

Joint Communiqué
The 25th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting
Among Korea, China, and Japan
28-29 September 2024, Jeju, Korea

Preamble

1. Minister KIM Wansup of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, Minister HUANG Runqiu of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China, and Minister ITO Shintaro of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan convened in Jeju, Korea on 28-29 September 2024 to hold the 25th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM25).

Leaders' Commitment to trilateral cooperation on sustainable development and environment

2. The Ministers noted the commitment of the leaders of Korea, China, and Japan at the 9th ROK-Japan-China Summit on 27 May 2024 in Seoul, Korea to the cooperation on sustainable development including through climate change response. In light of the Joint Declaration, they reaffirmed their willingness to continue and further strengthen the tripartite environmental cooperation within the framework of TEMM.
3. In light of the Joint Declaration, the Ministers agreed to continue collaborating with Mongolia on reducing dust and sandstorms in East Asia through "Trilateral+X Cooperation" framework. They also shared their willingness to strengthen cooperation on global environmental challenges such as marine environmental conservation and plastic pollution.

Latest Development of Environmental Policies in Three Countries

4. The Ministers shared recent progress in environmental policies in each country since TEMM24. Minister KIM Wansup presented "Climate and Environmental Solutions: Opening Up a Sustainable Future", Minister HUANG Runqiu presented "Promoting Harmonious Co-existence between Humanity and Nature, Building a Clean and Beautiful World Together", and Minister ITO Shintaro presented "Review and Outlook of Major Environmental Policies in Japan". They

shared the view that such efforts of the three countries will contribute to achieving sustainable development in Northeast Asia as well as to solving national, regional, and global environmental problems.

Recent Progress in Tripartite Environmental Cooperation

5. The Ministers reviewed the progress in implementing the Tripartite Joint Action Plan 2021-2025 (TJAP 2021-2025) since TEMM24. They expressed satisfaction with the progress of cooperation projects under the eight priority areas of the TJAP 2021-2025 and are committed to continuing efforts to promote trilateral cooperation.

Air Quality Improvement

6. The Ministers welcomed the 11th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Air Pollution (TPDAP) hosted by Korea in July 2024 that shared the latest expertise and technologies on Ozone and PM2.5 co-control management and policies on air pollution. They recognized that the TPDAP shared common understanding for the need of collaborative area further expanded to co-control of air pollution and climate change. They appreciated the progress achieved in the TPDAP and other joint activities in line with the implementation of the Action Plan of the Second Phase of TPDAP among China, Japan and Korea (2021-2025) and expressed the expectation for the Third Phase (2026-2030). They shared the recognition that such joint efforts including through TPDAP substantially contributed to improving air quality in the three countries.
7. The Ministers welcomed the cooperation outcomes produced by the Dust and Sand Storms (DSS) Working Groups (WGs) in implementing the Mid-Term Action Plans of Working Group I & II for Joint Research on DSS (2020-2024), and noted the 17th meeting of DSS WG I to be hosted by Japan in October 2024, and the 17th meeting of DSS WG II to be hosted by Korea in November 2024. The Ministers noted that the both working groups will extend their mid-term action plans for 2020-2024 to the end of 2025 in line with the implementation period of the TJAP 2021-2025.

3R/Circular Economy/Zero Waste City

8. The Ministers welcomed the 16th Tripartite 3R/Circular Economy/Zero Waste City Seminar hosted by China in December 2023 which shared and discussed the

policies, practices, and progress on plastic waste management, circular economy and zero waste city.

Marine and Water Environment Management

9. The Ministers welcomed that the three countries participated in the 19th Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA) Annual Meeting and International Workshop held in Japan in January 2024 which shared the updates of water environmental governance and discussed water-related issues including TMDL in Korea, the introduction of bottom DO to water quality standards in Japan, and key river basins of water ecological environmental protection plan of China.

Climate Change

10. The Ministers noted that the 9th Forum of Carbon Pricing Mechanism in China, Japan, and Korea will be held in October to November 2024 in Japan to exchange latest progress in net-zero policies, operation results of carbon markets and development and challenges of international carbon market under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. They noted that the 5th Korea-China-Japan Carbon Neutral Cities Forum will be hosted by Korea in October 2024. They expressed the willingness to continue developing cooperation in the field of climate change, including synergy between pollution control and carbon emissions reduction.

