

Workshop for Comparing Swedish and Japanese Responses to Climate Change: Legal Systems, Local Governments, and Accounting Standards

Subject The Workshop on Climate Change (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022) was conducted as joint research as the first collaborative effort with the Swedish non-profit policy think tank the Institute for Security & Development Policy (hereafter, ISDP). A mission visited Sweden in September 2021 and the workshop published the report “Renewable Energy and Climate Action: The Future of Japan and Sweden Cooperation.”

However, what we keenly felt through the workshop was the great gap between Sweden and Japan in expertise and experience. In particular, we deeply recognized the differences between Sweden and Japan in climate change response and understanding overall including the explicit provisions in the Instrument of Government of Sweden (there are none in the Constitution of Japan) and the spread of environmental regulations to each sector of society, the approach to selected cities and the roles of the regional and central governments, and the advance of international sustainability accounting standards. The workshop learned from the Swedish government, regional governments, municipalities, universities, and other research organs about how they are addressing climate change, came to understand the differences between Sweden and Japan, and presented proposals or recommendations regarding policy formulation and research in Japan (some in Sweden) and implementation of projects by regional government bodies and municipalities.

Background of the Study In recent years, global warming has progressed at a speed faster than initially projected by the IPCC and it is now considered impossible to keep global warming to within 1.5°C above the level prior to the Industrial Revolution which is the target by the end of this century. During that period, in addition to continued emissions of CO₂ into the atmosphere, rising seawater temperatures, limits to CO₂ absorption, decrease of rainforests, logging of boreal forests, and the loss of permafrost are also continuing. Furthermore, methane continues to be released from crude oil and natural gas mining sites.

Under such conditions, while examining how Japan and Sweden, which both have companies engaged in development, address these problems, learning from Sweden about the constitution and other legislation and the functions of regional governments, municipalities and their efforts and companies' responses to international sustainability standards, and examining how Japan can implement efforts and link these to the resolution of the overall global climate change problem, the joint research was continued focusing on the following points.

A) Comparison of the Instrument of Government of Sweden and the Constitution of Japan concerning the environment

a) Sweden: The Instrument of Government includes provisions concerning the environment; enacted the Swedish Code of Environment; prescribes duty to promote the environment by regional governments and municipalities.

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- b) Japan: Constitution includes no provisions concerning environmental preservation. Related legislation includes the Constitution, the Basic Act on the Environment, and the Water Pollution Prevention Act
 - B) Selection of Climate Change Response Model Cities (Sweden)
 - e.g.) Vallentuna: It has environmental conservation and industry attraction policies, and wastewater treatment that are independent from the central government as well as its own tax collection system.
 - C) Research on Response by Swedish and Japanese Companies to International Sustainability Standards
 - a) General issues of Swedish and Japanese companies in addressing the international sustainability standards S1 (general requirements regarding the disclosure of sustainability-related financial information) and S2 (climate-related disclosure) which were announced in June 2023.
 - b) Case research on corporate response; for example, specific response conditions and issues at Volvo Group, Ito En, etc.

Summary of Research Results	<p>This is a Sweden-Japan cooperation project seeking resolutions to environmental issues, including global warming and climate change. The project has the three main pillars (1) comparative research on the constitution/Instrument of Government and environmental legal systems in Sweden and Japan, (2) comparison of the central government, provinces, and local government bodies concerning the formation and implementation of environmental policies and environmental projects, and (3) comparison of the implementation conditions in Sweden and Japan concerning CSRD and other international sustainability accounting reporting and directives. During the first year, some results were achieved by learning about each pillar from the concerned organs in Sweden.</p> <p>In May and September 2024, missions comprised of workshop members from Japan visited central government agencies (the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and the Swedish Chemicals Agency) and universities in Sweden to investigate environmental policies and environmental legislation and gained specific instruction regarding many legal systems, environmental laws, and the Swedish Environmental Code. The team visited Vallentuna City and its municipal waste and wastewater processing facilities and observed the conditions of environmental administration. The workshop also held an online lecture regarding environmental legal systems, Japan's environmental legal systems, and CSRD and other international sustainability accounting.</p>
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Summary of Research Results	In the second year of the workshop, from 11 th through 21st May 2025, a Japanese mission once again visited Sweden and advanced additional surveys and research on items (1), (2), and (3) above at the Land and Environment Courts and in the northern cities of Lulea and Gothenburg. Results will be published at online symposiums of Swedish and Japanese members that will take place in February and/or March of 2026 (scheduled).
Period	April 1, 2024–March 31, 2026

Dates of meeting	Workshop and Discussion Topics	
	2024	
	April 16	Preparation of research plan for two years by all members
	May 27–31	Travel to Sweden
	May 27 (Mon.)	1) Visit Stockholm University, meet with Prof. Ranjula Bali Swain, etc. 2) Lunch with ISDP Executive Director Niklas Swanström 3) Tour Mahvie Minerals AB
	May 28 (Tues.)	1) Visit University of Gothenburg 1. Department of Business Administration Meet with Dr. Lana Sabelfeld, etc. 2. Department of Law Meet with Dr. Claes Martinson, etc. 2) Visit MEVA Energy Meet with Dr. Cleas Grill
	May 29 (Wed.)	Visit Stockholm Exergi Meet with Mr. Erik Dahlen, etc.
	May 30 (Thurs.)	1) Visit Vällentuna Municipal Administration Office 2) Visit Wetland Park 3) Visit Sorab (waste processing, sale, and recycling company)
	May 31 (Fri.)	1) Visit Norrvatten (water purification plant) 2) Visit Käppala (wastewater treatment plant)

