



Joint Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Committee on Trade and Sustainable Development under the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership

Online, 2 October 2025

The sixth meeting of the Committee on Trade and Sustainable Development (CTSD) under the Agreement between the European Union (EU) and Japan for an Economic Partnership (EPA) took place on 2 October 2025 via videoconference.

EU participants from the Directorates-General TRADE, ENV, CLIMA, EMPL, MOVE, JUST and from the EU Delegation to Japan, and Japanese participants from MOFA, MAFF, MHLW, MLIT, METI and MOE, as well as the Japanese Mission to the EU had a fruitful exchange of views on matters related to Chapter 16 (Trade and Sustainable Development) of the EPA.

## **1. OPENING AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The EU welcomed the new Japanese co-chair of the Committee of Trade and Sustainable Development (CTSD). Both parties reflected positively on the 6<sup>th</sup> Joint Dialogue with Civil Society (JDACS) in June and noted that the change of sequence allowed the CTSD's agenda to align with the topics discussed at the JDACS. Both sides stressed their commitment to ensuring effective implementation of the TSD chapter.

Following this, the agenda for the meeting was adopted (cf. attachment).

## **2. PROCEDURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ITEMS**

Japan up-dated on internal preparations towards an appropriate nomination for a chairperson of the panel, pursuant to Article 16.18 paragraph 4(d) of the EPA. The EU stated that it would be awaiting the Japanese proposal for replacement in order to react and to proceed with the necessary procedures as appropriate.

### **3. TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING TRADE AND CLIMATE ACTION**

#### **Update on the development on trade and environment, incl. trade and climate action, and feedback on the discussion at the JDCS**

Both sides reflected on recent developments in environment matters, noting in particular the discussions in the JDCS on green shipping corridors, circular economy and the Green Alliance.

- Green shipping corridors:

The EU and Japan confirmed green shipping corridors as an important area of cooperation to make trade more sustainable. This includes cooperation in the bilateral and plurilateral (G7) context as well as in the International Maritime Organization, with an up-coming vote on the Net-Zero Framework, which both sides support. Green transition and just transition are interlinked in this area as maritime professions need to adapt.

- Circular economy:

Both sides welcomed the recent high-level exchanges between Commissioner Roswall and Environment Minister Asao and the launch of the Working Group on circular economy in the framework of the cooperation between the Directorate General for Environment (DG ENV) and the Ministry of Environment. The EU provided an update on the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), on the Digital Product Passport, the Batteries Regulation and the End-of-life Vehicle (ELV) Regulation. Japan raised some concerns about the latter as well as the ESPR, ELV Regulation, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), and the Recycled Plastics for Food Contact Regulation. On the latter the EU responded including by noting recent exchanges and the importance of the public consultations ahead of the rolling out of concrete solutions in the upcoming legislation. The EU side noted the strong economic potential of cooperation in bioeconomy.

- Green Alliance, in particular ETS and CCUS

The EU noted the EU-Japan Green Alliance as a useful framework of cooperation, high level engagements over the last 18 months and the increasing focus on the competitiveness-climate nexus. On the Emission

Trading System (ETS), the EU welcomed Japan moving towards a mandatory system and offered to share its experience in this area. On Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage (CCUS), both sides noted its important potential to achieve the 2050 carbon neutrality target. On climate change adaptation both sides noted the potential of increased cooperation, including on making the business case of climate adaptation. On CBAM, the EU responded to Japan's concerns, noting its objective of preventing carbon leakage while not imposing an obstacle on trade. Both appreciated and expressed willingness to keep good ongoing exchanges.

#### **4. TRADE AND LABOUR**

##### **Updates on the development on trade and labour, including on the ratification and implementation of ILO conventions, incl. ratification of C111 and C155, and feedback to the discussion under the JDCS**

Both sides exchanged information on recent developments on trade and labour and engaged in fruitful discussion on some salient points.

The EU congratulated Japan on its decision to ratify C155 and underscored its strong commitment in this area, up-dating on recent ratifications of conventions C155 and C187 by some Member States. Both sides welcomed the cooperation on occupational safety and health matters, including during the recent EU-Japan Labour Symposium, and the Japan-organized World Expo's Safety, Health and Well-being Days. Safe and healthy work remains a shared priority.

Both sides presented key policy initiatives and priorities in fields of employment and social affairs and cooperation projects on labour rights in Asia, and expressed interest in regular information sharing on cooperation projects looking for synergies. The EU noted concerns about C87 in relation to effective implementation of freedom of association for firefighter and prison officers and inquired about progress towards C111 ratification by Japan. Japan confirmed ongoing consultations on C111 and showed openness to further cooperation in the ILO context. The EU side presented the progress with the preparatory work for the implementation of the EU Regulation on forced labour products. Japan confirmed its interest in

continuing exchanging information on forced labour issues.

## **5. CROSS-CUTTING ASPECTS OF TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Updates on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)/ Responsible Business Conduct (RBC)**

Both parties reviewed the discussions on these matters at the JDCS.

- CSDDD, CSRD and the Omnibus

The EU provided an up-date on omnibus while highlighting that the core objectives of the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) remain untouched. Japan acknowledged the past EU engagement with Japan's industry and expressed hope that this would continue once the CSDDD guidelines are published, which the EU confirmed. On Japan's concerns as regards implications for SMEs, the EU side confirmed that this aspect is duly considered in the ongoing simplification. Japan reported on human rights standards having been introduced in public procurement processes in 2023. It also shared the latest information on the update by Japanese companies of the voluntary standards on Business and Human Rights after the publication of national guidelines in 2022. Japan further provided up-dated information on its Business and Human Rights-related capacity building activities, particularly in South-East Asia. In terms of coordination with the OECD, it was recognized that ensuring interoperability across due diligence policies is an important area of cooperation.

## **6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

The EU side recalled the 2022 TSD communication, noted progress made in the area of Occupational Safety and Health and engagement with civil society and suggested to reflect this in future minutes. Japan suggested to discuss this further in the next CTSD.

Both sides noted the productive meeting and confirmed that they would continue to work together in close coordination for the next JDCS and CTSD meetings.

# **EU- JAPAN ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (EPA)**

## **6TH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2 OCTOBER 2025 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

### **AGENDA**

#### **1. OPENING AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

#### **2. PROCEDURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ITEMS**

#### **3. TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING TRADE AND CLIMATE ACTION**

Update on the development on trade and environment (incl. trade and climate action) and feedback on the discussion at the JDCS

#### **4. TRADE AND LABOUR**

Updates on the development on trade and labour, including on the ratification and implementation of ILO conventions, and feedback to the discussion under the JDCS.

#### **5. CROSS-CUTTING ASPECTS OF TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Updates on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)/ Responsible Business Conduct (RBC)

#### **6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**