

**Joint Communiqué**  
**The 21st Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting**  
**among Japan, Korea and China**  
**23-24 November 2019, Kitakyushu, Japan**

**I. Preamble**

1. At the invitation of Minister KOIZUMI Shinjiro of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, Minister CHO Myungrae of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and Minister LI Ganjie of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China visited Kitakyushu, where the three Ministers met for the 21st Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM21) on 23-24 November 2019.

**II. Overview of TEMM21**

2. The Ministers exchanged the latest developments in environment policies of each country following TEMM20. Minister KOIZUMI presented “Japan’s Environmental Major Policies”, Minister CHO presented “Korea’s Environmental Policies for Sustainable Future”, and Minister LI presented “Guided by Ecological Priority and Green Development to Promote High-Quality Economic Development and Sound Ecological and Environmental Protection”. The Ministers shared the understanding that these policies contribute to the sustainable development in North-east Asia and lay the foundation to solve the environmental problems on the regional and global scales.
3. Alongside TEMM21, three sub-forums were held with the participation of business representatives, youths, and researchers from the three countries, and the results of the discussions of these forums were reported to the Ministers. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the Tripartite Roundtable on Environmental Business (TREB) which discussed “Initiative for Realizing a Virtuous Cycle of Environment and Growth”, the TEMM Youth Forum which discussed “Vision for Transforming

the World to Sustainable for Everyone”, and the Forum of the Tripartite Joint Research Project on Cities towards Decarbonization and Sustainable Development which discussed “good practices implemented by leading cities in each country”.

4. The Ministers congratulated and commended the winners of the TEMM Environment Award. Dr. Uchida Keiichi from Japan, Dr. Lee Jong-Jae from Korea and Professor Chai Fahe from China, who were awarded for their contributions to the tripartite environment cooperation.
5. The three Ministers recognized with appreciations the role of the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) in advancing trilateral environmental cooperation, including holding the 2nd Trilateral Environmental Teacher’s Exchange Program in Tokyo, Japan in August 2019, and expected its continuous participation in the TEMM mechanism.

### **III. Recent progress in the implementation of the Tripartite Joint Action Plan 2015-2019**

6. The Ministers reviewed the progress in the implementation of the Tripartite Joint Action Plan for Environmental Cooperation 2015-2019 (TJAP 2015-2019) adopted at TEMM17 in April 2015 in Shanghai. They confirmed with satisfaction the cooperative activities carried out under the nine priority areas of the TJAP after TEMM20 and noted major achievements.
7. In the priority area of Air Quality Improvement, the Ministers welcomed the meetings of the Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Air Pollution (TPDAP) and its two Working Groups (WG) held in Tokyo in February 2019 as well as the publication of “Air Quality Policy Report” by the TPDAP that includes air management policy and achievements of the three countries in the recent years. They also appreciated the experts from the three countries for their efforts in finalizing the Summary Report for Policymakers of the Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution in Northeast Asia (LTP) which was released on 20th November 2019. They welcomed the results of the meetings of the Dust and Sand Storm (DSS) Working Group (WG) I (the 11th and 12th Meeting), DSS WG II (the 11th Meeting).

8. In the priority area of Biodiversity, the Ministers welcomed the 6<sup>th</sup> Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Biodiversity (TPDBD) held in April 2019 in Kunming, which reiterated the necessity of in-depth information exchange and cooperation on invasive alien species including red imported fire ants, and reaffirmed the importance to continue exchanging ideas on the development and implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
9. In the priority area of Climate Change, the Ministers welcomed the progress of the Joint Research Project on Cities towards Decarbonization and Sustainable Development, including the 2nd Workshop held in Yokohama from July to August 2019 and their reports such as the Synthesis report of China-Japan-Korea Joint Research Programme on Cities towards Decarbonization and Sustainable Development, and the City Climate Action Report. They recognized the importance of promoting decarbonization at the city level and encouraged the three countries to share the research results with municipalities in the three countries and with global community at COP25.
10. In the priority area of Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response, the Ministers welcomed that the 13<sup>th</sup> Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Chemical Management (TPDCM) and the 13<sup>th</sup> Tripartite Expert Seminar on Chemical Management (TESCM), held in October 2019, exchanged the latest policies and research information of the three countries and appreciated their continued efforts to improve chemical management in the three countries.
11. In the priority area of Circulative Management of Resources/3R/Transboundary Movement of E-Waste and Marine Environment area, the Ministers welcomed the results of the 12th Sound Material-Cycle Society/Circular Economy/3R and Transboundary Movement of E-Waste Seminar held in December 2018 in Seoul, where measures to reduce plastic wastes were shared. They appreciated the 5th TEMM-NOWPAP Joint Workshop on Marine Litter Management and International Coastal Cleanup Activities held in September, 2019 in Dalian.

12. In the priority area of Environmental Education and Public Awareness, the Ministers welcomed that the 19th and 20th Tripartite Environmental Education Network (TEEN) were held in Kitakyushu in October 2018 and in Hangzhou in October 2019 respectively.

13. The implementation status of each priority area is summarized in the Annex.

#### **IV. New priority areas for the next Tripartite Joint Action Plan (2020-2024)**

14. The Ministers discussed the new priority areas with which the next Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation for the period from 2020 to 2024 (TJAP 2020-2024) will be shaped.

