



From Japan to the Northwest

News From the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle



Dear friends of the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle,

Our monthly newsletter, "From Japan to the Northwest," is intended to share important and interesting information related to Japan, our region, and the consulate's activities.

You can find [past issues of the newsletter here](#).

APEC SOM3 EDITION



**Welcome,
APEC Delegates!**

***All APEC delegates proceed to the
APEC/MPC Lane***



City of Seattle



**GREATER SEATTLE
PARTNERS**



**VISIT
seattle**



Welcome Sign for APEC SOM3 Delegates at Sea-Tac Airport

We're back!

After several busy and exciting weeks of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Senior Officials' and Ministerial Meetings (APEC SOM3) in Seattle, we are ready to share some news regarding the events attended by delegations from Japan. Some of the delegations have just recently returned to Japan, and have not released news about their visits. Once this information is made available, we will share it in a future next issue.

In other newsletter-related news, in order to bring you only the most important updates from Japan and our region, this newsletter's release schedule **will switch from twice a month to once a month**.

If you are looking **for more frequent updates** on Japan-related events and the consulate's activities, be sure to **follow us on social media by clicking the icons below**:



1. What is APEC?

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum established in 1989 to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific. [APEC's 21 members](#) aim to create greater prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and by accelerating regional economic integration.

APEC has 21 members. The word 'economies' is used to describe APEC members because the APEC cooperative process is predominantly concerned with trade and economic issues, with members engaging with one another as economic entities. (Source: [APEC.org](https://www.apec.org))

The United States is the host economy for APEC meetings in 2023. Events have been taken place in various U.S. cities since February of this year. The Third Senior Officials' Meeting and Related Meetings (APEC SOM3) was held in Seattle from July 29 to August 21. The APEC CEO Summit will take place in [San Francisco in November 2023](#).

2. Who from Japan attended APEC SOM3?

While over 400 individuals from various Japanese ministries and agencies were in Seattle for APEC SOM3 this past month, there were five major delegations led by senior officials.

High Level Meeting on Health & Economy

- Delegation led by Mr. [ISA Shinichi](#), State Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare

Food Security Ministerial Meeting

- Delegation led by Mr. [FUJIKI Shinya](#), Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Energy Ministers' Meeting

- Delegation led by Ms. [OTA Fusae](#), State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry

Women and the Economy Forum:

- Delegation led by Mr. [OGURA Masanobu](#), Minister in charge of Women's Empowerment, and Minister of State for Gender Equality
- Ms. [INOUCHI Kuniko](#), Member of the House of Councillors, National Diet of Japan, was also invited to attend a Forum event as a guest panelist.

Small & Medium Enterprises Ministerial Meeting:

- Delegation led by [Mr. SATOMI Ryuji](#), Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry

In addition, just before APEC SOM3 began, Mr. [WATANABE Hiromichi](#), Minister for Reconstruction, visited Washington State from July 23 to 27.

Though details for all of these official visits are not yet available at this time, we have summarized the information available below.

3. Vice Minister OTA Fusae Attends Energy Ministers' Meeting



(Photo: METI)

On Tuesday, August 15, the APEC SOM3 Energy Ministers' Meeting was held. Discussions focused on three key issues: (1) decarbonization of the power sector, (2) methane emissions reduction, and (3) a fair energy transition.

In light of the situation in Ukraine, Vice Minister OTA spoke about the importance of promoting energy transition and innovation through various pathways to simultaneously achieve climate change countermeasures, energy security, and economic growth.

Regarding methane emission reduction, she highlighted the "CLEAN" (Coalition for LNG Emission Abatement toward Net-zero), initiative which was launched at the 2023 LNG Production and Consumption Conference held in Japan last month in cooperation with the IEA, and introduced the global LNG value chain cleanup, the LNG value chain reduction, and the LNG market. She also expressed her desire to contribute to the clean LNG value chain and methane reduction efforts in the APEC

region.

The Vice Minister also explained that Japan is proceeding with efforts to decommission the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant based on scientific evidence. In particular, she introduced the IAEA Comprehensive Report released last month which concluded that the discharge of ALPS-treated water into the ocean is in compliance with international standards and has negligible radiation effects on humans and the environment. She also stated that she has been explaining to the international community that the measures on ALPS-treated water are being taken on the basis of scientific evidence and international standards. She then stated that she would continue to respond to the situation with transparency.

Based on the discussions at the meeting, the [Chair's Summary](#) was compiled. At the same time, an external link to the [Joint Statement of Volunteer Economies on Accelerating Methane Mitigation from the LNG Value Chain](#) was issued.



Vice Minister OTA Speaks with US Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm

Seizing the opportunity of the APEC Energy Ministerial Meeting, Vice Minister OTA exchanged views with U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm, Peruvian Minister of Energy and Mines Oscar Vera, and New Zealand Minister of Energy and Resources Megan Woods.