Biodiversity

11. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 10th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Biodiversity (TPDBD) hosted by Japan in July 2024, which discussed the matters related to the monitoring framework and the review mechanism of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), possible synergies among measures for climate change and biodiversity loss, progress of the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), resource mobilization, digital sequence information on genetic resources, invasive alien species and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The Ministers also welcomed the outcome of the Tripartite Invasive Alien Species Expert Meeting held with TPDBD. The Ministers noted the discussion on DSI on genetic resources at the 10th TPDBD and recognized the importance of the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of DSI on genetic resources.

Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response

12. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 17th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Chemical Management (TPDCM) and the Tripartite Expert Seminar on Chemical Management (TESCM) hosted by Korea in November 2023 which shared national policies and response to global trend in chemical management and discussed the result of joint research on eco-toxicity test.

Transition to Green Economy

13. The Ministers welcomed the progress in the tripartite cooperation on eco-labelling and noted that the Tripartite Working-level Meeting on Eco-Labeling held in September 2024 in Beijing which discussed the trilateral standards for indoor floor decoration materials with a view to signing a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) in December 2024.

Environmental Education, Public Awareness and Engagement

14. The Ministers noted the 25th Tripartite Environmental Education Network (TEEN) Symposium to be hosted by Japan in October 2024 which addresses “Bridging the Past, the Present, and the Future”. The Ministers welcomed that the results of the TEEN joint project named “Case Study Report on Environment Education for Climate Change mitigation and adaptation among China, Japan and Korea” which was completed in December 2023 and led by Korea. They also welcomed the 21st Tripartite Joint Environmental Training Program which was held in China in December 2023 themed at promoting low carbon development at local level where environmental officials of the three countries exchanged best practices and discussed how to promote further cooperation. They noted that the 22nd Tripartite Joint Environmental Training Program will be held in Japan in November 2024.

Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS)

15. The Ministers welcomed the outcome of the 3rd Forum on Carbon Neutrality Goals of China, Japan, and Korea held in March 2024 hosted by TCS. The Ministers acknowledged the contribution of TCS under the framework of TEMM and welcomed continued collaboration with TCS in implementing TJAP 2021-2025.

Tripartite President Meeting (TPM)

16. The Ministers welcomed that the 21st Tripartite President Meeting among the National Institute of Environmental Research (NIER) of Korea, the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences (CRAES) of China, and the National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) of Japan will be held in November 2024 in Incheon, Korea and encouraged further strengthening the tripartite research cooperation which would provide scientific reference for policy cooperation within the TEMM framework.

Promoting Cooperation on Regional and Global Environmental Issues

17. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitments to strengthen measures to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental pollution in light of their respective national circumstances; accelerate the transformation towards green and low-carbon development / the net-zero economy and society / the carbon-free society; promote harmony between humanity and nature; and pursue efforts to improve global environmental governance, so as to facilitate green recovery and sustainable, inclusive development.

Air Pollution in the region

18. The Ministers took note of the progress of the cooperative activities of the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) and the North East Asia Clean Air Partnership (NEACAP) which have contributed to addressing air pollution in the region.

Climate Change

19. The Ministers reaffirmed the Joint Declaration of the 9th ROK-Japan-China Trilateral Summit, which decided that the three countries will take solid action and support efforts to achieve the Paris Agreement temperature goal to address the climate crisis in this critical decade, and the three countries will come forward with ambitious next Nationally Determined Contributions, reflecting the outcome of the first global stocktake.
20. The Ministers confirmed that they will prepare and submit their first Biennial Transparency Reports by the end of 2024.
21. Recognizing the urgent need for the actions for climate change adaptation to minimize the damage caused by climate crisis, the Ministers agreed to promote

tripartite cooperation and exchange of policies and best practices on adaptation.

22. The Ministers expected that substantial progress will be made at the 29th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP29) including in the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG) and Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

Biodiversity

23. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the swift, full, and effective implementation of all goals and targets of KMGBF, by taking urgent actions, through the implementation of their revised and updated National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), in order to achieve its 2030 mission to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, and its 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature. The Ministers also committed to continuing the three countries' international contributions to the global conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including through resource mobilization, capacity building, and technical and scientific cooperation.
24. The Ministers shared the recognition that invasive alien species pose an urgent issue in East Asia, and confirmed to continue cooperation and share information on the countermeasures and the best practices. They also confirmed to cooperate to share the domestic progress regarding DSI on genetic resources.

