

# **Government decision on addressing water contamination issue at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station**

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013

In order to tackle the contaminated water issue at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, the Government of Japan has decided - mobilizing expertise from all the government authorities - to play a further proactive role in taking countermeasures against the issue. In this context, on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, the Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters decided to put in place a "Basic Policy for the Contaminated Water Issues at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station." The key points of the policy are as follows:

(1) Government Initiatives

- (i) Establishment of inter-ministerial council for contaminated water and decommissioning issue
- (ii) Establishment of intergovernmental liaison office near Fukushima Daiichi NPS
- (iii) Establishment of intergovernmental council for coordination near Fukushima Daiichi NPS
- (iv) Progress management and risk identification of the contaminated water issue and decommissioning
- (v) Financial Support
- (vi) Enhancement of monitoring activities, prevention of reputational damages or misinformation, reinforcement of global communications

(2) Three Principles for the countermeasures against the contaminated water issue

Principle 1: Removing the source of the contamination

Principle2: Isolating ground water from the contamination source

Principle3: Preventing leakage of the contaminated water

At present, statistically-significant increase of radioactive concentration in the sea outside the port of Fukushima Daiichi NPS has not been detected. However, the Government of Japan will continue to pay the closest attention to the situation,

make every effort to work on the contaminated water leakage issue, and provide information to the international community in an appropriate way.

<Basic facts>

1. Influence of contaminated water

- Influence of contaminated water is limited in the port of Fukushima Daiichi NPS, whose area is smaller than 0.3 km<sup>2</sup>.
- The results of monitoring of sea water in Japan are constantly below the standard of 10 Bq/L ("Guidelines for Radioactive Substances in Bathing Areas" released by Ministry of Environment gives an instruction regarding the water quality for municipalities to open bathing areas as follows; the concentration of radioactive Cs (Cs-134 and Cs-137) is lower than or equal to 10 Bq/L.

2. Status of TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi NPS

- The temperature in the reactors ranges from 25 to 50°C for the last one month (as of August 29).
- The radioactive material release from the reactor buildings is evaluated at  $1.6 \times 10^{-9}$  becquerels per cm<sup>3</sup> for both Cs-134 and Cs-137.
- The radiation dose due to the radioactive material release is 0.03 mSv per year, equivalent to 1/70 of annual natural radiation dose (Japan's average is 2.1 mSv per year).

3. Safety of food and water

- Japan adopts the world's highest standards for food and water, and conducts strict monitoring and distribution management. In practice, even in Fukushima Prefecture where the accident occurred, annual radiation exposure from food and water is lower than one hundredth of 1mSv.
- Food safety is secured by (1) setting of the limits harmonized with the guideline levels of Codex Alimentarius, which is 1 mSv/year, (2) rigorous inspections, and (3) prompt restriction of food distribution.
- The monitoring of radionuclide levels of food in Japan was conducted for 412,959 items from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013, and among them only 2,866 items (0.69%) exceeded the limits.
- Products exceeding the limits are disposed. Also, the distribution of products exceeding the limits is prevented through the restriction of shipment in areas where those products are found. Therefore, the safety of foods currently on the market is guaranteed.

- For further information, please refer to the following site of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/kinkyu/0000020539.html>

The following sites also provide related information.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: [http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page3e\\_000071.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page3e_000071.html)

Nuclear Regulation Authority: <http://www.nsr.go.jp/english/>

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry:

<http://www.meti.go.jp/english/earthquake/nuclear/decommissioning/index.html>

TEPCO (Information on water leakage):

<http://www.tepco.co.jp/en/nu/fukushima-np/water/index-e.html>

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