



JFBA OECD Joint Webinar

**“Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence in practice
– Responsible Business Conduct and the Role of Lawyers”**

Date: 31 May 2021 18:00-20:00 JST

Venue: Virtual event (ZOOM with simultaneous translation)

Registration by 26 May: <https://form.qooker.jp/Q/auto/en/esgsmnren/apply/>



Background

Expectations for Japanese companies to conduct human rights and environmental due diligence across supply chains and business relationships are increasing. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) clarify that companies should carry out human rights due diligence to meet their responsibility to respect human rights. The [OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises](#) are the first international instrument on responsible business conduct (RBC) that is comprehensive in nature – covering all areas of business responsibility. The OECD Guidelines align with the UNGPs and recommend incorporating risk-based due diligence into all areas where business operations intersect with society – including both human rights and the environment.

In October 2020, the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP) was published by the Japanese government. Through the NAP, the Government reinforced its commitment to promoting RBC and due diligence practices among Japanese companies. Revisions have also been proposed to the Japanese Corporate Governance Code which highlight the importance of addressing human rights and global environmental issues. Proposals include new disclosure requirements on sustainability policy and climate change related information.

The European Union has also committed to consider legislation requiring mandatory environmental and human rights due diligence across global value chains, which may impact on and shape global markets for years to come. Both the Commission and Parliament have underlined that alignment of the legislation with existing international standards on Responsible Business Conduct is critical in order to make it most effective.

The [OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct](#) supports businesses in translating internationally recognised due diligence recommendations into action. It provides plain-language explanations, tips and illustrative examples of due diligence actions that companies may take to identify, prevent and mitigate risks. The Japanese language version was translated in 2019 with the support of IDE-JETRO and under the OECD's [Responsible Supply Chains in Asia programme](#).

The Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) has been actively promoting and supporting the improvement of due diligence practices by Japanese companies, most recently through the publication of its [“Guidance on Human Rights Due Diligence”](#) and [“Guide on ESG-related Risk Management”](#) and its participation in the process of formulating the NAP.

In this JFBA - OECD joint-webinar, experts and lawyers inside and outside Japan will discuss how to effectively carry out human rights and environmental due diligence in line with OECD recommendations on RBC, and how to implement due diligence in practice in Japanese business and legal contexts. Speakers will highlight global and domestic policy trends, the essential characteristics of due diligence processes, and the role of lawyers in Japan.



Tentative Agenda

Moderator Sakon Kuramoto, Member, CSR Project Team, JFBA

Opening Remarks

- Makoto Saito - Chair, CSR Project Team, JFBA
- Stephanie Venuti - Environment Lead and Japan Country Manager, OECD Centre for Responsible Business Conduct

Presentations

- **“How can Japanese companies advance due diligence? – Challenges and opportunities in Japan’s National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights”**
Miwa Yamada -Director, Law and Institution Studies Group, Inter-disciplinary Studies Center (IDE-JETRO)
- **“Global policy trends on Responsible Business Conduct and an introduction to the [OECD Due Diligence Guidance on for Responsible Business Conduct](#)”**
Barbara Beljic – Legal Expert, Financial Sector Lead, OECD Centre for Responsible Business Conduct
Rena Hinoshita - Policy Analyst, Supply Chain Due Diligence, OECD Centre for Responsible Business Conduct
- **“How Japanese business and lawyers can improve due diligence practices – takeaways from legal practices on Business and Human Rights and case studies on environmental due diligence”**
Daisuke Takahashi -Vice Chair, CSR Project Team, JFBA

Discussion and Q&A

Closing Remarks

- Stephanie Venuti – Environment Lead, Japan Country Manager, OECD Centre for Responsible Business Conduct
- Makoto Saito -Chair, CSR Project Team, JFBA

OECD co-organises this event as part of the [Responsible Supply Chains in Asia programme](#).