PRESS RELEASE
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New Japanese Poll: Aso Government Failing on Climate Change

As Election Approaches, New Poll and Manga Ad Campaign Say Japanese Voters Favor a 25% or Higher 2020 Emissions Reduction Target

A recently completed nationally representative survey of 976 Japanese of voting age has found a resounding mandate for ambitious climate action, and widespread dissatisfaction with the Aso cabinet's current performance on the issue.

The survey, conducted by internationally renowned polling firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner, found that more than six in ten Japanese favor a 2020 emissions reduction target of 25% or greater under 1990 levels (63%), say the Aso government isn't doing enough to combat climate change (62%), and believe that an ambitious 2020 target would help the economy (61%). More in-depth results and description of the survey methodology are included in a findings memo from Greenberg Quinlan Rosner, included below. Importantly, support for ambitious climate policy cuts across all party lines, with strong majorities of Mr Aso's base agreeing with the consensus for ambitious climate action.

"This survey demonstrates the massive miscalculation that PM Aso and the Keidanren have made", said Ricken Patel, Executive Director of Avaaz.org. "The Japanese public know that ambitious climate policy is not only good for the environment, but is critical for Japan's international reputation and Japan's economy. They are not going to be fooled by self-interested polluters."

Prime Minister Taro Aso, a member of the ruling political party LDP, is considering a range of 6 possible 2020 emissions reduction targets, ranging all the way from a 4% increase from 1990 levels to a 25% decrease from 1990 levels. The main industry association, the Keidanren, has called for the weakest target of 4% increase from 1990 levels. Meanwhile, the main opposition party, DPJ, has called for a 25% target. Scientists around the world say that developed countries like Japan must cut emissions by 25-40% from 1990 levels by 2020 in order to avoid catastrophic climate change of more than 2 degrees Celsius. Aso is expected to announce the target in the middle of June. An election is slated to take place by September.

"This survey shows that the Japanese people demand strong climate action, in line with what the science shows is necessary," said Kim Carstensen, Leader of WWF's Global Climate Initiative. "Prime Minister Taro Aso would do himself an electoral disservice by choosing a weak 2020 target, which would provide ammunition to the opposition DPJ in the election. Given the support for strong climate action among Mr Aso's base, LDP voters, the only political incentive Mr Aso can have for weak climate policy is to kowtow to rich corporate polluters."

The release of this survey coincides with the launch of a major media campaign around Japan's 2020 targets by global advocacy group Avaaz.org and international climate campaign tcktcktck.org. The campaign includes a full-page ad in Nikkei, Japan's largest business newspaper, and a front-page ad in the European edition of the Financial Times, both on June 2. The campaign is timed to coincide with the intersessional negotiations of the UNFCCC in Bonn, Germany, from June 1-June 13. The ads can be viewed at www.avaaz.org/japan_climate_poll.

The Nikkei ad features Prime Minister Taro Aso as a manga comic character "Aso Robo", who is fighting the twin monsters of climate change and recession. The ad calls on Mr Aso to use his best available weapon – a 25% emissions cut – to fend off the monsters. Mr Aso is well-known for his hobby of reading manga. The ad campaign will continue to run on June 10, when it will appear in the manga comic book Big Comic. "This message for Mr. Aso is so important that we expressed it in manga, to make sure that he wouldn't miss it," said Mr. Patel. "If Mr. Aso has ever wanted to be a hero like in a manga comic, setting a 25% or higher 2020 target is his chance."

The survey was commissioned by a coalition of Japanese and international civil society groups, including Avaaz.org (www.avaaz.org), Kiko Network (www.kikonet.org), WWF Japan (www.wwf.or.jp). Their call for Japan to set strong 2020 climate targets in line with climate science is supported by over 250,000 Avaaz members in 192 countries. For more information about Copenhagen and global climate change negotiations, also visit www.tcktcktck.org.

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GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

June 1, 2009

Re: Japanese public opinion on climate change policy

To: Interested Parties

From: Masahiko Aida

Survey Methodology

International polling firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner (Washington DC, USA) conducted a telephone survey research of nationally representative Japanese citizen of 20 years and the older with random digit dialing sampling frame. The fielding period was between 16th of May to 25th of May, and total of 976 respondents were interviewed. Adams Communication (Tokyo, Japan) conducted the actual telephone interviews using CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing).

