

The JSPS Alumni Club Award 2019

Award ceremony to Professor Dr. Peter Hennicke on May 24, 2019 in Vienna

The JSPS Alumni Club Award (JACA) refers to exceptional projects between Germany and Japan. With the JACA of 2019 the German JSPS Alumni Association honours Professor Peter Hennicke. He is representing the founding consortium of the worldwide unique German Japan Energy Transition Council (GJETC). The GJETC works since 2016 with high level energy experts supported by METI in Japan and by Foundations as well as Ministries in Germany. With outreach events, public hearings, comprehensive publications and master thesis of young researchers the GJETC disseminates its findings in Germany and in Japan (GJETC.org). It presents in depth recommendations to support the energy transition and energy efficiency in both countries. It is heading for the fundamental goal of the UN Paris Agreement (2015) that global temperature rise should stay “well below” 2 degrees Celsius. The GJETC advocates the responsibility of Japan and Germany as highly developed and rich countries to take the lead by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 at least by 80% and continuously pursuing carbon neutrality.

Professor Hennicke is a pioneer in the field of energy transition and energy efficiency since over more than 30 years. Until today he works for the social-ecological transformation of the energy system in Germany and in other countries, especially in Japan. As economist from his academic background he works intensively on the benefits of energy savings and on the economic feasibility of a 100% energy supply from renewable energy sources. With his work and experience he is one of the most distinguished experts of the energy transition.

He started to develop his ideas in the beginning of 1980. Professor Hennicke develops concepts for energy savings and demanded their implementation in high ranking policy advisory boards. As a member of three Enquete Commissions of the German Bundestag on the issue climate and energy, he pushed forward the concept of sustainable and low-risk energy systems. As a pioneer and leading personality, he takes an exemplary function in research and for the younger academic members, also reflected in his impressive list of more than 230 publications on energy transition, energy efficiency enhancements, climate and resource protection.

Professor Hennicke was President of the Wuppertal Institute, received the highest Environmental Awards of Germany and Sweden and was appointed as a Full Member of the Club of Rome. As a representative of the European Parliament he served for four years in the Management Board of the European Environment Agency in Copenhagen. In the last 15 years he was invited speaker in numerous conferences in Japan e.g. of the Global Environmental Action (GEA) and the STS Forum. He was member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute for Global Energy Strategies (IGES/Hayama).

His outstanding achievements in the national and international scientific policy advice led finally to his most recent activity as the founding and chairing of the GJETC, together with Prof. Masakazu Toyoda, CEO of the Institute of Energy Economics, Japan.

The GJETC in the first phase lasted two years from 2016-2018 until the first “Report 2018” was published in April 2018. In the second phase the GJETC will work until 2020 mainly on these topics: hydrogen society, the role of digitalisation for the energy transition, long-term climate protection strategies and monitoring and energy efficiency in buildings.

The GJETC is regarded as a blueprint for similar worldwide initiatives to a faster implementation of the energy transition and bilateral mutual learning processes. Despite of differences in energy politics and geographical frame conditions, Japan and Germany have to master a similar long-term challenge: To transform the energy system into a system that is cost-effective, reliable, low in risk, resource-friendly and climate-neutral, while maintaining and strengthening the international competitiveness. A bilateral energy transition council based on common research between the two high-tech countries can contribute to problems solutions in Germany and Japan. The GJETC is in its format, continuity and size the first research-based German Japanese cooperation project on the energy transition. It works with top-class researchers from Germany and Japan and focusses in its first phase on a comprehensive study program on strategic system issues. Results will be provided for politics, economy and civil society. The council also brings together the vision and knowledge of experts from business, politics and academia with scientific findings. Stakeholder dialogues with high ranking representatives of the Japanese and German industry, Parliamentarians and representatives of the decentralized energy sector have been successfully realized.

One of the joint recommendations of the GJETC in its Report 2018 has been the following: “A bilateral agreement, budget, and marketing concept for a German-Japanese support program for the exchange of students, joint master and doctoral theses, and in general for vocational training and school education are strongly advised. This could be modelled on the EU Erasmus Programme. With regard to an ambitious Japanese-German exchange program, attractive financial support for acquiring language skills and for accommodation abroad would be essential”.

The GJETC encourages and facilitates the exchange of young researchers from both countries to gain experience in the work of the Council e.g. by writing their thesis (Master; PHD) in cooperation with the Institutes/ Networks of the Council Members.

Based on their long-standing friendship and basis as technologically oriented industrial nations, Germany and Japan should work together on the ‘man-to-the-moon-challenge’ of a carbon-neutral energy system. However, up to now the specifications for mid-century GHG-reduction targets have differed between the two countries to date. More in-depth exchange on these differences is needed. It needs continuity and open-minded exchange of views especially of young researches in both countries to understand the cultural and geographic differences and at the same time the common challenges to work together for effective problem solutions.

German JSPS Alumni Association