4. Parliamentary Vice-Minister FUJIKI Shinya Attends Food Security Ministerial Meeting



On Thursday, August 3, the Food Security Ministerial Meeting was held to discuss achieving food security through sustainable agriculture and food systems in the APEC region. Based on the discussions at the G7 Miyazaki Agriculture Ministerial Meeting, Parliamentary Vice-Minister FUJIKI called for each country and region to expand sustainable agricultural production through innovation, while effectively utilizing domestic resources, in order to achieve food security in the APEC region. At this meeting, the [Principles for Achieving Food Security Through Sustainable Agri-food Systems in the APEC Region](#) was formulated, which clarifies the approach for achieving food security and building sustainable agriculture and food systems in the APEC region. No agreement was reached to issue a joint statement, resulting in the issuance of a [Ministerial Chair Statement](#) by the United States.

Key Points of Parliamentary Vice Minister FUJIKI's Remarks:

Japan condemns Russia in the strongest terms for its aggression against Ukraine, which has a significant negative impact on global food security. We also regret Russia's decision to terminate its participation in the "Black Sea Grains Initiative" and strongly urge the resumption of grain exports from Ukraine.

Based on the outcomes of the G7 Miyazaki Agriculture Ministers' Meeting, we insist that (a) improving agricultural sustainability should be done in a way that increases productivity, (b) existing domestic agricultural resources should be used to the maximum extent possible, and (c) all forms of innovation should be used. Japan is promoting the "Green Food System Strategy" to put these points into practice.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution for building a sustainable agriculture and food system, and it is important for each country and region to seek optimal measures while staying close to the issues on the ground, and for this purpose, it is necessary to share each other's efforts, etc.



Parliamentary Vice-Minister FUJIKI and Washington State Secretary of Agriculture Sandison

During the meeting with Washington State Secretary of Agriculture Derek Sandison, Parliamentary Vice-Minister FUJIKI exchanged views on the longstanding friendship between Washington State and Japan in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries, as well as Washington State's organic farming initiatives.

Parliamentary Vice-Minister FUJIKI also met with local Japanese business owners to discuss the status of business development in the U.S., promotion of Japanese food, and promotion of exports.

5. Minister for Reconstruction WATANABE Hiromichi Visits WA State



Minister WATANABE touring PNNL Radiological Processing Laboratory

Reconstruction Minister WATANABE visited [the Hanford area in Washington State](#). This area has been undergoing significant development, centering on the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), while cleanup projects are underway to clean up contamination from radiological materials from the former nuclear weapons facilities.

During the visit, Dr. Yamazaki, president of the newly formed Fukushima International Research and Education Organization (F-REI) and PNNL Director Ashby, led a fruitful meeting attended by representatives of local institutions, including the Tri-Cities Development Council, Washington State University Tri-City, and others. The tour also included visits to research and educational organizations and local companies to learn about the latest initiatives in the Tri-Cities area.



Minister WATANABE's [Statement](#) on his visit:

"From July 23 to 27, I visited the Hanford area in Washington State. This area has been undergoing major development centering on the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, which is under the direct control of the Department of Energy, while at the same time promoting clean-up projects for radioactive contamination from the former nuclear facilities in the area. I first visited Pacific Northwest National Laboratory to introduce F-REI to Director Ashby and other relevant personnel, and to hand over a letter of introduction from President Yamazaki.

Director Ashby expressed his sympathy for the significance of the establishment of F-REI and its vision, and expressed his positive attitude toward the collaboration between F-REI and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. We are looking forward to his visit. We immediately informed President Yamazaki of this fact.

In addition to visiting two PNNL research institutes, we also visited the Tri-City Development Council, where we exchanged views on mechanisms and innovations for leading regional economic development through industry-academia-government collaboration.

In addition, I visited Columbia Basin College, which provides community-based vocational education and plays a major role in local human resource development, the Hammer Federal Training Center, a training center for crisis management, including nuclear disasters, and a company developing advanced hydrogen energy technology.

During these discussions, I introduced the Fukushima Institute for Research, Education and Innovation (F-REI) and explained the Japanese government's position and current status regarding ALPS treated water, and sought their understanding.

I believe that this visit was very meaningful despite the extremely tight schedule, and I will continue to work toward the creative reconstruction of Fukushima by making use of these results."

6. Minister OGURA Masanobu Attends Women and the Economy Forum

[Media Note](#), U.S. Department of State:

On The United States hosted Japan and the Republic of Korea in Seattle, Washington on Friday, August 18, on the margins of the APEC Women and the Economy Forum. Assistant to the President and Director of the Gender Policy Council Jennifer Klein led the U.S. delegation, which also included U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Geeta Rao Gupta, in discussion with Minister in charge of Women's Empowerment OGURA Masanobu and Consul General of the Republic of Korea in Seattle Seo Eun-ji on shared priorities and efforts related to advancing women's economic empowerment.

