

Summary of Youth Forum

The 16th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM16)

28th April 2014, EXCO in Daegue, Korea

We, youth representatives from Korea, China and Japan, gathered for Youth Forum of the 16th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting. The theme of Youth Forum in this year is “Youth Aspiration for Sustainability: Be Creative and Initiative!” During the forum, we exchanged our views on how we youths can contribute to a sustainable future through creative initiatives. On behalf of the youth representatives, I would like to present a summary of the Youth Forum.

Based upon the presentations and group discussions in the forum, we fully agree that the experiences and cases which we shared are extremely valuable to young people in three countries.

The youth representatives from China presented the FengGang Fair-trade project in which a group of university students communicated and collaborated with local tea farmers. The case illustrates how Chinese youths applied their academic knowledge of the environment to local communities, hoping to improve the living standards of others with passion.

In the case of the Toyooka-city of Japan, students took initiative in the “Paddy Rice Field Project” to reduce impacts of natural disasters such as typhoon and flood. This project aimed at biodiversity and agriculture has brought our attention

to the significance of youth cooperation with local communities. It also reminds us how small steps of youths can make our regions more sustainable.

The cases of Korean initiatives showed how young people in Korea have worked for sustainability through their creativity. Both the company of Ecubelabs that invented solar powered trash bins and the Tree Planet a smart-phone game company that developed VIRTUAL games to plant REAL trees, utilized creative ideas of youths and made partnership with government, companies and NGOs.

Through group discussions in the forum, we identified challenges we are facing for sustainability and drew common visions to promote more sustainable future. We also fully agree that active participation of creative youth is crucial in pursuing a sustainable society.

Based on the results of Youth Forum, we, young representatives of three nations, are eager to highlight the importance of environmental education in Korea, China, and Japan. From primary schools to university level and further, we propose to strengthen quality environmental education to raise eco-friendly citizens who can apply their knowledge and creativity for sustainability.

We also propose government, business and NGOs to encourage more creative ideas and initiatives of young people based on potential partnership. One feasible option is to establish an award for the young who takes the first action for sustainability with creativity.

We also suggest that governments provide network or platform opportunities for youths in three nations to exchange their creative ideas and experiences.

All of our representatives would like to extend our gratitude to TEMM16 for providing such a great opportunity to share our experience and to learn from each other. We will share the experience and passion of the Youth Forum with the friends and colleagues in our own countries.