

Japan CO2 emissions hit record yearly high

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Steam rises from the Kawasaki natural gas power station in Kawasaki City in Kanagawa prefecture, south of Tokyo on August 25, 2011

Japan's carbon dioxide emissions hit a record high in the year to March due to the nation's reliance on fossil fuels following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster, an official said Monday.

CO2 emissions related to the use of non-renewables reached 1.224 billion metric tonnes, up from 1.208 billion metric tonnes for the previous fiscal year, said an official of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

They were also up more than 15 percent from 1990, the base year for [emission cuts](#) previously targeted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

According to the official, the use of natural gas and coal account for some 90 percent of the nation's entire greenhouse gas release.

The country's CO2 emissions have been steadily rising due to growing demand for [fossil fuels](#) following the nuclear accident.

"The recent economic recovery in the fiscal year also helped increase CO2 emissions," the official added.

Japan's entire stable [nuclear power stations](#) were gradually switched off after the tsunami-sparked catastrophe at Fukushima, when the breakdown of cooling systems sent reactors into meltdown, setting off the worst atomic accident in a generation.

Two reactors were briefly restarted but their power-down in September last year heralded an entirely nuclear-free Japan.

Earlier this month, local politicians approved the first restart of two reactors in southern Japan.

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