

Platform News – Platform welcomes new Japanese partner organisation

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29 January 2015 - In November last year Platform founder and policy advisor Ingvild Jenssen visited Yamaguchi Prefecture based community network Ikki-Ikki Asia Japan. The volunteer-based network, first established 25 years ago, works on a multitude of community-building, environmental and solidarity projects. For more than a decade Ikki-Ikki has had a partnership with Platform member organisation YPSA in Bangladesh. It was during one of Ikki-Ikki's annual visits to Chittagong that Chief Executive Mori first learned about the human rights abuses and environmental pollution related to shipbreaking activities in Bangladesh. Ikki-Ikki has since then translated the Platform reports "The Human Cost of Breaking Ships"[1] and "Child Breaking Yards"[2] to Japanese and raised awareness of the issue in Japan. *"Japan is a major ship owning country and has a responsibility to ensure that its end-of-life fleet is dismantled under conditions that can ensure safe working conditions without devastation of sensitive coastal environments. Raised awareness in Japan of the disastrous conditions at the South Asian shipbreaking beaches is crucial and we are therefore glad to welcome Ikki-Ikki onboard",* said Ingvild Jenssen, *"their work is encouraging and a true inspiration."*



(photo: Meeting with Ikki-Ikki

Asia Japan in Kiwa-no-sato, a traditional village house in mountain side of Yamaguchi) Whilst Japanese ship owners have traditionally opted for recycling at modern ship recycling facilities in China, in 2014 most Japanese-owned vessels hit the beaches of South Asia for breaking. Only the Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Limited (MOL)-owned ship "Global Spirit" was dismantled under conditions that meet international standards in Turkey after the ship was arrested in the port of Antwerp for an attempt to illegally send the ship for breaking in India. Meanwhile, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has recently expressed their willingness to support the upgrading of Indian ship recycling yards with a USD 180 million loan. The upgrading would include the building of a dry-dock to remove hazardous wastes from ships; expanding waste treatment and disposal capacity at Alang; the building of accommodation for 1.000 workers; as well as a school. *"We welcome the Japanese efforts to improve the conditions in Alang. A dry-dock will address concerns related to pollution in the intertidal zone. One dry-dock will however only be able to accommodate a minor fraction of the Japanese - and world - fleet. Japan needs also to look beyond South Asia and draw experiences from, as well as synergies with, its own shipbuilding industry,"* said Ingvild Jenssen. Ikki-Ikki Asia Japan thus joins the list of partner organisations that support the Platform's work, [which includes the ECCJ, EEB, EJOLT, Human Rights at Sea, Mediterranean SOS Network and Surfrider Foundation](#). **NOTES** [1] You can access [the Japanese version of "The Human Cost of Breaking Ships"](#) [here](#) [2] You can access [the Japanese version of "Child Breaking Yards"](#) [here](#)