

“The 34th Clean Coal Day International Symposium” & “The Energy Security with Decarbonization Symposium 2025”

『Decarbonization and Just Energy Transitions』 &『Coal Strategy for a New Era - The Role of Coal in Energy Security』

On Thursday of September 4, 2025, we Japan Carbon Frontier Organization (JCOAL), with co-organized by Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO), Japan Organization for Metals and Energy Security (JOGMEC), held the 34th Clean Coal Day International Symposium as an in-person event, as supported by embassies of 12 countries located in Tokyo, including the 3 state of Australia, the Global CCS Institute (GCCSI), Ube City, and Kushiro City. On the following Friday, September 5th, 2025, we held the Energy Security with Decarbonization Symposium 2025 with co-organized by Japan Organization for Metals and Energy Security (JOGMEC).

A total of 2,700 participants from 24 countries representatives' industries, governments, and academia participated in the symposium. The symposium included presentations from the major coal-producing/consuming countries such as US, India, China, Australia, Poland, South Africa, Malaysia etc. as well as relevant institutions and companies, and the international Energy Agency (IEA), Global CCS Institute (GCCSI), Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), FutureCoal Global Alliance (FutureCoal), ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE), VGBE Energy e.V. (VGBE), and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan and academic societies participated. Many active and fruitful discussions were made with a variety of information and opinions. JCOAL has released JCOAL's Statement below.

JCOAL STATEMENT

👉 Redefinition of the Role of Coal Amid Surging Global Energy and Power Demand

- Amid global uncertainty around energy supply-demand incurred by international conflicts such as the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the resurging conflict in the Middle East, and associating food and supplies shortages, the world has come to revisit the role of coal in the context of energy security. Also, the U.S. Trump administration's policy direction endorsing fossil fuels remind the global society of the importance and expected role of coal in addressing the surging energy demand. In the power sector, in addition, the rapid global expansion of AI and data centers is pushing up power demand, and further demand increase is expected globally.
- In view of the above situation, we believe it the optimal choice for countries to try keeping a diverse energy mix including coal based on availability and affordability, instead of eliminating the potential of coal-fired power generation that also offers decarbonization in combination with proven low-carbon and decarbonization technologies. Needless to say, decarbonization efforts by introducing more progressive technology as time proceeds for accelerated realistic energy transition is crucial. Ensuring supply chain of coal resources is a must, as coal is to play its role in energy transition.

👉 Early Implementation of Innovative Decarbonization and Low-Carbon Technologies

- In order to accelerate decarbonization in realistic manner, countries are to make efforts in enhancing the power systems while ensuring efficiency and flexibility enhancement as well as environmental improvement of coal-fired power plants; reducing CO₂ emissions by co-firing or exclusive firing of biomass and/or ammonia as an alternative to coal; hydrogen reduction in the steelmaking field; capturing, and utilization of carbon into valuable products (carbon recycling/CCU); and carbon capture and storage (CCS). While many of relevant technologies are proven, further bilateral and/or multilateral efforts are important, for making more innovative low-carbon and decarbonization technologies affordable through supporting policies and policy instruments.

👉 Promotion of International Collaboration with Tangible Outcomes

- Since carbon neutrality must be targeted and achieved jointly on a global scale, countries and regions, governments, organizations and companies, and different sectors are to proceed energy transition pathways in well-coordinated collaboration.
- In emerging economies like ASEAN countries, coal-fired power plants are relatively new and are expected to continue to support their steady economic growth. Where applicable, upgrading existing power plants to be more efficient and environmentally compliant is required, in view of the potential of coal-fired power plants as balancing sources to ensure grid stability while massive introduction of variable renewable energy (VRE) proceeds and other balancing sources as well as batteries are not sufficient in terms of scale to address possible fluctuation.
- For such actions as part of the entire energy transitional efforts, international and inter-organizational collaboration for optimal utilization of existing infrastructure, as well as the establishment of financial frameworks such as transition finance schemes and national/regional carbon market, are quite important.
- In this regard, the roles of international frameworks such as the Asia CCUS Network and the Asia Zero Emissions Community (AZEC) are crucial and shall be further enhanced.
- JCOAL is determined to undertake its role as a part of the global community jointly working for carbon neutrality. Holding a post-conference webinar in collaboration with our long-standing partner ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) is one of the earliest actions after the symposiums. The webinar is intended for focused and intensive discussions with ASEAN stakeholders and Japanese organizations and companies with technologies, to further a few important issues identified as the most relevant to ASEAN context, for the sake of accelerated joint implementation of decarbonization projects in ASEAN countries.