

HAWAI'I-OKINAWA PARTNERSHIP ON CLEAN AND EFFICIENT ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT

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HONOLULU – A United States-Japan national agreement on clean energy development was signed today in Tokyo among the U.S. Department of Energy, Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, the State of Hawai'i and the Prefecture of Okinawa. This national agreement features the Hawai'i-Okinawa Partnership on Clean and Efficient Energy Development and Deployment.

This agreement follows the meeting between former Japan Prime Minister Hatoyama and President Obama last November to initiate the acceleration of joint energy programs between the two countries through cooperative research, development and deployment activities in renewables, energy efficiency, and next generation vehicles. As the two largest funders of science and technology research, the two leaders affirmed their intent to expand already strong cooperative activities to increase the likelihood that commercially viable technologies will be developed and move towards a clean energy economy.

Due to Hawai'i and Okinawa's demonstrated leadership and experience in energy technologies such as solar, wind, bioenergy, electric vehicles, energy efficiency, and regulatory and policy planning, Japan and the United States have designated Hawai'i and Okinawa as the representatives for this groundbreaking partnership.

"This is a momentous day for the United States, Japan, the State of Hawai'i and the Prefecture of Okinawa as our nations work together to demonstrate a secure, clean energy economy," said Governor Linda Lingle. "Solving the issues relating to the rapid transformation of Hawai'i's and Okinawa's energy systems will provide valuable lessons and experience for other regions of the world."

On March 29, 2010, the first meeting of the Hawai'i-Okinawa Task Force was held in Honolulu. Top-level officials from the U.S. Department of Energy, Prefecture of Okinawa, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, New Energy Technology Department, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Hawai'i State Energy Office, Department of Defense, and national laboratory representatives met to discuss the acceleration of renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency, and evaluate the achievements of existing clean energy projects to enable the islands to be energy independent. Initiation of several joint projects resulted from that meeting.

"Through the groundbreaking Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative, our state is leading the way toward an energy-secure and self-sufficient future," said Lt. Governor Aiona, who delivered the keynote address at the Hawai'i-Okinawa Task Force meeting. "Working together, Hawai'i and Okinawa can exchange new ideas and cultivate the energy initiatives needed to provide a clean energy future."

The partnership between Hawai'i and the Prefecture of Okinawa intends to deploy both governments resources, including its national laboratories, to support the structural transformation that needs to occur to help transition Hawai'i and Okinawa to sustainable, clean energy economies.

This includes demonstration of clean energy and energy efficient technologies, financing methodologies, and enabling policies designed to support social, economic, and political acceptance of clean energy projects. A network of policymakers, scientists, and academicians will work together on a sustained basis to support the efforts of Hawai'i and Okinawa to achieve maximum deployment of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies.

"The Memorandum of Cooperation is a critically important step in strengthening our government partnerships among Hawai'i, Okinawa, Japan, and the U.S.," added Governor Lingle. "This MOC will be play a major part in the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative as we our State towards a 70 percent clean energy future while reducing our dependency on fossil fuels."

In 2008, Hawai'i created a partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy that launched the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative with the goal of achieving 70% Clean Energy in Hawai'i by 2030. Similarly, Okinawa has announced plans to formulate an "Okinawa Energy Vision" to achieve both energy security and low-carbon goals by 2030. This common background forms the basis for future cooperation between the two islands.

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