



Asia-Pacific Regional Youth Call to Action 2024



Japan

Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Eradicating Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises: The Effective Delivery of Sustainable, Resilient and Innovative Solutions in Asia and the Pacific with Young People at the Forefront

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Today, Japan is one of the few countries in the Asia-Pacific region that can be classified as a developed country, and while it faces unique problems such as low birth rate, aging population, food self-sufficiency, and natural disasters, it is also a driving force for building sustainable peace and combating climate change in the Asia-Pacific region, and for comprehensive collaboration and solidarity across age, sector, and national borders. solidarity is in tow.

Our call to action emphasizes the importance of working with governments, businesses, and civil society organizations from a youth perspective to promote advanced examples of building a society based on the goals of the 2030 Agenda by promoting the transformation to a sustainable social and

industrial infrastructure in light of these social contexts. This is because many of Japan's social systems today were developed half a century ago and are still in use today with the addition of several regulations.

Japan has faced numerous natural disasters, including earthquakes, tsunamis, and landslides, such as the massive earthquake that struck the Hokuriku region in January of this year. In addition, Japan needs to promote discussion on issues such as the declining birthrate, aging society, growing social disparities, and political corruption.

Outside of Japan, Japan also needs to continue to address disputes with neighboring countries in diplomacy, such as the illegal occupation of territory by Russia and the abduction of Japanese citizens



by North Korea. We are convinced that resolving these diplomatic issues requires continued efforts at home and firm communication of these efforts to the international community.

In light of these issues, we declare in our country's Call to Action Declaration that we will advance the building of sustainable and equal friendly relations with the Asia-Pacific region from all approaches by presenting our views on climate change, peace building, and partnership with emphasis on specific and advanced examples by young people. We declare that we, the youth of Japan, will continue to work to build sustainable and equal friendly relations with the Asia-Pacific region.

OUR KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

SDG 1: No Poverty

We demand that youth, citizens, and job seekers who fall into the 16% relative poverty category in Japan be provided with the opportunity for a sustainable and culturally viable life with the mediation of public works projects in rural areas.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

- We require sustainable support for the domestic hunger problem of relative poverty and refugees due to the current price hikes and demand that activities be promoted to reduce the wasteful disposal of imported food through the promotion of food loss based on the concept of local production for local consumption.
- We demand that in view of the problem of domestic food self-sufficiency, which is around 38%, the lowest figure among developed countries, we demand that a centralized reform of industry, land use, and governing bodies be promoted to quickly solve the problem of food security in domestic contingencies.
- We, the youth, call for active participation in the technological, legal, policy, and social implementation steps to build an appropriate agricultural production system through agile land use and reclamation that can promote a comprehensive and sustainable transformation

of Japan's food self-sufficiency and food production system in the future.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

- We the Youth call on local governments to adopt universal design and foreign-language and gender-sensitive signage for transportation infrastructure and public facilities with the aim of realizing a diverse society in Japan.
- We, the Youth, require that the Japanese government take an educational and legal approach to building a society in which women can play an active role by providing appropriate educational opportunities and reforming work styles with a focus on equal pay for equal work, with the aim of promoting improvements in the gender gap index in the economic and political spheres in Japan. The group will also seek to promote the development of a society in which women can play an active role.

SDG 13: Climate Action

- We require the establishment of the Youth Council in Japan to reflect our voices to the policies. We youth will be the most affected generation by climate change, but we do not have a way to decide our future.
- We urge accelerated decarbonisation of the fossil fuel industry to achieve an expanded carbon capture rate of 100% by 2050. The Ministry of Economy, Trading and Industry (METI) should adopt a rapid implementation of CCS and CCU, as it plans to make extensive use of co-firing of gas with hydrogen and ammonia. We urge METI to have a clear implementation time plan that will ensure commercial scale by 2030 and also ensure Japan's international competitiveness.¹
- We require not to construct additional nuclear power plants when the society is decarbonized.
- We encourage METI and the Ministry of Environment (MOE) to actively disseminate necessary information to ensure the safety of nuclear power generation worldwide.
- Bringing pace and momentum towards the bilateral and multilateral investment for climate mitigation and adaptation measures are crucial to fight the challenges faced by nations.

