

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

21 April 2026 (videoconference)

The seventh 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 21 April 2026 via videoconference.

The EU side hosted the meeting. They were represented by their Directorates-General for Climate Action, Energy, Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Trade, and the EU Delegation to Japan. The attached agenda was adopted. The Japanese delegation consisted of participants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), and the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy (ANRE), and the Mission of Japan to the EU.

The EU side acknowledged the progress achieved on the reform of **offshore wind auctioning rules** in Japan and asked to clarify the timelines for further steps concerning the first, second, and third auctioning rounds. They expressed concerns regarding the emphasis on domestic supply chains in the evaluation criteria under revision and recalled the benefits that a level playing field for the EU industry with their long-standing experience would bring. European companies should be viewed as long-term partners rather than just suppliers. Regarding the possible introduction of a price band mechanism where a weaker price scoring could be compensated by a higher feasibility score, they also stressed the importance of setting a meaningful floor price to ensure the viability of future projects. In this context, the EU side also asked when such floor price would be set. Moreover, they asked whether measures such as access to the Long Term Decarbonization Power Source Auction (LTDA), the facilitation of base port usage, increased flexibility on supplier modification (post-award) were still under consideration, and suggested follow-up meetings at working level with ANRE on these matters.

The Japanese side confirmed that for future auctions emphasis would be put on feasibility and deliverability and that excessively low bids should be discouraged. They stressed that bidders would have to set contingency periods to manage potential delays and risks. Developers in auction rounds 2 and 3 would be allowed to participate in LTDA to ensure stable revenue. The specific timing for re-tendering auctions had not yet been determined, and a public consultation would be held before. They concurred to hold a technical meeting to share experience from European auctions.

The EU side reiterated their long-standing concerns about **access to construction vessels** and expressed the view that the amendment of the Ministerial Ordinance for Enforcement of the

Ship Act in June 2025 did not fully address the needs of developers, particularly regarding predictability in times of scarcity of vessels, exacerbated by the possible overlap of the construction of projects auctioned in rounds 1 to 3 as well as by the absence of a sufficient pool of qualified workers in Japan. The Japanese side explained that the amendment aimed to improve procedural clarity and predictability within the existing cabotage framework, including by allowing comprehensive applications for special permissions and clarifying application procedures. The Japanese side further noted that the revision constitutes a starting point for practical implementation and expressed its willingness to continue constructive dialogue, taking into account evolving project conditions.

The EU side commended Japan for passing the EEZ Bill in 2025 and confirmed their interest to support the **deployment of floating offshore wind farms** in Japan, for instance through industry partnerships, discussion on standards, R&D projects or under the EU-Japan Green Alliance. However, they pointed to important challenges, in particular that technical requirements for the certification of floating structures in Japan are equivalent to those of manned facilities, leading to significant constraints. They also recalled that for floating structures, requirements such as those relating to earthquakes or complex ground conditions should not remain Japan-specific as standardisation would bring significant benefits to both Japan and the EU.

The Japanese side explained that the Floating Offshore Wind Technology Research Association (FLOWRA) provides a forum for industrial collaboration in this regard and that MoUs had been signed with some Member States.

The Japanese side noted concerns on the lack of F-gas alternatives for split heat pump systems of small-middle capacities (6-12kW), amplified by the current legal uncertainty about the future restrictions on the use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The Japanese side emphasized its expectation that the regulations, particularly the requirement for split-type Air to Air (ATA) units of 12 kW or less to comply with a Global Warming Potential (GWP) threshold of 150 or below from 2029, will be revised to reflect practical realities more accurately. They also asked which methodology Japanese companies could use to apply for the exemption under Article 11(2) of the F-gas Regulation which allows the placing on the market of prohibited products and equipment where alternative (i.e. non-F-gas) solutions are less energy efficient.

The EU side clarified that the Commission was continuously checking the availability of alternatives in various sectors and that all F-gas prohibitions and restrictions would be reviewed by 2030 if needed. In case of lacking alternatives in certain exceptional cases for a specific type of equipment, Article 11(5), not Article 11(2), may be triggered in order to allow for a temporary delay of a prohibition in a given case. This was already applied in some cases¹. Where safety standards prohibit the use of an F-gas alternative, without action under its Article 11(5), the Regulation already allows the placing on the market of the F-gas-containing equipment. They also recalled that the EU applied the precautionary principle as stipulated by EU legislation, and that the draft opinion of its Committee for Socio-Economic Analysis (SEAC) on the

¹ https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/fluorinated-greenhouse-gases/documentation/f-gas-legislation_en

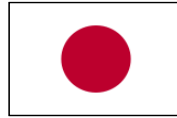
proposed restriction of PFAS was currently under public consultation (open until 25 May 2026). Finally, they explained that Article 11(2) could currently not be applied because EU eco-design rules did not establish that any F-gas alternatives were less energy efficient. Alternative substances, like propane, were much more efficient.

The Japanese side expressed concerns about EU regulation on **Multi-walled Carbon (Nano)Tubes (MWC(N)Ts)**. They challenged the identification of the entire group of substances as carcinogenic and called for a separate assessment and treatment of different kinds of MWC(N)Ts. They were also concerned about measurability. They further sought reassurance that a more comprehensive assessment would be conducted, if regulatory measures addressing industrial uses of MWC(N)Ts were to be considered.

The EU side recalled that most MWC(N)Ts were classified as carcinogenic and that current restrictions applied to consumer use and mixtures, not to products for industrial or professional use. The EU side offered to follow up bilaterally should time not have been sufficient in the meeting. They reassured the Japanese side that if challenges were to arise from the measurement of different MWC(N)Ts in mixtures in the implementation of the restriction, they would be open to engage with stakeholders to discuss possible solutions.

Both sides will work towards holding the **next Committee meeting** in Q1/2027.

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**Seventh Meeting of the Committee on Regulatory Cooperation
under the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an
Economic Partnership**

21 April 2026 (videoconference)

Agenda

- 1. Opening remarks**
- 2. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 3. Offshore Wind Power**
- 4. F-gas Regulation**
- 5. Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council**
- 6. Closing remarks**