

Reject Carbon Capture and Storage

This is a joint press release by Friends of the Earth Japan and Sahabat Alam Malaysia

Kuala Lumpur/Tokyo – Today, Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth Malaysia) and Friends of the Earth Japan, environmental organisations that are members of one of the largest grassroots environmental network Friends of the Earth International submitted an open letter to the Government of Japan and Malaysia to demand not to promote Carbon Capture and Storage as this technology only delays the real climate action, asserting that the exportation of CO₂ from the Global North to the South is a grave climate injustice.

Japan, one of the top historical emitters of CO₂, is actively considering the exporting of CO₂ to other countries including Malaysia. For example, a consortium of companies signed a Memorandum of Understanding on March 1st, 2024 to jointly study carbon capture and storage and the establishment of potential CCS value chains from carbon dioxide (CO₂) capture and accumulation in Tokyo Bay, shipping, and CO₂ storage in Malaysia. The amount of CO₂ to be captured is expected to be around 3 million to 6 million tonnes per year.

This practice does not only exacerbate the climate crisis but is fundamentally against the principle of climate justice, particularly by dumping CO₂ in countries in the Global South like Malaysia. Further, it is an unproven technology with high risk, high cost and comes with long-term liability. Relying on such technology will only delay real climate action in Japan.

Meenakshi Raman, President of Sahabat Alam Malaysia says, “The climate crisis is worsening day by day here and people in the global south are disproportionately impacted. Rich countries must pay for what they have caused and cut emissions at their ends. Now, countries like Japan are considering transferring not only responsibilities but also CO₂ itself to other countries. They are just dumping the waste in the Global South. This is ridiculous. This will undermine Malaysia's own emissions reduction efforts. Who pays for this although any payment will not guarantee safety for generations to come? We also demand that the Government of Malaysia not accept any more waste from rich countries and Malaysia should not be the world's dumping ground for any waste.”

Hamizah Shamsudeen, Climate and Energy Campaigner of Greenpeace Malaysia says, “Exporting CO₂ is equivalent to making Malaysia another dumpsite again. As a member of the Climate Action Network (CAN), Greenpeace Malaysia does not see CCS as a climate solution. Over-reliance on CCS may result in making the existing non-renewable fossil fuel sources like coal, natural gas, and petroleum seem to be possible to exist in our energy mix beyond the net zero 2050 target. Instead, the Malaysian government should divert its investment to improve policies and infrastructures, for cleaner alternatives such as solar energy and energy efficiency for a viable long-term solution for responsible, democratic, and sustainable energy transition.”

Many CCS projects in the past have failed due to the high cost and technical difficulties. The Japanese National Diet is now discussing the CCS Business Act to provide a legal framework to conduct the CCS project both domestically and overseas.

Ayumi Fukakusa, Climate Change and Energy campaigner and Deputy Executive Director of FoE Japan says “The Japanese government’s CCS policy is just a pipe dream. Current policy aims to store 120-240 million tons of CO₂ by 2050 which is equivalent to approximately 10-20% of Japan’s current emissions. There is no commercially viable project that exists in Japan yet and there are technological and financial barriers. It is a shame that the Japanese government is openly arguing that exporting CO₂ to other countries is a cheaper option. The Japanese government must set a stronger emission reduction target, based on the principles of equity and its historical responsibilities, and must stop promoting these false solutions”.

Lise Masson, Climate Justice & Energy International Programme Co-coordinator of Friends of the Earth International commented that “Carbon Capture and Storage is yet another trick by the fossil industry to carry on extracting resources that must be kept in the ground. It is a dangerous distraction from the urgent, fair and deep drastic emission cuts we need. It also carries unacceptable risks for people and the planet. When we look beyond the greenwashing smokescreen we see CCS for what it is: an unproven, costly, and dangerous industry dream that takes us further into climate breakdown.”

There is no time to waste to tackle the climate crisis. Both countries must cooperate on just, fair and equitable energy transitions.

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Please read our open letter for more details: https://consumer.org.my/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/21-March-2024-SAM-FoE-Japan-Open-Letter-Reduce-carbon-at-source_Do-not-dump-carbon-dioxide-into-Malaysia_EN.pdf

Note:

1. For more information on Japan’s CCS policy: <https://foejapan.org/en/issue/20240227/16297/>
2. In Japan, CCS Bill was submitted to the 213th Ordinary Diet Session and is currently being debated.