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***From the Editors:***

**There Are Always Alternatives**

Consumers Union of Japan has a history as an alternative voice in Japan and the global community. We do what we can to appeal to common sense, based on the principles that consumers and citizens have rights: the right to know being one of the most fundamental.

The right to protest is also emerging as an important one.

However, as the recent debate surrounding the release of

contaminated water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant shows, TEPCO and the government will do whatever they think is right, regardless of the protests, here and abroad.

We believe there are alternatives, and we will continue speaking up against the mis-management of nuclear power and its supporters.

- Editors

**Urgent Statement:  
Protest Against TEPCO's  
Discharge of Contaminated Water  
from the Fukushima Daiichi  
Nuclear Power Plant into the  
Ocean**

On 24 August 2023, Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) forced the release of contaminated water generated by the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident into The Pacific Ocean. We protest with strong anger against this outrageous action, which violates the written promises made to fishermen's groups and shows no regard for the opposition and concerns expressed by local communities in Fukushima Prefecture and other regions and groups.



Photo: 24 August 2023 Protest Outside TEPCO in Tokyo, Japan

The decision to discharge the water into the ocean was made without any consideration of the various alternatives that were proposed in response to the Government's policy decision in April 2021, and shows the administration's complete lack of

respect for the opinions of citizens and parties concerned.

Although the contaminated water stored in the tanks is supposed to have had all but tritium removed, in reality about 70% of the contaminated water still contains radioactive substances such as cesium, strontium and iodine, which exceed the standard values. If the water is discharged into the ocean in this state, even if it is diluted, there is a risk that it will be taken up by fish, shellfish and algae and become concentrated and appear on our dinner tables, potentially causing damage to our health. In addition, tritium has an extremely large impact when it enters the living organism.

An even bigger problem is the Kishida Government's shift to a pro-nuclear policy, which includes restarting and building new nuclear power stations, extending the operating periods of old ones, and strengthening support for the nuclear power industry.

Consumers Union of Japan has upheld the slogan "A Sound and Healthy Life for the Future". The current discharge of contaminated water into the ocean and the promotion of nuclear power are incompatible with the kind of society we seek. We strongly demand that

the government and TEPCO immediately stop the oceanic discharge and express our determination to move forward together with many consumers and consumers towards the early realisation of a nuclear power free society.

### **Future of Food: Public Meeting on Genome-edited Fish in Kyoto**

Genome-edited foods are now being distributed in Japan, and in Japan alone, and are starting to appear on our tables. Moreover, two of the three types of genome-edited food distributed in Japan are fish (horse mackerel and tiger puffer fish). Until now, genetically modified fish have never been distributed as food in Japan. Genome-edited foods are as dangerous as, or even more dangerous than, genetically modified foods, yet the government has stated that there is no need to assess whether they are safe to eat or to label them. It is also totally unpredictable what will happen if genome-edited fish escape and enter the ecosystem. Regional Fish, the Kyoto University venture that developed, farms and sells such fish, has made no attempt to respond to our concerns or questions, while downplaying the dangers.

The fish farm is located in Miyazu City, Kyoto Prefecture, where the rich fishing grounds produce a lot of

delicious local fish. However, Miyazu City has adopted genome-edited tiger puffer fish as an official “Hometown Tax Return Gift” as part of a program to promote local regions around Japan. Despite local citizens demanding that it be revoked, the city will not listen.

Regional Fish is developing genome-edited fish in collaboration with Food & Life Companies, which owns Sushiro, the revolving sushi restaurant chain. It has established a joint venture with NTT for land-based aquaculture and claims to be planning to establish new land-based aquaculture facilities across the country.

Genome-edited fish are now gradually making their way into our daily lives. But there is no labelling. We, the consumers, have no choice. Consumers Union of Japan is calling on Regional Fish to stop the development and cultivation of genome-edited fish, and on Miyazu City to withdraw them from its official tax return program. Furthermore, we are also working with the fishing industry to stop the onshore cultivation of genome-edited fish. This is why we have organised this meeting in Kyoto, where genome-edited fish are being developed and farmed.

We hope you will join us at this meeting to help protect the future of our food supply!

