

Urgent Message from KANBUN

on

the Government Council Proposal for the formulation of the Long-Term Strategy under the Paris Agreement

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1. On April 2, 2019, a proposal regarding the Long-Term Strategy under the Paris Agreement as Growth Strategy was submitted to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. It was compiled by a government council which was composed of under the direction of Prime Minister Abe who stated, at the 17th meeting of the Council on Investment for the Future on 4 June 2018, “Measures against global warming are no longer a cost for companies. They are a source of competitiveness. Companies that actively fight against environmental crises attract funds from all around the world, enabling them to prepare for the next phase of their growth and take further measures.”
2. The proposal of 27 pages long provides the latest review on the trend of climate change issues, possible viewpoints and important elements to be considered in formulating the Long-Term Strategy, as well as desirable measures and policies of cross-sectoral issues. Among others, it expresses their basic recognition of the seriousness of climate change issues, stating that the abnormal weather phenomena all over the world derives from human activities expanding beyond the planetary boundary. It also refers to the IPCC’s special report “Global Warming of 1.5 °C” compiled last October. To respond to the urgent situation depicted by IPCC’s special report on 1.5 °C, such phrases as “discontinuous innovation”, “ambitious vision”, and “address the issue with a sense of speed” are repeatedly appeared here and there in the proposal.
3. However, the proposal is just perfunctory, showing no concrete policy measures to tackle with serious global warming although such existing technological concepts as “hydrogen-based society”, “CCS”, “CCU”, “artificial photosynthesis” and “methanation” are referred to throughout the document.

4. The Abe Administration is targeting 80% GHG emission reduction by 2050, but the proposal is not clearly explains the roadmap to that goal. As regards the carbon pricing which many experts consider vital to achieve the goal, it only says carbon pricing "includes not only pricing GHGs through the market but creating a new taxation system (already partially introduced), and their impacts, valuation and implementation challenges depends on each system. Technical discussion is needed by experts based on the international trends and domestic situations as well as on possible impacts on Japanese industries' competitiveness in international markets." There, the long discussion among Japanese experts for the last quarter-century was totally neglected! It does not even refer to the fact that the carbon pricing has been introduced in major countries of the world producing good effects in reducing GHGs. In short, the proposal remains the business-as-usual attitude, a big gap from the wording of the proposal ("discontinuous innovation" or "ambitious vision").
5. The proposal does not refer to the following important points raised in the IPCC's special report "Global Warming of 1.5 °C".
 - i) Global warming is *likely* to reach 1.5°C as early as 2030 if it continues to increase at the current rate.
 - ii) In model pathways with no or limited overshoot of 1.5°C, global net anthropogenic CO₂ emissions decline by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030
 - iii) In 1.5°C pathways with no or limited overshoot, renewables are projected to supply 70–85% of electricity in 2050 ... while the use of coal ... would be reduced to close to 0% of electricity.
 - iv) In 1.5°C pathways with no or limited overshoot, unprecedented level of implementation actions are required, such as emission reduction in all sectors through introduction of various possible technologies (including carbon dioxide removal), rapid and extensive changes of infrastructures, industrial systems and human behaviors/lifestyle, and increased investments to low-carbon options.
6. Furthermore, the proposal does not say anything about the participation of citizens. To achieve such massive reforms, not only the business sector but also individual citizens' recognition and active support/action are indispensable.
7. The persistent innovation that the IPCC report is requesting would not be achieved only through introduction of such new technologies as "hydrogen-based society", "CCS", "CCU", "artificial photosynthesis" and "methanation". What is really requested there is the "unprecedented" full-fledged changes of modern civilization on a greater scale we have never seen before. The report provides extensive views of building a new civilization toward decarbonized society, changing industrial structure and economic system, reviewing energy and social systems, and even transformation of values. However, from this proposal of the government council, we cannot feel any strong spirit to urge

formulation of new strategies for future generations. It just says, “the ultimate goal is to change economic system and lifestyle in view of the future in and after the latter half of this century.”

8. We, KANBUN, consider that business-led innovation relying solely on economic methods or technologies is not at all sufficient in achieving the target. To realize the “decarbonized society” requested by the Paris Agreement, mobilizing all possible human powers is inevitable with all sectors (business, citizens, NPOs and researchers) participated in the efforts of changing their values as well as social institutions, and introducing any measure conceivable in addition to technical innovations. The proposal compiled by the council on 2 April totally lacks the above viewpoint. Therefore, we strongly request that the government reflect our suggestions in the above in the Long-Term Strategy to be formulated by this coming June.