



Title	Japanese policymakers' and media perspectives on climate change policy : Does international contribution dominate the discussion?
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Abstract of Thesis

Name (Monika Ostrowska)	
Title	Japanese policymakers' and media perspectives on climate change policy: Does international contribution dominate the discussion? (政策決定者とメディアの観点から見た日本の気候変動政策－議論の中心は国際貢献なのか。)
<p>Abstract of Thesis</p> <p>Climate change is an issue that requires increasing commitment from developed and developing countries in tackling domestic greenhouse gases emissions and shifting to renewable sources of energy, and also in enhancing international cooperation. The issue appeared on the agenda of Japanese policymakers and media in the late 1980s, at the time when global warming just started getting attention worldwide. This early interest in the problem translated for Japan in associating climate change with international cooperation and contribution through development assistance and technology transfer. Mainstream media explored the issue from scientific mechanism and projected impacts point of view, gradually shifting towards increasing coverage of need for domestic policy and also coverage of international developments. With gradual development of domestic policy, Japan has continued to put international contribution high on the political agenda. As the result, Japan has been one of the biggest donors to international funds for mitigation and adaptation in developing countries, and invested in scientific projects to assess scale of the problem. On the other hand, proponents of early shift to low carbon energy sources have been critical of Japan's involvement in funding coal power plants in developing countries. Domestically, high energy efficiency achieved after oil shocks by the industry has been seen as an already made effort in tackling climate change, and rise in emissions due to increasing energy consumption was to be remedied by nuclear power. To meet the Kyoto target, Japan relied on offsets through the Clean Development Mechanism and domestic forest sinks, and decision of non-participation in the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol was announced in 2010, several months before the nuclear accident in Fukushima. The treaty was perceived as ineffective and unfair, and the increasing dependence on procuring offsets from China was not the desirable situation for the next 8 years of extended treaty. Instead, the government launched its own initiative JCM to secure bilateral offsets and provide technology to developing countries. Domestically, mitigation of greenhouse emissions has become complicated by the nuclear power shutdown which was the outcome of the accident and public opposition. Although the mitigation target became drastically lower, there has been much more attention to renewable energy than before the nuclear crisis.</p> <p>The main purpose of this research is to explore the domestic debate on climate change in policymakers' statements and in media coverage, and to answer the question whether attention to climate change international contribution has changed over the years in comparison to attention to domestic mitigation efforts. Both domestic action and international contribution are necessary ingredients of global warming countermeasures. However, there is an impression that attention to domestic mitigation efforts has been declining in Japan. At the same time, the government continues to offer financial assistance to developing countries and promotes climate change cooperation through various initiatives. The main research question of this dissertation is whether international contribution dominated the discussion on climate change in Japan. The goal is to find out if policymakers' and media attention to domestic policy and international contribution changed, and whether the focus of the public debate in Japan shifted from domestic mitigation to international contribution.</p>	

論文審査の結果の要旨及び担当者

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論文審査の結果の要旨

This thesis is a comprehensive analysis of the changes in policy and media attention in Japan regarding climate change. With the opening observation that interest in climate change has fallen in recent years, and the suspicion that attention is focused on international contributions made by the Japanese government, rather than on the issue of domestic commitment to the reduction of greenhouse emissions and the expansion of renewable energy sources, the thesis aims to determine at what point (and for what reasons) did interest decline, and to determine whether international contribution has indeed dominated the discussion on climate change in Japan.

The thesis begins with an introductory chapter that introduces the issue, the hypothesis, and the methodology, as well as offering a literature review on the issues raised. Chapter 2 offers a systematic and sober assessment of Japan's performance in terms of its response to climate change and the policies it has implemented in this regard at a domestic level, culminating in the failure of the climate change bill in 2010. This is largely an overview chapter, but the discussion of how energy efficiency should be assessed shows that the assessment of performance is not as simple as it may appear. Chapter 3 is another overview chapter, this time focusing on Japan's foreign policy regarding climate change. It traces Japan's participation in the UNFCCC, and also explores Japan's financing for climate change policies and joint crediting mechanisms.

Chapter four offers an analysis of Japanese policymakers' attention to climate change, which is comprised of a quantitative examination of the statements by prime ministers since the mid-1990s, attention to climate change in the Diet, and the expressions relating to climate change by political parties, primarily through their election manifestos. Prime ministers' statements were examined using a content analysis, in which the specific issues (divided into domestic and international levels) that were raised were counted and chronologically graphed, allowing readers to pinpoint the prioritization (or the lack thereof) of certain aspects of climate change by the country's leaders. We see a similar analysis applied to the questions submitted by parliamentarians to the prime minister regarding the issue of climate change. Finally, analysis of the stance of political parties regarding climate change, including an examination of change over time, is presented.

Chapter five examines the media coverage of climate change in a quantitative and comprehensive manner. It shows the change in the climate change-related topics that are the subject of editorials in four major national newspapers, before engaging in a more detailed and focused analysis of coverage by the Asahi Shimbun since the mid-1980s. The analyses reveals peaks of coverage surrounding the 1997 adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, and again between 2007 and 2009, representing several climate change-related events, as the Kyoto Protocol came to an end. In many ways the levels of media coverage mirrored the attention to the issue by policymakers.

This thesis is filled with quantitative data measuring trends over time relating to the various issues surrounding climate change, at both domestic and international levels. Although it does not go as far as demonstrating conclusive links between policymaker and media attention – agenda-setting – the data does strongly suggest an overall policy-led influence. It shows that both policy and media interest were lost well before the East Japan Disaster of 2011, and that policy attention did appear to be focused on international contribution, rather than domestic issues. As an academically solid thesis offering an original and convincing argument backed by copious quantitative and qualitative (interview and literature) data, we believe that this thesis qualifies at a level required for that of a Ph.D. thesis.