

Doctoral Dissertation

**Environmental Civil Society Organizations:
Activism and Advocacy for Deliberating Energy Policies in Post-Fukushima Japan
(Summary)**

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The 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, also known as the Great East Japan Earthquake (*Higashi Nihon Daishinsai*) occurred on March 11, 2011, and caused a nuclear accident in the Fukushima Daichii nuclear power plants in the following days. The Fukushima nuclear accident and the public backlash which followed reshaped the energy-related discussions in Japan by civil society (*shimin shakai*). The Fukushima issue went beyond a technical nuclear energy issue and became a nationwide socio-political issue.

The government's decision to restart nuclear reactors, which had been shut down following the Fukushima accident, and the focus on nuclear energy for the country's future energy portfolio (20-22%) intensified the debate among environmental organizations and the Japanese government. Consequently, Japanese state-society relations have undergone a significant transformation. ECSOs have started to pursue a goal of a nuclear phase-out (*datsu-genpatsu*) along with a nuclear-free policy (*hikaku seisaku*), criticizing the government's energy strategy put forward by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), widely known for its pro-nuclear stance.

This research study focuses on a case study of the environmental civil society organizations (ECSOs) based in Japan. The case study of Japanese environmental civil society organizations involved in energy policies is an exemplar of the creation of deliberative spaces. This research examines the extent to which environmental civil society organizations (with a particular focus on Greenpeace Japan, Friends of the Earth, The Institute of Sustainable Energy Policy, and Renewable Energy Institute) have been influential in the energy decision-making process since the Fukushima accident. It highlights the socio-political dimensions of the nuclear energy issue in Japan, including the efficacy level of ECSOs, deliberative and democratic spaces of civic actors, the interactional dimensions of state-civil society partnership, and the dynamics of the energy policymaking process in contemporary Japan.

Key words: nuclear, Fukushima, Japan, civil society, deliberation, environmental governance