Japan



Press conference following the filing of the lawsuit at Nagoya District Court

The transition from the Kishida administration to the Ishihara administration in 2024 did not change Japan's existing GX policy. This "decarbonization policy" continues to heavily favor nuclear power, hydrogen, ammonia, and CCS, while effectively neglecting renewable energy and energy conservation.

Working to Change Japanese Policy

In October, we called for a climate-conscious vote in the House of Representatives election by comparing the policies of various political parties. The ruling coalition ultimately failed to secure a majority, which we believe will lead to more robust debates on climate and energy policy in the Diet. Consequently, we have been intensifying our engagement efforts with politicians.

Meanwhile, the 7th Strategic Energy Plan, Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures, NDC, and the GX2040 Vision were all approved by the Cabinet. Following these decisions, Kiko Network held a series of webinars where we invited experts to explain key issues related to these policies. During the public comment period for the government's draft policies, which were finalized at the end of the year, we conducted additional webinars and encouraged hundreds of participants to submit their feedback. The high level of public interest was clear, with over 70,000 comments submitted in response to the plan.

Focusing on Issues in the Power Sector

Kiko Network has consistently prioritized the power sector in its climate change efforts due to its significant share of Japan's emissions. In 2024, we built a framework to highlight these issues externally and conduct public outreach.

In July, we published an analysis paper on JERA, Japan's largest emitter. We also analyzed the reduction targets of ten major power companies and compiled our findings into a report. Our analysis showed that these companies' policies are inconsistent with the 1.5°C target and that their goals are inadequate. We also revealed that while they project future emissions reductions through nuclear power, hydrogen/ammonia, and CCS, their objective evaluation of these measures remains insufficient.

This analysis also provides the basis for the youth climate lawsuit filed in August, which demands significant reductions from Japanese power companies. In this way, it serves as a foundation for supporting the youth's legal action.

From the Kobe and Yokosuka Coal Plant Lawsuits to the Youth Climate Case

In 2018, a civil lawsuit was filed to halt coal-fired power plants operated by Kobe Steel and Kansai Electric Power, along with a parallel administrative lawsuit against the national government. The following year, another administrative lawsuit was filed to cancel the environmental assessment for JERA's Yokosuka coal-fired power plant. Although each of these cases ended with the courts rejecting the plaintiffs' claims in what were seen as unjust rulings, the plaintiffs achieved something significant: Through these legal challenges, they shared the problems of coal-fired power with a wider audience, expanding a circle of solidarity and energizing local movements. Their efforts highlighted the severity of the climate crisis, the problematic stances of power companies, and the flaws in national policy, ultimately passing the baton to the younger generation who will face even more severe climate risks. On August 6, 2024, the Youth Climate Case Japan was filed.

Kiko Network is fully supporting this case and its plaintiffs.



Report Briefing on the Second Oral Hearing Date



©Masaki Tajima

On the day of filing the lawsuit, in front of Nagoya District Court

Decarbonizing Communities, Building Capacity



With the Japanese government's declaration of carbon neutrality, over 1,000 local governments have now pledged to become "zero carbon cities," with a goal of achieving net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2050. However, a major challenge for Japan in advancing regional decarbonization efforts is a significant lack of human resources, institutional capacity, and specialized knowledge. In response, Kiko Network made it a key focus in 2024 to provide intermediary support, particularly for local governments.

Hosting an Intermediary Support Exchange Forum

Since 2023, we have been hosting the "Intermediary Support Exchange Forum for Promoting Decarbonized Regional Development". The goal of the Forum is to build a network of stakeholders nationwide who are working on regional decarbonization and to help them share a common understanding of the issues. In 2024, we held the second session on May 21 in Nagahama City and the third on December 4 in Iida City. Over 40 participants—including practitioners, researchers, and local government officials from all over the country—attended, engaging in lively information sharing and discussions.

Based on the various insights from these forums, we also compiled and published a document titled "Issues for Consideration on the Role of Intermediary Support Organizations for Promoting Decarbonized Regional Development." This was done to further energize the discussion around intermediary support.

Download the document here:

[https://kikonet.org/activities/local/intermediary support for decarbonization](https://kikonet.org/activities/local/intermediary%20support%20for%20decarbonization)

Supporting the Establishment and Strengthening of Regional Intermediary Organizations

We have been actively supporting intermediary organizations to promote decarbonization efforts in local communities.

