

DECLINE IN PH **SMOKING** RATE EYED

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Vapers in the Philippines hope that the smoking rate in the country would sharply decline too, like what happened in Japan by allowing the regulated use of heated tobacco products and e-cigarettes.

“We laud the remarkable drop in Japan’s smoking rate. In 2005, 49 percent of men and 14 percent of women in Japan smoked. In 10 years, the country’s smoking rate has decreased to 18.2 percent of the total population,” said Tom Pinlac, president of The Vapers Philippines.

Joey Dulay, president of the Philippine E-cigarette Industry Association, said the “2018 State of Smoking Survey” showed that the decline in Japan’s smoking rate had accelerated in recent years with the entry of heated tobacco products in the market.

Dulay noted that the effect was also evident in other countries where the decline of smoking rates was accompanied by the entry of heated tobacco and vape products or e-cigarettes.

Heated tobacco products only heat tobacco. Because the tobacco is not burned, the levels of harmful chemicals produced by heat-not-burn products are significantly lower compared to combustible cigarette smoke.

“The fastest decline in the use of almost any consumer product is under way in Japan—an 18- to 20-percent drop in combustible cigarette use over the last 18 months,” said Derek Yach, president of the Foundation for a Smoke-Free World, which commissioned the survey.

According to the survey, the rising popularity of heated tobacco products in Japan is partially due to growing awareness on the health risks associated with smoking, the high cost of traditional tobacco products and Japanese smokers’ desire for cleanliness.

The survey involved more than 17,000 adult smokers, exsmokers and nonsmokers from 13 countries—Brazil, France, Greece, Israel, India, Japan, Lebanon, Malawi, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States.

“The data generated by the ‘State of Smoking Survey’ can help policymakers in different countries push for better science and advocacy on tobacco control, and ultimately for better regulation,” Yach said.