



## **Joint Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Committee on Regulatory Cooperation under the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership**

**Video Conference, 16 March 2021**

The second meeting of the Committee on Regulatory Cooperation under the Agreement between the European Union (“EU”) and Japan for an Economic Partnership (“EPA”) took place on 16 March 2021 via a video conference.

On Japan’s side, representatives from MOFA, METI, MAFF, MLIT, MHLW and the Mission of Japan to the EU participated in the meeting. On the EU side, the Directorates-General TRADE, ENER, GROW, SANTE and the EU Delegation to Japan were represented.

The meeting agenda was adopted (cf. annex).

The Committee confirmed that, for the time being, it would continue work in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Joint Committee adopted on 10 April 2019, which would apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Following their initial discussion at the first meeting of the Committee, both sides further exchanged views as regards the engagement with stakeholders on regulatory cooperation issues. Both sides confirmed their intention to consider and discuss proposals from interested stakeholders, such as the EU-Japan Business Round Table (BRT) Joint Recommendations on possible cooperation initiatives. The EU side described its initial assessment of the main points set out in the 2020 BRT Joint Recommendations and proposed to envisage a joint debriefing to the BRT. The Japanese side responded that it would consider the EU proposal, underlining its frequent consultations with private sector including BRT.

Both sides presented their respective practices as regards regulatory impact assessments, in the light of the relevant EPA provision. In addition, the EU side referred to the Sustainability Impact Assessments that it carries out when undertaking the negotiation of major trade agreements.

The EU side presented an ongoing project on the possible use of blockchain technology in the context of international trade, which should lead to the launching of a demonstration pilot project in the near future. The EU side expressed its readiness to consider a joint pilot project with Japan, if there is interest. Broader efforts are being made within the “European Blockchain Services Infrastructure” network. The Japanese side referred to private initiatives in the area of blockchain technology to make trade-related operation or financial transaction efficient. It recalled the G-20 discussions in relation to the financial industry and it referred to the meeting of the “Blockchain Governments Initiative Network” as a platform for governments to discuss opportunities for cooperation with various stakeholders.

Both sides discussed certain issues concerning the deployment of offshore wind power in Japan, against the background of the envisaged increase of capacity in the context of Japan’s “Green Growth Strategy Through Achieving Carbon Neutrality”. The EU side requested clarifications as regards standards, conformity assessment and the implications of some auctioning criteria for foreign companies. The EU side furthermore made a presentation on best practices on offshore wind power auctioning based on its experience. Japan provided initial explanations on the issues raised. Both sides confirmed that the EU would send a detailed questionnaire and Japan would provide replies in writing. Moreover, both sides confirmed that dedicated workshops under the EU-Japan Energy dialogue facilitated by the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation would take place on 26-28 April, with a view to discussing policy and regulatory aspects, opportunities for a Party’s operator to participate in the other Party’s market, Business-to-Business facilitation as well as opportunities for cooperation in third countries.

Following the initial discussions at the first meeting of the Committee in 2020, both sides discussed on the preparation of a list or compilation of regulatory cooperation activities carried out under the EPA. The work will be taken forward jointly. Each side will provide initial input covering the activities of the committees and working groups whose meeting it hosted.

At the request of Japan, the EU side provided information as regards the work to develop a legislative instrument to counteract economic coercion in international relations.

Notwithstanding the scope of the committee under Section A of Chapter 18 of the EPA, the EU and Japan had an initial exchange of views as regards cooperation on animal welfare, which would be pursued further through the appropriate channels.

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