In Iwate Prefecture, a private-sector-led organization named Energy Agency Iwate was launched to provide support functions, primarily for professionals in the construction industry.

Similarly, in Nagahama City, Shiga Prefecture, Energy Agency Kohoku was established with the goal of building a robust support system through public-private partnerships.

In Okayama Prefecture, we supported our partner organization, the Okayama Energy Future Study Group. Our assistance included conducting surveys and analyses for local governments, hosting workshops for citizens, and collaborating on discussions to establish an intermediary support system within the prefecture.

In Kyoto Prefecture, we collaborated with the Kyoto Center for Climate Actions and Kyoto Prefectural University to conduct a survey of the prefecture's municipalities. Our findings revealed that since the previous survey was conducted, local governments now place a higher priority on climate change countermeasures, and there has been significant progress in their collaborations with the Kyoto Center for Climate Actions.

In Aomori Prefecture, the prefectural government held training sessions for municipalities where they used Kiko Network's evaluation indicators to assess and analyze the status of local government climate action. Kiko Network also plans to continue collaborating with the prefectural government to provide ongoing support to these municipalities.

Research Conducted in Europe

For the past ten years, a research group that includes Kiko Network members and board members, led by Professor Nobutaka Matoba of Ryukoku University, has visited and studied over 100 leading case studies both in Japan and abroad. In 2024, the group traveled to Austria to conduct research specifically focused on the people and organizations that drive local decarbonization efforts and the systems that support them. The findings from this research were then shared through the Kiko Network newsletter, a webinar, and a published book.

【European Research Report】 The People and Organizations Driving Decarbonization

March 14, 2025, Session 1: "Human Resources and Organizations in Europe"

March 19, 2025, Session 2: "Participation Mechanisms in Europe and Japan: Engaging Citizens and Youth"

【Book】 Title: Human Resources Supporting Decarbonization: Lessons from Japan and Europe

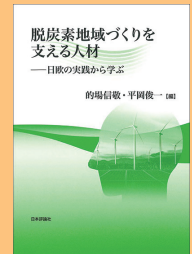
Edited by: Nobutaka Matoba and Shunichi Hiraoka

ISBN: 978-4-535-58793-9

Price: ¥6,000 + tax

Published: February 2025

Publisher: Nihon Hyoronsha



Building Capacity and Fostering Networks for Decarbonization

We organized and supported a series of lectures and webinars with the goal of training decarbonization professionals, sharing expertise, and building networks.

- We organized and supported a series of lectures and webinars with the goal of training decarbonization professionals, sharing expertise, and building networks.

- SJS Co-hosted Webinar: "Climate Neutrality by 2037: Learning about Basel-Stadt Canton's Climate and Energy Policy" (June 28)

- Renewable Energy School Kyoto: A four-part lecture series held in a hybrid format

- Special Webinar: "Expanding Renewable Energy in Europe and Regional Considerations" (October 4)

- Seminar & Roundtable Discussion: "Let's Hear from EV Users!" (November 2)

- Ryukoku University Student Climate Citizens' Assembly (November 30, December 14)

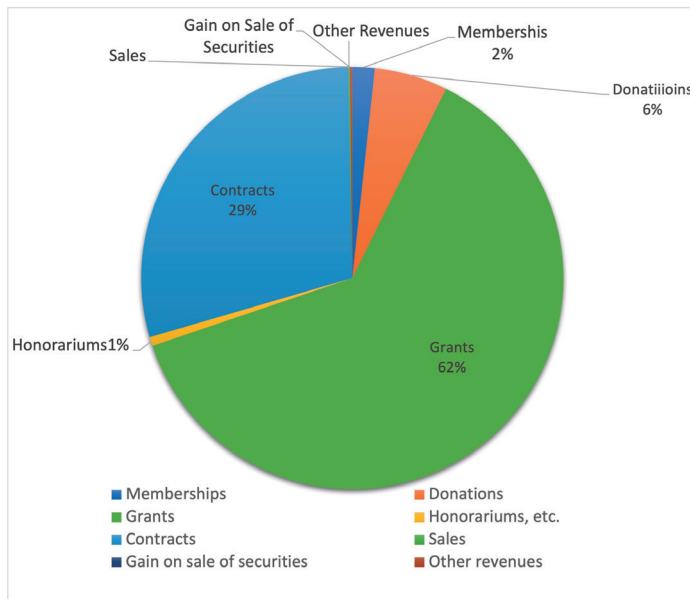
- Sunlight Symposium: "Challenges and Possibilities of Regional Energy" (December 5)

