



Our Opinions on the G7 Toyama Environment Ministers' Meeting Communique

May 24, 2016

The People's Environmental Forum was held in Toyama city on May 14th, 2016, organized by Earth Day Toyama. We addressed and discussed the issues of Pollution, Climate Change and Energy, Biodiversity, and Development and Lifestyle (including SDGs and ESD). Each working groups included scholars, practitioners and activists. Around 200 citizens participated in this forum. Through dialogue sessions, we composed the declaration statement, "From Toyama to the World, Environmental Declaration of Global Citizens" we then announced it to the participants of the forum and to the public.

We decided to express our opinions on the G7 Toyama Environment Ministers' Meeting Communique from the citizens' point of view.

In this communiqué, governments acknowledge the importance of a "civil society" where the interests of key stakeholders are given equal consideration. It was agreed that cooperation and collaboration are needed among stakeholders in order to effectively implement the SDGs.

We welcome this acknowledgement and we believe that it indicates that we are prepared to cooperate and collaborate with others within Japan and throughout the world.

We acknowledge several points on the G7 Toyama Environmental Ministers' Meeting Communique as follow:

- I. The ministers clearly stated that they are ready to develop and submit the long-term low GHG emission development strategies well within the schedule provided by the COP21 decision.
- II. In this communique acknowledged the basic significance of biodiversity. It shows their intention to inhibit easy introduction of biodiversity offset. The G7 recommends strict application of mitigation hierarchy to allow economic development will not destroy biodiversity.
- III. Following the G7 Elamu Summit, the G7 acknowledged the Marine Litter (pollution) as a worldwide issue requiring definitive action by all the countries throughout the world.
- IV. The G7 recognized the Cities are the cause of the problem for environmental damage and environmental risk due to the releasing the greenhouse gas emission. Therefore, the G7 identified "the Role of Cities" as a key player to solve the problem.
- V. The G7 encouraged women to be included and to play a key role in shaping climate change policies on mitigation and adaptation.
- VI. In the Toyama Framework on Material Cycles, intends to promote increased consumer awareness of the sustainable consumption. "Awareness of sufficiency" is a concept that encourages consumers to avoid greed for simplicity.

However, we will highlight following issues and make some proposals based on our "Environmental Declaration of the Global Citizens."

1. Given the Itai-Itai disease occurred in Toyama is the pollution-related disease claimed the lives of thousands of Japanese people, we were very disappointed with the fact that in this communiqué, it did not mention about the Itai-Itai disease at all even though it was the first pollution-caused disease the Japanese government acknowledged. We see it as valuable experience that should be shared with other countries and treated as a lesson to be learnt so that damage from copper poisoning would not be repeated ever again.
2. In this communiqué, after the Great East Japan Earthquake, it stated that things are moving smoothly such as the removal of radioactive contamination that has been in progress, which has led to eventual lifting of evacuation orders in parts of the region and reconstruction of local economics. However, there are still many number of the citizens who "can not go back, would not go back". Those who moved back are forced to live by being exposed to the radiation at the same level of nuclear power plant worker regardless of their age or sex. We shall not overlook the piled up problems such as enormous amount of soil contamination nor pollutants have not been disposed properly.
3. In this communiqué, it mentioned about the Marine Litter, yet it did not cover the marine pollution, especially radioactive contamination. Japanese government should acknowledge the fact that TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi

Nuclear Power Station still diffuses contaminated water to the ocean and deal with this serious condition that entails the responsibility.

4. In this communiqué, it emphasized economic approaches repeatedly in terms of biodiversity conservation. However, it appears that the fundamental issue is missing as not mentioning about the importance of nature's history that cultivates biological diversity and endemism. Even though this communiqué states the importance of conservation of biodiversity it does not include specific biological viewpoints except for introductory certification of the significance of biodiversity. At the construction site of Henoko U.S. Military Base, the Linear Chuo Shinkansen Line, Ishikigawa Dam, and gigantic coastal levee alteration of the natural environment that could bring great influence on biota is a concern. In this communiqué, it was necessary to include the statement to inhibit unsustainable land use and intend to pursue Green Infrastructure.
5. We believe that works such as agriculture, forestry, and fisheries contribute the conservation of biodiversity of Satoyama Satoumi. According to this communiqué, it did not include the importance of above those traditional industrial activities. The meaning of traditional work should be reassessed more widely and deeply from a biodiversity point of view.
6. In this communiqué emphasized the Role of Cities, and did not even mention Satoyama. We could utilize Satoyama for its energy supply, which will reduce the dependency on fossil fuel. We need this plan for a paradigm shift to 100% of renewable energy.
7. It should be essential for the G7 Environmental Ministers' Meeting to set a goal of staged phase out nuclear power generation along with achievement of the low carbon society by considering the fact the meeting was held in Japan which experienced severe accident of the nuclear power plant. Not only that, it was a big disappointment since it was not mentioned at all.
8. In order to achieve the SDGs goal of "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development", we should have a common understanding to avoid any war and choose peaceful solution under the difficult situation. Also, we must state that the war itself is the biggest cause of the environmental destruction.
9. The Japanese government states the importance of developing resource circulation by introducing the Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific, Climate and Clean Air Coalition. However, developed countries and corporations are irresponsible for selling products without taking care of the waste issues. We would like to emphasize that they are obligated to take Extended Producer Responsibility.
10. The education of the children is essential for the sustainable development of society since they are the ones will carry our future. Again, it was not mentioned at all in this communiqué. We insist the G7 will recognize the importance of Education for Sustainable Development and show leadership for its promotion.
11. "The Children's environmental health" is an issue of particular concern and we need to deal with it as our responsibilities for the future generation. Again, it did not mention about preventative method or policy to protect children from radioactive exposure by preparing safe and secure environment for them. We are deeply concerned about the fact that 166 children were diagnosed as thyroid cancer by the end of 2015. It was found out by medical examination done by Fukushima. The Japanese government should take immediate action for making policy to protect the children who are especially vulnerable to the radiation.
12. In the Toyama Framework on Material Cycles, the Japanese government listed the recycling of post-disaster debris, generated by the Great East Japan Earthquake as an example of action. However, we must emphasize the fact that the post-disaster debris contains radioactive substance. Before the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, the clearance level of radioactive waste was 100 becquerel/kg. After the disaster, the number the level was raised up to 8,000 becquerel/kg. Since then, any post-disaster debris below 8,000 becquerel/kg is incinerated which allows radioactive substance to be diffused in the environment. This incineration needs to be stopped immediately. The Japanese government needs to return it to the world clearance level back to 100 becquerel/kg.
13. It is imperative to end the development of and overriding priority on economic growth. Overriding priority on economic growth result in tremendous sacrifice of the most socially vulnerable people as well as the destruction and pollution of many natural resources. The current system needs to change. We expect the G7 will take leadership to implement the value of "awareness of sufficiency" for their policies. That will lead the achievement of the SDGs goal to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages", by respecting the principles of the 2030 Agenda which states "No one will be left behind".

Earth Day Toyama 2016 Executive Committee