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Measures to Cope with Global Warming and Establishing an International Framework after the Kyoto Protocol

Japan Chemical Industry Association

Measures Taken by the Chemical Industry to Cope with Global Warming

In Japan, in advance of the conclusion of the Kyoto Protocol, Nippon Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) developed a “Voluntary Action Plan on the Environment” consisting of measures by industry to cope with global warming to meet the objective of “endeavoring to restrain the emission of CO₂ from industry and energy-converting sectors in fiscal 2010 to less than the level in 1990.” Thirty-five industry associations including the Japan Chemical Industry Association (JCIA) have participated in this plan and promoted activities with voluntary action plans and targets by each association.

As a result of actively promoting the plan with its own target of reducing energy use by 10% from the base year by 2010, the chemical industry has achieved its target for four consecutive years since 2002. In fiscal 2005, production volume increased by 29% as a result of economic recovery while the emission of CO₂ remained at an increase of 10%. Including reduced emissions due to Freon alternatives, total emissions of CO₂ equivalents declined 15%.

In addition, the chemical industry has supported the development and diffusion of energy-saving products by providing existing and new materials to user companies and, at the same time, it has achieved success in the development of new energy-saving technologies in production sectors. From now on, we will not only continue to promote our activity but also support the transfer of energy-saving environmental technologies to China and other countries through programs such as the Japan-China Government and Private Sector Dialogue and the Japan-China Energy-Saving and Environment Forum.

Since the period of the Kyoto Protocol (2008-2012) will start next year, further efforts to achieve the target are expected from industry, and the chemical industry will evaluate the actual results of fiscal 2006 in fiscal 2007 and review our voluntary action plan.

Establishing an International Framework after the Kyoto Protocol

While the period covered by the Kyoto Protocol nears, there has been a notable movement internationally looking after that period. At this year's COP/MOP 3, essential discussions toward full-scale negotiations on the next framework have been planned.

In addition, at the Group of Seven and Russia in June this year (Germany Summit), it is expected that global warming and climate changes will become major subjects, and the likelihood has increased that measures to cope with global warming will become major topics at next year's Japan Summit. Meanwhile, the member countries of the European Union agreed at the recent executive conference to reduce the emission of CO₂ by 20% (30% for advanced countries) by 2020, and in the United States, which broke away from the Kyoto Protocol, influential members of both the Democratic and Republican parties have been offering their own ideas on how to deal with global warming.

Under these circumstances, it is essential for Japan to advocate for the shift from the current framework of a limited number of member countries representing only about 30% of the world's emissions of greenhouse gases to a framework where all the countries with significant emissions – including the US, China and India – will participate. In addition, Japan must advocate the establishment of fair targets of reduction that reflect the past efforts to improve energy efficiency by each country.

In addition to requesting our government and international-related organizations consider the aforementioned advocacy and promote the transfer of energy-saving technologies to newly developing countries, JCIA will express our opinions at the Steering Committee Meeting of International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) in April and JCIA Board Meeting in June.

JCIA's Opinions Relating to the Establishment of an International Framework after the Kyoto Protocol

- (1) Since the current framework covers only 30% of the emission of greenhouse gases around the world, all the major emission countries including the US, China and India should participate in the next framework.

- (2) Although the Kyoto Protocol does not evaluate measures to save energy that were carried out prior to 1990 or the base year, the next framework should consider a fair amount of obliged reduction that reflects the energy-saving efforts by each country in the past.
- (3) In transferring energy-saving technologies to newly developing countries, such support as the use of the official development aid (ODA) should be made.
- (4) It is essential to research, develop and promote the diffusion of energy-saving technologies and new materials, and the government should support further actions in that direction.

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