

January 27, 2022

Ms. Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Pursuing a Nuclear-Free and Carbon-Free Society is Possible Exclude Nuclear Energy from the EU Taxonomy

As former Prime Ministers of Japan, we were shocked to learn that the European Commission is planning to include nuclear power in the EU Taxonomy, which is designed to facilitate investments in projects that tackle climate change and other projects related to sustainability.

Following what had happened at Three Mile Island in the United States and Chernobyl in the former Soviet Union, the disaster at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant proved at great cost that nuclear power cannot be "safe". Moreover, what we have witnessed in Fukushima over the last decade is an indescribable tragedy and contamination on an unprecedented scale. Hundreds of thousands of people have been forced to flee their homes and vast areas of agricultural land have been contaminated. Radioactive water well beyond storage capacity continues to be generated, many children are suffering from thyroid cancer, and massive amounts of the country's resources and wealth has been lost. We do not wish European countries to make the same mistake.

Promoting nuclear power can ruin a country. Like policies that turn a blind eye to climate change, policies promoting nuclear energy threaten the survival and existence of future generations. In the aftermath of the disaster at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, various investigations and research, as well as expert opinions from within Japan and beyond, have made clear that nuclear power is neither safe, clean, nor economical. We are convinced that the only way to achieve a truly sustainable world is to promote renewable energies that will allow our societies to simultaneously move away from nuclear power and decarbonize.

The inclusion of nuclear power in the EU taxonomy would be to promote to the world that nuclear power contributes to creating a "sustainable society," when, in reality, indisposable radioactive waste and the inevitable risk of major accidents threaten the survival of the global environment and human species all together. If the EU were to endorse investments in nuclear energy, this would be at odds with the essence of the European Green Deal that is being promoted, and would leave a huge and irreversible legacy for the future of the EU and the world.

In the aftermath of the disaster at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, the decision made by the Merkel administration in Germany to phase out nuclear power was a remarkable one. We commend this decision. We sincerely hope that the European leaders will again make a courageous decision to weave a sustainable future for humanity.

Let us stress once again that a nuclear-free and decarbonized world is possible.

The 87th, 88th and 89th Prime Minister of Japan
The 79th Prime Minister of Japan
The 94th Prime Minister of Japan
The 93rd Prime Minister of Japan
The 81st Prime Minister of Japan

Junichiro Koizumi
Morihiro Hosokawa
Naoto Kan
Yukio Hatoyama
Tomiichi Murayama