- Expand the number of partners and projects under the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM), and strengthen existing relations with existing partners.
- We request METI and the MOE and to allocate an adequate budget to support startups and entrepreneurship focused on social innovation.
 - For example, Climate Youth Japan sends 5-7 youth to COP (Conference of Parties) every year, holds LCOY (Local Conference of Youth) Japan, and holds collaboration projects with international youth.
- We likewise request the METI and the MOE to further promote the development of renewable energy, especially hydrogen energy, and rare metal development projects in semiconductor manufacturing through the establishment of special economic zones.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

- We request all forms of administration (local, national, international) to collaborate with youth to redefine “meaningful participation.”
 - We believe meaningful involvement should not be a privilege but an unquestionable right for everyone. One that is fair and equitable, not restricted to those with financial and geographical advantages.
- We call on all administrations to issue a code in their governance that ensures youth voices reflect local policies.
 - With the establishment of the Basic Act on the Child and the Children and Families Agency in 2023, there is an ever-growing need and priority to hear youth voices.
 - Allow youth participation in councils related to education, climate, and gender policies. Example: Create permanent seats on the board of education at a local level or acknowledge current youth members of Children and Families Agency councils.
- We request the Ministry of Education, Sports, Culture, Science and Technology (MEXT) adopt concrete citizenship education so that youth can recognize their autonomy and actively participate in politics and other innovative spheres.
 - Compared to other Western and Asian countries, only 30% of Japan’s youth believe they can be drivers of societal change.²
 - We request that youth be at the center of shaping citizenship education and education for sustainable development (ESD).
- We encourage respectful and meaningful discussion on nuclear and inhumane weapons in promoting peace and achieving nationwide “human security.”
 - We request more official dialogues between government officials and youth in nuclear disarmament, peace, and security to develop implementable long-term plans that ensure peace and non-violence. Example: With the ongoing Ukraine-Russia conflict, although government interests conflict, we, the youth, can work together to develop ambitious visions of achieving peace without political interests.
- We demand that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs make further efforts to quickly resolve Russia’s illegal occupation of land in the Northern Territories and the issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

- We require meaningful partnerships between stakeholders, including youth-led organizations, to accelerate the SDGs.
 - Review again how the 17 goals and 169 targets are interconnected.³ Example: The Japan Youth Platform for Sustainability (JYPS) Pioneer Project aims to collect youth nationally and reassess the SDGs from their perspectives in parallel with the upcoming Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2025.
 - Take more proactive leadership to establish stakeholder collaboration, ensuring continuous and effective cooperation and sharing knowledge and insights.³



- Reduce trade-offs among issues and sectors to achieve the synergistic and effective achievement of the SDGs.³
- Have a diverse and inclusive youth representation in local national, and international conferences on the SDGs that counters exclusive trends.³
- We encourage current SDG initiatives to recognize their intersectionality and provide opportunities for collaboration.
 - We recognize that to accomplish the goals by 2030, we need an intersectional approach not bound by stovepiped divides
 - Raise awareness on youth-led platforms that activate partnerships with different SDG groups and stakeholders. Example: The Japan Youth Platform for Sustainability (JYPS) accelerates partnerships and discussions between different SDG groups by being an active member of the SDGs Round-Table Conference (SDGs円卓会議).
- We encourage a sustainable and coherent framework that synergizes SDG discussions with sub-regional countries, neighboring regional countries, and international youth.
 - Allow more opportunities for North-East Asian stakeholders to collaborate on SDG issues that can feed into the Summit of the Future, High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), and international youth organizations like the UNMGCY (Major Group for Children and Youth). Example: The SDG Youth Committee North-East Asia (SYCN), founded at the 7th North East Asia Multi-Stakeholder Forum on SDGs (2023), aims to strengthen peaceful partnerships towards achieving the SDGs in the North-East sub-region through regular meetings and dialogues.

ENDNOTES:

- 1 LCOY Japan 2023 National Youth Statement. <https://www.ypfp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023-LCOY-Japan-National-Youth-Statement.pdf>.
 - 2 MEXT, 2015. bit.ly/3wIDHoN.
 - 3 SDGs Youth Proposal 2023 (JYPS). https://www.jyps.website/_files/ugd/c5e333_dcabbb99899c4e52bco349cdc10a88d4.pdf.
-

The APFSD country and sub-regional briefs were developed through collective discussions and engagements between youth advocates at the APFSD Youth Forum in Bangkok on February 15-17, 2024. The Japan drafting team was led by Jin Tanaka, with inputs provided by Akari Horioka and Aya Yamauchi. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action team.
