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No summer blackouts: nuclear scaremongering in Japan proven false

Blogpost by **Justin McKeating** - September 10, 2012 at 19:10

2 comments



Despite the dire warnings from the nuclear industry and its backers, Japan's hot summer has passed with no power blackouts or shortages even though just two out of its 50 nuclear reactors were in operation.

The Japanese government's announcement last week of the end of its summer power-saving initiative proved the country's new energy strategy can and should include an immediate phase-out of nuclear power.

With its support for nuclear power, the government has been putting its people unnecessarily at risk, given the ongoing threats from earthquakes, but it underestimated the public.

The Japanese people have shown in recent months that they can achieve the power savings needed to achieve the nuclear-free future almost 90% of them are calling for.

Japan was completely nuclear-free for almost two months during the peak power demand period after the country's reactors were closed in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster.

The feared power shortages used to justify the reckless restart of the Ohi nuclear power plant never materialised. This is precisely what independent experts were advising in April, but the government chose to ignore them.

Even without the ongoing devastating fallout and scandals from Fukushima, the environmental damage, the contamination of the food chain, the corruption, cover-up, and collusion, the nuclear industry in Japan is in deep, deep trouble.

The summer of 2012 has shown once and for all that Japan – and the wider world – does not need nuclear power.

And yet, the scaremongering by the nuclear industry and its supporters in Japan bordered on the hysterical at times.

Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda claimed that Japan "cannot survive without nuclear energy" when his government restarted the Ohi nuclear power plant against expert advice and public outcry.

Importantly, plans for rolling blackouts in the Kansai, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku regions were never needed as the country met its power-saving targets.

The proof is here in black and white. Switching reactors back on and extending their lifespans for decades will create more unnecessary risk for Japan's population, its businesses and the national economy.

The only way forward that will satisfy all three is to abandon destructive, expensive and unwanted nuclear power and make a strong commitment to renewable energy.

The summer's power savings proved Japan could carry on as usual without nuclear power. A complete phase-out of nuclear power should now be included when the country announces its new energy strategy for 2030.

As [Greenpeace's Energy \[R\]evolution report](#) shows, further energy efficiency efforts and dynamic expansion of renewable energy can easily replace nuclear power, and rapidly put Japan's economy and greenhouse gas emission reduction efforts back on track.

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