**Photo gallery on the library** [**(link)**](https://media.greenpeace.org/shoot/27MDHUJOUC3)

**Greenpeace joins private citizens to file Taiwan’s first climate lawsuit, targeting corporate exemptions**

**2/05/2021 Taipei** -- Greenpeace East Asia’s Taipei office, the Environmental Jurists Association and four private citizens have filed the first climate lawsuit in Taiwan on the 3rd of February, targeting two exemptions that let big corporations dodge their legal duty to transition to renewable energy and meet Taiwan’s [2025 renewable energy goals](https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3880997#:~:text=By%202025%2C%20Taiwan%20will%20generate,(GW)%20within%20five%20years).

“The goal of this lawsuit is to let our laws work the way they were intended. At this rate, we won’t meet Taiwan’s energy goals. Taiwan can’t be a leader in Asia if the government doesn’t show leadership at home,” said Tracy Cheng, a Taipei-based climate and energy campaigner with Greenpeace East Asia.

The lawsuit (here in Mandarin Chinese) aims to defend the rights of people impacted by the climate crisis in Taiwan. It challenges two clauses of a 2019 energy regulation originally meant to transition large electricity users to renewable energy.[[1]](#footnote-0) But after a lengthy review process, the Ministry of Economic Affairs managed to write in metrics that let big businesses off the hook by measuring their energy use by contracted capacity[[2]](#footnote-1) (instead of actual electricity consumption) and raising the threshold to determine who qualifies as a “large power consumer.”

The current state of regulation asks large electricity users to transition 10% of contracted capacity to renewable energy, which has so far resulted in an actual transition of approximately 1.4% of the overall electricity use.[[3]](#footnote-2)

The Ministry of Economic Affairs also raised the [original threshold](https://ec.ltn.com.tw/article/paper/1296553) for those who qualify as a “large power consumer” from 800kWh to 5,000 kWh. The switch-up exempts almost 4,500 companies -- 90% of the cohort of large energy consumers that the original threshold would regulate. Of the total 5,000 large power companies that consume just over half of Taiwan’s electricity supply and emit around 30% of all carbon emissions, now only 500 will be regulated.

“Big corporations are getting a free pass while the rest of us shoulder their burden. We can only get there together. We need a regulation for 20% renewable energy that covers a corporation’s total electricity use,” Cheng said.

These exemptions could have widespread negative effects on Taiwan’s renewable energy industry. Exemptions for large companies, for example, will result in less rooftop solar installations from industry leaders. With solar capacity instead built on solar farms, regulators are inviting conflict over land use, farming, and natural habitats. These can be avoided with forward-looking, solutions-oriented policy.

This lawsuit joins more than 600 legal cases filed by individuals and non-governmental organizations around the world since 2010 that assert the rights of people impacted by the climate crisis.

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Contact

Sidney Lai, Communications Officer, Taipei, GPEA, sidney.lai@greenpeace.org

1. "Renewable energy development act, Article 12, Paragraph 3 <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=J0130032>" [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. “Contracted capacity” describes the electricity generating capacity reserved by a user that is negotiated in the contract entered into with the service provider that supplies the electricity. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. A corporation with a contracted capacity of 5000kW per hour would be obliged to use 500kW of renewable energy (any renewable energy). Total electricity use would be 5000kWh\*8,760 hrs (there are 8,760 hours in a year) = 43,800,000 kWh per year. If using solar PV as their renewable energy: 500kW\*1250hrs= 625,000kWh per year. And 625,000/43,800,000 = 1.4% [↑](#footnote-ref-2)