15. The Ministers shared the recognitions that the next TJAP needs to be in line with the efforts of the international community by taking into consideration of global and regional environmental milestones, which have taken place since the adoption of the TJAP 2015-2019, including the following:

- (i.) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, which highlight environmental dimension as well as social and economic dimensions, were adopted by the Heads of States at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015.
- (ii.) The Paris Agreement was adopted at the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on 12 December 2015 which aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change.
- (iii.) The G20 Ministerial Meeting on Energy Transitions and Global Environment for Sustainable Growth held in Karuizawa, Japan in June 2019 produced significant outcomes including “the G20 Karuizawa Innovation Action Plan on Energy Transitions and Global Environment for Sustainable Growth”, “the G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter”, and

“the G20 Action Agenda on Adaptation and Resilient Infrastructure”. The G20 Osaka Summit shared “G20 Osaka Blue Ocean Vision” as well as endorsement of these outcomes at the abovementioned Ministerial Meeting. The progress under the G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litters has been made including sharing information on the relevant policies, plans and measures of the G20 countries.

- (iv.) Concerning biodiversity, the efforts are undertaken towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will be adopted in 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held next year in China in order to continue and develop the efforts on the global scales based on the lessons learned from the achieving of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.
- (v.) To implement air-related SDGs, related discussions and cooperation were developed under the UN framework, such as the third session of UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-3), which adopted the Resolution on “Preventing and Reducing Air Pollution to Improve Air Quality Globally” in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2017, the 27th Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held in Bangkok, Thailand in May 2019, which adopted the Resolution of “Strengthening Regional Cooperation to Tackle Air Pollution Challenges in Asia and the Pacific,” and the global celebrations of World Environment Day 2019 held in Hangzhou, China on 5 June 2019 under the theme “Beat Air Pollution.”

16. In developing the next TJAP and setting the new priority areas, the Ministers agreed to bear in mind following principles:

- (i.) Cooperations in the TEMM framework will contribute to achieve the SDGs goals of the three countries.
- (ii.) Joint activities under the next TJAP will be promoted in consideration of the interlinkages among the priority areas as well as the interdependence across the goals and targets of the SDGs and conducted in a way to maximize the

synergies.

- (iii.) TEMM will further explore activities with the “3+x” modality to promote sustainable development in the region and beyond, through making best use of the multilateral frameworks such as G20, ASEAN+3, and APEC into the activities under next TJAP and seeking partnerships with other countries and international organizations with consensus of the three countries.
  - (iv.) The TEMM activities are to be developed on the basis of mutual respects, mutual benefits, each country’s available resources and respect one another’s difference in the stage of development, and will be reviewed and renewed from time to time to seek the effective and efficient mechanism.
17. Reviewing the implementation of the TJAP 2015-2019 and taking into consideration of the aforementioned milestones and principles, the Ministers adopted the new TEMM priority cooperation areas for the period from 2020 to 2024 as following:
- (1) Air Quality Improvement
  - (2) 3R/Circular Economy/Zero Waste City
  - (3) Marine and Water Environment Management
  - (4) Climate Change
  - (5) Biodiversity
  - (6) Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response
  - (7) Transition to Green Economy
  - (8) Environmental Education, Public Awareness and Engagement
18. The Ministers agreed that the three countries will work together to build on the above priority areas to develop the TJAP 2020-2024 with a view to adopting it at TEMM22.
19. The actions under these priority areas will be developed based on the above principle. For example, activities under Marine and Water Environment Management including activities to tackle marine plastic litters would be promoted

in connection with other areas such as 3R/Circular Economy/Zero Waste City and/or Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response, as appropriate. Joint activities under Environmental Education, Public Awareness and Engagement would be pursued in conjunction with other areas such as Climate Change and Biodiversity. Activities under Climate Change would be developed in a way to also contribute to Air Quality Improvement and Transition to Green Economy.

20. According to the principles of sharing, efficiency, and integration, in the area of Air Quality Improvement, the Ministers recognized with appreciation the positive progress of EANET, and encouraged the further cooperation on policy dialogue, information sharing, technical facilitation, as well as capacity building. The Ministers also encouraged policy dialogue under the other inter-governmental cooperation frameworks such as North-East Asia Clean Air Partnership, etc.
21. In order to implement the joint research on DSS efficiently and effectively, the Ministers agreed to renew its implementation structure, by integrating the function of the Tripartite Directors General Meeting on DSS into the Directors General Meeting for TEMM and of the Steering Committee Meeting for joint research on DSS into both DSS WG meetings, which composes of both researchers and officials. They also endorsed the Mid-term Action Plan of WG I for joint research on DSS (2020-2024) and invited the DSS WG II to formulate their draft Mid-term Action Plan (2020-2024) at the next TEMM.

#### **V. TEMM22 and future events**

22. The Ministers decided that TEMM22 will be held in 2020 in Korea. The date and venue will be proposed by the host country and confirmed by China and Japan.
23. The Ministers welcomed that the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) will be hosted by China in October 2020, and expressed their willingness to cooperate towards the success of the COP.

24. The Ministers welcomed that Korea will host the 2nd P4G (Partnering for Green Growth and Global Goals 2030) Summit in June 2020, and the 4th Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific in September 2020.

## **VI. Closing**

25. The Ministers expressed their satisfactions with the success and fruitful outcomes of TEMM21. Minister CHO Myungrae and Minister Li Ganjie expressed their deep appreciations to Minister KOIZUMI Shinjiro, the Japanese Government, and the Kitakyushu Municipal Government for hosting the Meeting and extending great hospitality to all participants.



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KOIZUMI Shinjiro  
Minister  
Ministry of the Environment  
Japan

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CHO Myungrae  
Minister  
Ministry of Environment  
Korea

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Li Ganjie  
Minister  
Ministry of Ecology and Environment  
People's Republic of China