The officials specifically addressed their joint commitment to advancing women's economic participation; strengthening care infrastructure; and supporting women's leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. This meeting builds on previous trilateral engagements in 2016 and 2020 on women's political and economic empowerment and women's leadership in STEM fields, respectively, and supports the U.S. Strategy on Global Women's Economic Security. The three sides agreed to continue to work together to reduce barriers to women's full and meaningful participation in the economy, including at a 2024 conference in Washington, D.C.

7. Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI Ryuji Attends Small & Medium Enterprises Ministerial Meeting



Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI addresses APEC Women and the Economy Forum

[News Release](#), METI

Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry SATOMI Ryuji visited Seattle from August 20 to 24 for the APEC SME Ministerial Meeting.

This was the first time for APEC to hold a joint meeting between the APEC Women and the Economy Forum and the SME Ministerial Meeting, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI took this opportunity to publicize measures to support women-owned businesses and initiatives to promote women's activities ahead of the Osaka/Kansai Expo in 2025.

The participants also exchanged views with U.S. Undersecretary of Commerce Lago, who chaired this meeting, and Minister of State for Trade and Industry Lowe, and discussed bilateral cooperation, including start-up and SME cooperation.



Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI meets with Singapore Minister of State Low

On Sunday, August 20, under the theme of "Creating a Resilient and Sustainable Future for All People," Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI and the ministers in charge of small and medium-sized enterprises and women attended and had a wide-ranging discussion. Parliamentary Secretary Satomi explained about the support package for female entrepreneurs and the dissemination of women's activities starting with the "Women's Pavilion" at the Osaka/Kansai Expo.

On August 20, Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI and his delegation had bilateral meetings with U.S. Undersecretary of Commerce Lago to exchange views on bilateral economic relations, and with Singapore Minister of State Low to exchange views on bilateral start-up cooperation, this year's 50th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan friendship and cooperation, and other issues.

At the 29th APEC SME Ministerial Meeting, held on Monday, August 21, Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI spoke about the importance of using digital tools and expanding opportunities for people with economic potential, including women.

On Tuesday, August 22, Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI and his delegation visited Boeing and Toray Composite Materials America, Inc. to observe the aircraft assembly and carbon fiber production process.



Parliamentary Vice-Minister SATOMI and his delegation visit Boeing

Other Topics

ALPS-treated water release at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station

The Japanese Government provides many resources to help with understanding ALPS (Advanced Liquid Processing System), and how it is removing radionuclides from water at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station.

- [Ministry of Economy, Trade & Industry](#)
- [Prime Minister's Office](#)
- [Minister of Foreign Affairs](#)

Fires in Hawaii

Foreign Minister HAYASHI's provided [messages](#) of condolence and support after the devastating wild fires experienced in the State of Hawaii.

Japan has also pledged \$2 million USD to aid with the recovery from this disaster. [Press Release](#), MOFA.

PM Kishida's visit to the U.S.A. and Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit

On August 17, 2023, Prime Minister Kishida visited the State of Maryland, the United States of America.

The following day, August 18 (local time), Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States of America, at Camp David, Maryland. They were then joined by H.E. Mr. YOON Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea, for the Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit. Following this, the Prime Minister held a Japan-ROK Summit with President YOON, which was then followed by the Japan-U.S.-ROK joint press conference. At the end of the visit, Prime Minister Kishida spoke to the press regarding his visit to the U.S. and other matters. Press Releases, [Cabinet Office](#), [MOFA](#)

Prime Minister KISHIDA and Foreign Minister HAYASHI attend Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Memorial

On August 6, 2023, Prime Minister KISHIDA, Foreign Minister HAYASHI and other officials attended the annual Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony held in the Peace Memorial Park in the City of Hiroshima. Approximately 50,000 people, including atomic bomb

survivors and bereaved family members, as well as representatives of 111 nations, the European Union, and international organizations such as the United Nations, attended the ceremony marking the 78th anniversary of the atomic bombing.

Press Releases, [Cabinet Office](#), [MOFA](#)

Michi Hirata North from Washington State receives 2023 Foreign Minister's Commendation

This year, the Commendations are being awarded to 187 individuals and 63 groups (37 individuals and 7 groups reside in Japan, and 150 individuals and 56 groups reside overseas). The Foreign Minister's Commendations are awarded to individuals and groups with outstanding achievements in international fields, in order to acknowledge their contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and other countries and areas. The Commendations also aim to promote the understanding and support of the Japanese public for the activities of the recipients.

In April, Mrs. Hirata North was also awarded the Consul General's Commendation in a ceremony held during her piano recital at Town Hall Seattle. She was recognized by the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle for her contributions to Japan-US relations.

Press Releases, [MOFA](#), [Consulate](#)

Consulate News:

Job Opportunity:
[JET Program Coordinator and Educational Affairs Specialist](#)

Training Opportunity:
[2024 Japanese American Leadership Delegation to Japan \(JALD\)](#)

That's it for this issue of "From Japan to the Northwest."

Thank you for reading. Until next month!

Sincerely,
Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle

View [past issues of "From Japan to the Northwest" here](#).

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