

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation ZOOM webinar, co-organised with the Innovation, Partnerships & Trade (IPT) Committee of the Belgium-Japan Association (BJA)

Opportunities for EU & Japan Industrial and Innovation Cooperation
in the Circular Economy for Strategic Metals

Thursday, 23 June 2022 from 16:30 to 18:30 in Tokyo (09:30 to 11:30 in Brussels)

(Summary by EUJC secretariat)

The seminar was moderated by Koh Ichi Masaki (co-Chair of the BJA IPT Committee; Head of European Affairs & Agency Convention Business Centre, Japan Management Assoc.). It began with opening remarks by Philippe de Taxis du Poët (MD – EU-side, EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation) and an introduction by Fabrice Stassin (co-Chair of the BJA IPT Committee; Director – Government Affairs Electromobility Projects / Coordinator for Asian Affairs, Umicore).

The first panel discussion addressed the view of the EU and Japanese Authorities:

- *Peter Handley (Head of Unit, Energy Intensive Industries – Raw Materials, DG GROW):* Mr Handley began by noting how close the cooperation is between the EU and Japan (the only country with which it has established a Green Alliance). Circularity is embedded in this. He then looked at the new geopolitical realities relating to strategic metals and the importance of innovation.
- *Kazuaki Kobayashi (Director, Mineral and Natural Resources Division, Natural Resources and Fuel Department, Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, METI):* Mr Kobayashi began with an overview of trends in critical raw materials outlining the positions of the IEA; the plurilateral Critical Materials & Minerals Meeting; the US, EU and China. He looked at trends in raw material pricing and outlined the Japanese Government view – its Sixth Strategic Energy Plan, the role of JOGMEC, the development of marine resources and the need to shift to a resource recycling society.
- *Nevena Mateeva (First Secretary, Trade Section, Delegation of the EU to Japan):* Ms Mateeva outlined the EU's Circular Economy Action Plan; the need for a shift from a linear to a circular model affecting both production and consumption; how the EU Recovery Plan & Circular Economy will work in practice; the importance of having a sustainable product policy framework; the need for sustainability to be designed into products; and legislative and policy-based measures.
- *Minako Kageyama (Deputy Director, Industrial and Hazardous Waste Management Division, Environment Regeneration and Resource Circulation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment):* Ms Kageyama gave an overview of Japanese legislation to make the circular economy real, including its Basic Acts on the environment and on promoting the formulation of the circular society; Waste Management Act and the Basel Act. She then looked at how 'Basel waste' and other wastes are treated including through exports and imports.

The second panel discussion addressed the role of innovation and circular economy ecosystems:

- *Frédéric Verhaeghe (Research Fellow, Umicore Corporate R&D and Flanders Metals Valley):* Mr Verhaeghe outlined the work, goals and achievements of the Flanders Metal Valley, looking in particular at the activities of Umicore (a Flanders Metals Valley member).
- *Philippe Giaro (Senior Research Officer, Georesources, Minerals Engineering and Extractive Metallurgy, University of Liège, and Reverse Metallurgy Platform):* Mr Giaro explained how Wallonia sees the recycling of end-of-life products into raw materials as having high economic importance and outlined the work of the Reverse Metallurgy to promote metal recycling.
- *Toru Nishiyama (Principal Visiting Researcher, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), J4CE Secretariat, Japan Partnership for Circular Economy):* Mr Nishiyama introduced the work of J4CE; gave examples of various metal recycling activities by Japanese companies; and outlined how lithium-ion batteries can be recycled.
- *Christian Leroy (Board Member – Processes4Planet and Head of Innovation – European Aluminium):* Mr Leroy outlined the work of the Process4Planet partnership and the goals and work of the ASPIRE public-private partnership.

The Q&A / discussion session was moderated by Fabrice Stassin. The key issues addressed were (see the video recording for more information):

- How to reconcile Basel waste and securing access to raw materials.
- Steps taken by the EU and Japan to support investments in Africa, Latin America or Asia to gain geostrategic control over access to raw materials.
- The role for AI and robots to process waste in labour-expensive regions rather than exporting it to other countries for processing.

(Event details, slides and the recording are available at <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/opportunities-eu-japan-industrial-and-innovation-cooperation-circular-economy-strategic>)