Dates of meeting	August 21	“Lecture on the Constitution of Sweden and the Swedish Environmental Code” Lecturer: Prof. Lena Gipperth, University of Gothenburg
	Sept. 16–20	Travel to Sweden
	Sept. 16 (Mon.)	1) Meet with ISDP board members 2) Visit the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, meet with Climate Ambassador Mattias Frumerie
	Sept. 17 (Tues.)	1) Visit Vallentuna Municipal Administration Office; meet with Mayor Johan Skog, etc. 2) Visit Uppsala University, meet with Prof. Ashok Swain, etc.
	Sept. 18 (Wed.)	1) Visit Environmental Agency, meet with Dr. Hanna Roos, etc. 2) Visit Chemicals Agency, meet with Dr. Emma Swedberg Wikstad, etc. 3) Dinner at the Japanese ambassador’s residence
	Sept. 19 (Thurs.)	Visit Gothenburg University 1) Meet with Dr. Lana Sabelfeld, etc. 2) Meet with Dr. Lena Gipperth, etc.
	Sept. 20 (Fri.)	1) Tour Renova (waste processing) facility 2) Visit Gothenburg County, meet with Mr. Sten Folgfors
	Nov. 29	Lecture meeting concerning “Japanese Environmental Law” Lecturer: Professor Tadashi Otsuka, Waseda University

Dates of meeting	2025	
	Jan. 24	Lecture meeting “CSRD and its Impact on SMEs” Lecturers: Dr. Lana Sabelfeld, University of Gothenburg, Dr. Marita Blomkvist, University of Gothenburg
	March 17	Lecture meeting “CSRD and Report Regarding Water, Response by Large Corporations” Lecturers: Dr. Lana Sabelfeld, University of Gothenburg, Dr. Conny Overland, University of Gothenburg
	April 11	Lecture meeting “Relations between International Law and EU Law and Environmental Law” “International Law, EU Law and the Impact on Sweden,” Prof. David Langlet, Uppsala University “Environmental Law, the Constitution, and the Swedish Environmental Code,” Prof. Jonas Ebbesson, Stockholm University “Considerations on the Constitution of Sweden, the Swedish Environmental Code, the Constitution of Japan (which has no environmental provisions), and Environmental Legal Systems,” Dr. Masayuki Komatsu

Dates of meeting	May 11-21	Travel to Sweden
	May 12 (Mon.)	1) Visit EPA, met with Mr. Viktor Lofvenberg, Ms. Elina Ibo and Ms. Hanna Roos 2) Visit Swedish Enterprises, met with Ms. Madeleine Svenberg 3) Visit Land and Environment Court, met with Judge Anders Lillienau and Judge Bjorn Raffegard
	May 13 (Tue.)	1) Visit Chemicals Agency, met with Mr. Ulrike Frank, Ms. Helena Kraner and Mr. Mats Allmyr 2) Visit Stockholm City Hall, met with Ms. Anna Essehag and Ms. Gofi Aldstam
	May 14 (Wed.)	1) Visit Municipality of Vallentuna, met with Mayor Johan Skog, etc. 2) Expert meeting on large crises management by local authorities, attended by Mr. Markus Gustavsson, Chief Rescue, Firebrigade, Greater Stockholm Area, etc. 3) SORAB Recycling Facility of Food Waste/Plastics, met with Ms. Jenny Griffin Lindahl
	May 15 (Thu.)	1) Sustainability Reporting Workshop at Business School of Gothenburg University 2) Meeting with Business Shool, met with Dr. Lana Sabelfeld and Dr. Marita Blomkvist

Dates of meeting	May 16 (Fri.)	1) Visit City of Gothenburg, met with Mr. Bo von Bahr and Ms. Maria Leffler 2) Visit Marieholm, met with Mr. Bo von Bahr 3) Visit Boras Energi och Miljo, met with Mr. Rikard Olsson
	May 19 (Mon.)	1) Visit W3Energy, met with Mr. Par Dunder, CEO 2) Visit SSAB Stockholm, met with Mr. Anna Viefhues 3) Visit Byggforetagen Norrbotten, met with Mr. Erik Ranangen
	May 20 (Tue.)	1) Visit Boden municipality, met with Ms. Elin Lindahl 2) Visit Recycling Center Brannklappen & Biogas Facility, met with Mr. Urban Jansson 3) Visit Lula Municipality, met with Mr. Roger Tuomas
	May 21 (Wed.)	1) Visit Kalix Sami Village in Sandra, met with Mr. Orjan Pekka and Mr. Dan Abarhamsson

Members	<p>Dr. Masayuki Komatsu (Leader) Visiting Researcher, Kajima Institute of International Peace Chair/President, Ecosystem Research Institute Visiting Professor, Asian Growth Institute President, Toto Enterprise Owners Society</p> <p>Nobuyuki Hiraizumi President, Kajima Institute of International Peace Advisor, Avant Associates, Inc.</p> <p>Otuka Tadashi Professor of Law at Waseda University</p> <p>Yasuhiro Takarada Professor, Faculty of Economics, Nanzan University</p> <p>Takashi Sekiyama Professor, Kyoto University</p> <p>Tatsuo Shikata Visiting Researcher, Kajima Institute of International Peace Mitsui & Co., Ltd. Company Fellow</p> <p>Dr. Niklas Swanström Executive Director, Institute for Security and Development Policy, Stockholm</p> <p>Dr. Jagannath P. Panda Head, Stockholm Center for South Asian and Indo-Pacific Affairs (SCSA-IPA) and Executive Editor for Institute for Security and Development Policy, Stockholm</p>
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Dr. Svetlana Sabelfeld

Senior Lecturer of School of Business, Economics and Law,
University of Gothenburg

Dr. Marita Blomkvist

Senior Lecturer of School of Business, Economics and Law,
University of Gothenburg