

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

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## 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](http://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](http://www.avaaz.org)), Kiko Network ([www.kikonet.org](http://www.kikonet.org)), WWF Japan ([www.wwf.or.jp](http://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](http://www.tcktcktck.org).

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