Financial Report & List of Board Members

Kiko Network Financial Report for FY2024

In fiscal year 2024, our total revenue increased due to the expansion of our activities, leading to higher income from commissioned projects and donations. Revenue from membership fees and grants remained largely consistent with the previous year. Expenditures also rose in line with our expanded operations, with increased spending on grant-funded and commissioned projects. Other significant expenses were directed toward public awareness, information provision, research, and policy recommendations, which remain core pillars of our work..

As the climate crisis intensifies, causing severe damage and necessitating a swift transition to a decarbonized society and economy, the role of civil society and environmental NGOs/NPOs is becoming ever more critical. We will continue our efforts to ensure Kiko Network fulfills this vital role. In 2024, the appointment of three new board members revitalized our activities and expanded our network. However, we face the challenge of a declining membership, and so to address this, we will strengthen our initiatives to increase membership and donations, secure a more stable financial foundation, and broaden our base of supporters, stakeholders, and partner organizations.



Revenue breakdown

FY2024 Revenues	
Category	Amount (JPY)
Memberships	3,031,000
Donations	9,916,822
Grants	110,466,041
Honorariums, etc.	1,221,075
Contracts	51,643,285
Sales	198,700
Gain on sale of securities	0
Other revenues	354,440
Total	176,831,363

FY2024 Expenditures	
Category	Amount (JPY)
1. Program expenditures	
Outreach	6,937,617
Research and advocacy	5,203,213
Network building	1,214,083
International negotiations and policy work	2,081,285
Community and NGO support	1,907,845
Grant-funded programs	77,615,694
Expenses related to the sale of securities	0
Contract-funded programs	53,614,584
Program subtotal	148,574,321
2. Administrative expenditures	
Salaries	4,648,451
Retirement benefits	588,800
Travel	787,139
Communications and shipping	179,496
Supplies	139,298
Office rent	167,614
Printing	139,542
Employee benefits	663,448
Tax and public dues	188,665
Other expenditures	22,684
Administrative subtotal	7,525,137
3. Income taxes – current	140,000
Total	156,239,458

Revenues and expenditures	FY2024 results
Opening balance	68,979,287
Total revenues	176,831,363
Total expenditures	156,239,458
Closing balance on March 31, 2024	89,571,192
Closing balance (restricted portion)	63,798,615
Closing balance (unrestricted portion)	25,772,577

List of Board Members

Mie Asaoka (Lawyer)
 Kuniyasu Inoue
 Takuma Kani
 Hiroshi Kanda
 Ayako Sakurada
 Yoshitsugu Sasaki
 Kenro Taura
 Ken Tsuzuki
 Oomi Nishizono
 Ikumi Hara
 Tsuyoshi Hara
 Shunichi Hiraoka

Kimiko Hirata
 Takako Momoi
 Motohiro Yamazaki
 Naoyuki Yamagishi
 Juta Wada
 Masako Ichihara
 Takashi Sasaki
 Nanami Takei

Auditor, Toshiyuki Ueda
 Auditor, Yoshimichi Sakakibara
 Auditor, Shigenori Fukushima

As of July 2025, in random order



Change the rules, not our climate.

The mission of Kiko Network can only be achieved with your support.

There are many ways you can support: by becoming a member, donating, volunteering, assisting with joint research, spreading our campaigns, etc.

We at Kiko Network thank all of our supporters for their past and future contributions to changing the world as we move toward a sustainable global society.

For further information, please contact your nearest Kiko Network office.

Kiko Network Kyoto Office: #305 Takakura Bldg. Takakura-dori, Shijo-agaru, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto 604-8124, JAPAN

TEL: +81-75-254-1011, FAX: +81-75-254-1012, E-mail: kyoto@kikonet.org

Kiko Network Tokyo Office: Fujimori Bldg. 6B, 2-12-2 Hirakawacho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093, JAPAN

TEL: +81-3-3263-9210, FAX: +81-3-3263-9463, E-mail: tokyo@kikonet.org



kikonetwork



@kikonetwork



@kikonet.org



kikonetwork



@kikonetworkchannel