



The Climate Emergency Declaration of Hokuei Town (Tottori Prefecture)

All over the world, record-breaking high temperatures, heavy rainfalls, large-scale droughts and other such extreme weather events are increasing in intensity and frequency. The WMO (World Meteorological Organization) has indicated that these increasing trends are associated with long-term global warming trends. In recent years, weather disasters such as extreme heat, large typhoons, and torrential rains have frequently occurred in Japan, and our town is also affected by them.

Climate change is an extremely serious problem that results in the intensification of severe weather disasters, the degradation of natural environments and ecosystems, increased health risks, and adverse effects on agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and it is a dilemma that will fundamentally shake the foundations of human survival.

The Paris Agreement, an international framework to globally respond to the threat of climate change, aims to suppress the global average temperature rise well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and, at the same time, to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. According to the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) 1.5°C Special Report published in October 2018, the global temperature rise has already reached about 1.0°C, and in order to keep global warming at 1.5°C, anthropogenic CO₂ emissions need to be reduced to essentially zero by about 2050.

Since the extent of the temperature rise is determined by the cumulative emissions of CO₂ from the past to the future, in order to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement, it is essential that all involved parties throughout the world immediately take drastic reduction measures and to continue to advance those measures. In addition, appropriately designed climate change countermeasures, such as the promotion of renewable energy and energy conservation, extend virtuous cycles to local economies, lead to solutions regarding economic and social issues, and also contribute to the achievement of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).

Our town is blessed with natural environments of fertile black soil and sand dunes that spread across the beautiful landscape of white sandy beaches dotted with green pine trees. A large variety of sought-after agricultural products have been produced from these areas, and it is necessary for the next generation to also be able to inherit this rich environment. Furthermore, our town is also a place that has been actively engaged in environmental policies, including the operation of nine wind turbine power generation facilities, and has a strong will to combat climate change.

Due to the above circumstances, our town recognizes that climate change is a significant threat to mankind, hereby declares a climate emergency here, and will aim to achieve zero-carbon (net zero emissions of anthropogenic CO₂) by 2050 by pursuing efforts in the following areas:

1. Hokuei Town will promote thorough energy conservation and maximize the use of renewable energy. These efforts will lead to economic and social issue solutions, such as the creation of mechanisms for cycling funds in the region and the construction of decentralized energy systems that are useful for disaster prevention. In addition, we will endeavor to establish mechanisms for active participation by our townspeople, and strive to collaborate with various entities, such as businesses and related local governments.
2. Hokuei Town will pursue efforts to raise awareness and educate people about climate change issues, further promote energy conservation and the comprehensive use of the 4Rs in daily life, encourage people to live in energy-saving houses with high-performance thermal insulation, support ethical consumption habits such as “local production for local consumption,” and encourage comfortable and attractive lifestyles that contribute to the success of climate change countermeasures.
3. Hokuei Town will protect the sacred connections between high-quality forests, rivers, fields and the sea through such actions as appropriately managing forest resources, including the use of biomass resources, and maintaining farmland appropriately, and we will continue to pass on the rich natural environment here to the next generation.
4. In order for the government to take initiative and set an example, Hokuei Town will conduct comprehensive reviews of the local government implementation plan based on the Act on Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures, implement the management of public facilities and infrastructures with sustainable development in mind, and also design policies to help combat climate change in all administrative areas of our town. In addition, we will actively call on the Japanese government and other local governments regarding further measures to combat climate change, and will collaborate extensively toward achieving these aims.

December 20, 2019

Akio Matsumoto
Mayor of Hokuei Town