Date: 23 September 2023 13:00 – 16:00

Venue: Hito Machi Koryukan Kyoto, Kyoto Main Conference Room

Participation fee: 500 yen

Capacity: 300 at the venue, 500 online

Application deadline: 19 September

(Note: The meeting will be held in Japanese only)

### **Program**

12:30 Doors open

13:00-13:05 Opening remarks

13:05-13:50 Part 1: Keynote speech “How will genome-edited foods change the future of food” by Setsuko Yasuda

13:50-14:25 Part 2: Talk session “What is the problem with genome-edited fish?” by Keisuke Amagasa and Masahigashi Kawada

14:25-14:35 Break

14:35-15:10 Part 3: Panel discussion “Genome-edited tiger puffer fish as a tax return gift for promoting hometowns”

15:10-15:40 Questions and answers

15:40-15:55 Appeal by fishermen, appeal on genome-edited tomatoes

15:55-16:00 Rally appeal, closing remarks

### **60 Years and More, for Japan’s Nuclear Reactors? No Thanks!**

*We Protest Against the Kishida Administration’s Passage of the GX Bill to Promote Nuclear Power*

6 June 2023

On 31 May 2023, the Green Transformation (GX) Decarbonization Power Source Bill, which will allow nuclear power plants to operate for more than 60 years, was passed and enacted in Tokyo, Japan. This happened at a plenary session of the House of Councillors by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and New Komeito, as well as Isshin no Kai, and others. This legislation bundles together five bills amending the Basic Act on Nuclear Energy, the Nuclear Reactor Regulation Act, the Electricity Business Act, the Reprocessing Act, and the Renewable Energy Special Measures Act.

In July 2022, the Kishida administration established the GX Executive Council with the aim of realizing a decarbonized society, and in response to the Basic Policy for Realization of GX – Roadmap for the Next 10 Years released by the Council in December, the GX decarbonization bill was submitted to the Diet in February 2023 to legislate the basic policy.

In reality, the bill is not about a green transformation at all. It is an attempt to force a major change in the

existing policy of reducing dependence on nuclear power as much as possible by restarting nuclear power plants, building new nuclear power plants, extending the operation period of aging nuclear power plants, and strengthening support for the nuclear power industry.

Consumers Union of Japan is strongly opposed to this legislation.

After the Fukushima nuclear accident in 2011, it became clear to everyone that we cannot coexist with nuclear power plants. With the opinions of the overwhelming majority of citizens and residents as a backdrop, the Innovative Energy and Environment Policy was formulated under the Democratic Party of Japan administration to realize a society that does not depend on nuclear power plants at an early stage, which stated that “no new nuclear power plants will be built” and “the maximum operating period of nuclear power plants will be 60 years. On the surface, the Abe and Kan administrations have followed this policy.

However, the Kishida administration, after a short and formal deliberation and study that lasted only six months or so, abandoned the previous policy and took a sharp turn in the direction of bailing out the declining, so-called Nuclear Power Village, a money-laden combination of industry, academia, and government.

We must never forget the fact that a huge number of residents suddenly lost their hometowns as a consequence of the Fukushima nuclear accident, and many are still forced to live in painful evacuation shelters and are unable to return to their hometowns. The revision of the law is a disregard for the lessons learned from the accident.

In Germany, nuclear power plant phase-out was achieved in April this year, without being distracted by the energy crisis caused by Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine.

Consumer Union of Japan strongly protests the Kishida administration’s shift in nuclear power policy. We also express our determination to move forward together with consumers, citizens, and many others toward the early realization of a nuclear power free society.

## **The Fukushima Contaminated Water Release: From the NGO Perspective**

**Friends of the Earth Japan:** The government trivializes the impact of releasing ALPS-treated contaminated water into the ocean as “harmful rumors.” And the media has repeatedly reported the government’s position. Little has been reported about alternatives or radioactive materials other than tritium.

The nuclear accident of 2011 was a man-made disaster, and the perpetrators were the government and TEPCO. The government’s approach, coupled with media reports, is to silence healthy debate by labeling any mention of the effects and risks of releasing radioactive materials into the ocean as nothing but “harmful rumors.”

<https://foejapan.org/en/issue/20230824/14106/>

### **Citizen’ Nuclear Information**

**Center:** Instead of releasing the water, CNIC is calling for cement solidification of ALPS treated water. The government argues that the solidification process will cause the tritium to evaporate, but this leakage is incomparable to the total release that they are insisting on, and this leakage can be easily stopped.

The government’s unilateral reneging on its written promises is an act that is both irrational and unethical, and

completely destroys trust not only in the government but in politics as well. Social norms will collapse. The government says that it will “take full responsibility for the situation, even if it takes decades to resolve,” but who can believe this?

Once again, we call for a halt to ocean discharge and a change in policy.

<https://cnic.jp/english/?p=6784>

### **Consumers Union of Japan**

**CUJ is a politically and financially independent non-governmental organization (NGO). We are funded by membership fees, sales of publications and donations.**

**CUJ was founded in April 1969 as Japan’s first nationwide grassroots consumer organization.**

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