Plastic Pollution

25. The Ministers committed to playing a constructive role in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, with the ambition of completing its work at its fifth session (INC-5) which will be held in Busan, Korea, in November 2024.
26. The Ministers also expressed willingness to continue and strengthen the policy and information exchange regarding circular economy and plastic waste management through seminars and other activities. They acknowledged the significance of strengthening scientific, technical and technological knowledge with regard to plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, inter alia, on methodologies for monitoring.

Trilateral+X

27. Ministers noted the progress in the cooperation among three countries and Mongolia to reduce DSS and expected to further develop the collaboration to address regional environmental issues. They also shared the willingness to continue to explore possible “Trilateral+X” cooperation in such areas as climate change and marine environmental conservation to support accelerated implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism and expected close cooperation among the three countries at upcoming major regional and global environmental conferences, including the UNFCCC COP29, CBD COP16, INC-5 and relevant G20 meetings in 2024.

Marine Environment

28. The Ministers strongly supported the adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Convention and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) and agreed to endeavor to ratify and implement the agreement. They also committed to promoting collaborative activities to address marine debris problem in Northeast Asia including through policy and information sharing.

Priority Areas for the Next Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation 2026-2030

29. The Ministers discussed the new priority areas with which the next Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation for the period from 2026 to 2030 (TJAP 2026-2030) will be shaped.
30. The Ministers agreed on the following goals, under which new priority areas will be categorized for the purpose of defining and demonstrating the objectives and direction of the future cooperation in the TEMM framework:
- (1) Improving Environmental Qualities;
 - (2) Promoting Carbon Neutrality and Green Economy; and
 - (3) Enhancing Environmental Welfare
31. In developing the next TJAP and setting the new priority areas, the Ministers agreed to bear in mind the following principles:

- (1) The actions of the current TJAP which have been proven active and successful with productive and consistent progress will continue to be promoted and developed further.
- (2) The actions of the current TJAP will be streamlined and reorganized in terms of resource efficiency and common interest of the three countries.
- (3) Major changes in domestic and international environmental policies and processes will be taken into account to reflect new and growing cooperation demands.
- (4) The actions 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.

32. Reviewing the implementation of the TJAP 2021-2025 and in line with the goals and principles, the Ministers adopted the new TEMM priority cooperation areas for the period from 2026 to 2030 as following:

Improving Environmental Qualities

- (1) Air Pollution & DSS
- (2) Biodiversity
- (3) 3R/Circular Economy/Zero Waste City & Plastic Pollution

Promoting Carbon Neutrality and Green Economy

- (4) Climate Change
- (5) Transition to Green Economy

Enhancing Environmental Welfare

- (6) Environmental Education & Awareness
- (7) Environmental Management of Chemicals
- (8) Living Environment

33. The Ministers agreed that the three countries will work together to build on the priority areas to develop the TJAP 2026-2030 with a view to adopting it at TEMM26.

TEMM Youth Forum & Tripartite Roundtable on Environmental Business

34. The TEMM Youth Forum and the Tripartite Roundtable on Environmental Businesses (TREB) took place as the side events of TEMM25 and the results of

the discussions were reported to the Ministers. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the Youth Forum which discussed “Accelerating transition to a circular economy on plastics: Youth transformative action” and of the TREB which shared information on the efforts of the three governments and industries to achieve carbon neutrality under the three sub-themes of green hydrogen, circular economy, and the digital transformation of green industries.

TEMM25 Environment Awards

35. The Ministers congratulated and commended the winners of the TEMM Environment Awards. Ms. CHOI Jaeyeon from Korea, Ms. ZHENG Zhirong from China, Dr. CHATANI Satoru from Japan were awarded for their contributions to the tripartite environment cooperation.

TEMM26

36. The Ministers decided that TEMM26 will be hosted by China in 2025. The date and venue will be proposed by the host country and confirmed by Japan and Korea.

Closing

37. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the fruitful outcome of TEMM25. Minister HUANG Runqiu and Minister ITO Shintaro expressed their deep appreciation to Minister KIM Wansup, the Korean Government, and the Jeju Province for hosting the meeting and extending the great hospitality accorded to all participants.

29 September 2024, Jeju, Korea

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