

Looking Forward toward a Carbon Neutral Japan during the Recovery

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The current global pandemic has caused massive disruptions in many normal activities and changed working and personal behavior patterns. In many cases, the response to the pandemic has shifted working, travel, education, business and personal activities away from normal patterns. In some cases, these shifts will be permanent. This has resulted in some severe economic impacts which could require a significant recovery period to reach post-pandemic levels of production and business activities. This shift has highlighted the value of broad, internet-supported communications to allow a number of activities to keep pace despite the need to 'social distance'. On the other hand, it has exposed weaknesses in supply chains, factory productivity, and energy sources and uses.

This presentation will look at some of these factors for the situation in Japan and ask the question: *“Can the economic recovery of Japan provide pathways to accelerate the time to reach carbon neutrality while enhancing Japan’s energy policy of energy security, economic efficiency, environmental protection and safety (3E+S)?”*

This talk will highlight some of the considerations for a recovery in Japan that could shift energy uses and business productivity away from more carbon-intensive energy sources. The intent is to provide some information and some perspective about what actions might be considered in the recovery process that could move Japan closer to the 2050 carbon targets. The intent of the talk is not to provide or suggest a specific pathway or set of solutions, but to highlight important considerations for Japan’s energy future. The hope is to start to a wider discussion of opportunities provided by the economic recovery to the pandemic consistent with Japan’s energy policy, the changing demographics in Japan, and the growing competition for and control of global energy sources.