Summary

This survey on Japanese public opinion around climate change reveals wide support for strong action to combat climate change and create a new clean energy economy. In particular, large majorities of voting-age Japanese consider Prime Minister Taro Aso's policies on climate change to date to be inadequate, favor an ambitious 25% or greater 2020 emissions reduction target, and believe that such a target would help the economy. In the context of the upcoming Japanese election, these findings suggest that politicians could be well-served to drastically ratchet up Japan's international leadership on the pressing global threat of catastrophic climate change. Our key findings are below:

Key Findings

1. Across the political spectrum, Japanese voters are unhappy with the Aso government's climate change policies, with fully 62% of respondents saying that Aso should do more to combat climate change, compared to only 7% who thought his climate policies were too strong. Moreover, even among Aso's base – those who say they intend to vote for the LDP – a clear majority (58%) say that Aso should do more to combat climate change,

2. Japanese voters widely favor a strong 2020 target of 25% or higher emissions reductions from 1990 levels by 2020. When presented with the short, basic argument for both a weak target and a strong target, 62 percent described the target as about right (41 percent) or not strong enough (22 percent). Only 30 percent believe the target is too strong. Once again, support for 25% or higher targets crosscuts party lines, with a stunning 62% of LDP supporters supporting a 25% or stronger target.

3. Japanese voters' support for strong climate policies stem from their beliefs that these policies are essential for both Japan's economy and its international reputation. 61% of voters say that ambitious 2020 targets would help the Japanese economy, while only 28% say ambitious targets would hurt the Japanese economy. Meanwhile, fully 85% say it is important for Japan to be seen as a world leader in combating climate change.

Survey Results

Do you believe that the Aso government should do more to combat climate change, do less to combat climate change, or should keep doing the same amount to combat climate change?

	Total	LDP Supporters	DPJ Supporters
More to combat climate change	62	58	67
Less to combat climate change	7	5	7
Keep doing the same amount	26	37	23
(Don't know/refused)	4	1	3

How important do you think it is for Japan to be seen as a world leader in combating climate change? Would you say it is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not important at all?

	Total	LDP Supporters	DPJ Supporters
Very important	47	54	49
Somewhat important	38	33	36
Not too important	11	10	13
Not important at all	3	4	2
(Don't know/refused)	1	1	1

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You may have heard that Prime Minister Aso will soon be setting a target for cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. The government has proposed a range of 6 possible targets, from 4 percent higher than 1990 levels to 25 percent lower than 1990 levels.

Some Japanese corporations argue that Japan is already so efficient that keeping emissions at 4 percent over 1990 levels is enough.

Meanwhile, climate scientists around the world say that cuts of 25 percent from countries like Japan are needed to prevent dangerous levels of climate change.

Do you think that the proposal for a 25 percent cut would be too strong, about right, or not strong enough?

	Total	LDP Supporters	DPJ Supporters
Too strong	30	33	34
About right	41	38	45
Not strong enough	22	24	16
(Don't know/refused)	8	4	5

From what you happen to know now, do you think that setting a strong, ambitious 2020 emissions target would be more likely to help the economy or hurt the economy?

	Total	LDP Supporters	DPJ Supporters
Help the economy	61	67	61
Hurt the economy	28	28	31
(Don't know/refused)	11	5	8

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About Greenberg Quinlan Rosner

Greenberg Quinlan Rosner is the world's leading polling and strategic consulting firm for international issue campaigns and political leaders, helping causes and candidates around the world campaign and win. We bring unmatched insight and experience, based on work in over 80 countries, to help our international clients assess the political landscape and develop campaign strategy. We help leaders modernize and reform their parties, coalitions, and countries, making them more effective both on the campaign trail and in office.

The scope and success of Greenberg Quinlan Rosner's work for progressive international political leaders is clear from our record: US President Bill Clinton's 1992 victory; all three victories of Tony Blair and the British Labour Party; the 1998 victory that elected Gerhard Schroeder; the presidential victories of Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki; the 1999 and 2001 campaigns of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak; the 2002 victory of Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada; the successful presidential campaign of Honduran president Mel Zelaya in 2005; and the upset victory of the Austrian SPO in 2006. Currently, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner is working with the Republic of Georgia President, Mikhael Saakashvili.

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Bio

Masahiko Aida
Director of Analytics

Masahiko Aida, a native of Japan, specializes in micro-targeting, survey methodology, analysis of large scale political database and the operations research. His clients include AFL-CIO, Women's Voices. Women Vote, National Education Association, Rock the Vote and America Votes. He provides strategic guidance in persuasion contacts, GOTV campaigns and advocacy outreach using his in-depth understanding of micro-targeting, modeling and statistical data analysis.

Aida also trains and guides other research staff in various aspects of the U.S. and international political surveys in cutting edge research technologies that GQR has begun integrating into much of its research, including cell phone sampling, multi-modal research, sampling of difficult-to-reach populations, analysis of census data and use of IVR for data collection.

Additionally Aida is a frequent presenter to the analytic community in Washington, D.C. and American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) conferences. He has published peer reviewed articles in the field of political science, social psychology, public health and co-authored book chapters for political psychology and statistical methodology textbooks. Aida received his Masters of Science in survey methodology from the University of Michigan, as well as his Masters of Arts in social psychology from the University of Tokyo, and Bachelor of Arts in social psychology from the University of Tokyo.

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