

Joint Communiqué
The 20th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting
among China, Japan and Korea

23-24 June 2018, Suzhou, China

Preamble

1. At the invitation of Minister LI Ganjie of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of People’s Republic of China, Minister NAKAGAWA Masaharu of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan and Minister KIM Eunkyung of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea visited Suzhou, where the three Ministers met for the 20th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM20) on 23-24 June 2018.

2. The Chinese and Korean Ministers conveyed their condolences and sympathy to Japan for the lives lost and people injured as a result of the earthquake striking Osaka, Japan on 18 June 2018.

Overview of TEMM20

3. The Ministers delivered keynote speeches at the opening ceremony. Minister LI presented “Promote Ecological and Environmental Protection and Build a Clean and Beautiful World”, Minister NAKAGAWA presented “The Latest Trend of Environmental Policy in Japan” and Minister KIM presented “Towards a Sustainable Future: Korea’s Major Environmental Policies”.

4. The *Report on Tripartite Environmental Cooperation and its Outlook* was briefed to the Ministers. The *Report* reviews the evolution of the tripartite cooperation over the past 20 years, its achievements and useful experiences, and outlines future cooperation opportunities and outlook.

5. Sub-forum delegates gave presentations on a variety of topics, representing the 4th Tripartite Roundtable on Environmental Business, the 12th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Chemical Management, the 3rd Joint Workshop Between WGI and WGII

for Joint Research on Dust and Sandstorms, Tripartite Workshop on SDGs and Green Finance, and the Youth Forum.

6. The Ministers congratulated and commended winners of the TEMM20 Special Contribution Award. China National Environmental Monitoring Centre and Dr. Hu Min from China, Mr. Toshihiko Goto and Professor Hidefumi Imura from Japan and the Hanns Seidel Foundation Korea and Professor Kim Cheol Hee from Korea were awarded for their contribution to the tripartite environmental cooperation.

7. The Ministers held a closed-door meeting, during which they further exchanged views on deepening tripartite cooperation in a candid and in-depth manner.

8. The Ministers welcomed the birth of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China which integrates the former Ministry of Environmental Protection with additional functions such as climate change response, marine environmental protection, groundwater pollution prevention, etc. and opens new opportunities for further tripartite cooperation.

9. The three Ministers recognized with appreciation the role of the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) in advancing trilateral environmental cooperation and expected its broader participation in the TEMM mechanism.

Achievements of 20-year Cooperation

10. The Ministers congratulated that, as one of the most successful and longest-standing trilateral cooperation mechanisms within the framework of the China-Japan-ROK Trilateral Summit, TEMM has greatly contributed to building a clean and beautiful Northeast Asia during the last twenty years through close and effective cooperation among the three countries in the field of the environment. Recognizing the important role of TEMM in promoting the regional cooperation on the environment and sustainable development, they reaffirmed their commitment to continuing and further intensifying the cooperation under TEMM.

11. The Ministers commended the sincere tripartite partnership based on mutual understanding. They recognized that the scientific attitude of seeking truth from facts, their professionalism featuring the pursuit of excellence and their down-to-earth work

style are becoming strong driving forces for the deepening of the tripartite cooperation.

Recent Progress in Tripartite Environmental Cooperation

12. The Ministers were encouraged by the fact that the three leaders spoke highly of the progress achieved in the ongoing tripartite cooperative activities under the umbrella of TEMM as stated in the *Joint Declaration of the Seventh China-Japan-ROK Trilateral Summit*.

13. The Ministers heard with satisfaction progress made on the implementation of the *Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation (TJAP) 2015-2019* since TEMM19 (See annex).

14. They congratulated the key progress achieved through a variety of cooperative activities, especially the 5th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Air Pollution (TPDAP), which emphasized the compelling necessity for further strengthening joint effort and collaboration of the three countries in tackling air pollution; and the 4th and 5th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Biodiversity (TPDBD), which reiterated the necessity of in-depth information exchange and cooperation on invasive alien species including red imported fire ants, and on the contribution to the Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15).

15. The Ministers also welcomed the substantial progress that the three countries have achieved in sharing the information of microplastics in the TEMM-NOWPAP Joint Workshop on Marine Litter and disaster waste in the Sound Material-Cycle Society/Circular Economy/3R and Transboundary Movement of E-Waste Seminar.

16. They also welcomed the progress of the Tripartite Joint Research on the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals from environmental dimension.

Future Outlook of TEMM

17. The Ministers emphasized the importance to faithfully implement the Leaders' commitment for further strengthening joint effort and collaboration in tackling issues of common interest and deepen cooperation in various fields in the TJAP.

18. The Ministers believed that tripartite environmental cooperation will

contribute to resolving the global environmental issues with more proactive response to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity, etc.

19. The Ministers recognized that the three countries should join hands in increasing communication and cooperation within the frameworks of the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation, East Asia Summit, APEC and the G20. They shared the intention to explore the “3+1” modality to promote sustainable development in the region and beyond by sharing development experiences and deepening practical cooperation in the field of the environment. The Ministers welcomed that G20 Ministerial Meeting on Energy Transitions and Global Environment for Sustainable Growth will be hosted by Japan in June 2019, as the first ministerial meeting for the environment under G20, and expressed their willingness to cooperate toward the success of the meeting.

20. The Ministers reiterated that the three countries should work on the basis of mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit, openness and transparency, respect one another’s difference in the stage of development, and explore new cooperation ideas and approaches involving the various stakeholders including central governments, local governments, scientific research institutes, industrial enterprises and non-governmental organizations, so as to form a top-down and bottom-up cooperation pattern and build a closer cooperation network.

21. The Ministers welcomed the preparatory work done to date and agreed on launching the joint research on cities towards decarbonization and sustainable development in 2018.

22. The Ministers agreed that *the Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation (TJAP) 2020-2024* would be jointly developed and endorsed at TEMM22.

23. The Ministers appreciated the efforts of the experts of the Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollutants in Northeast Asia (LTP) project in conducting the joint research and agreed to support them to revise the Summary Report for Policymakers for its publication prior to TEMM21 at the latest. Noting the value of the proposed Northeast Asian Clean Air Partnership (NEACAP) in the context of the Northeast Asia Sub-regional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC), they agreed to

cooperate for its establishment at the 22nd Senior Officials Meeting due to be held in October 2018 based on the agreed Terms of Reference (TOR) of NEACAP at the Consultation Meeting in October 2017.

TEMM21

24. The Ministers decided that TEMM21 would be held in 2019 in Japan. The date and venue will be proposed by the host country and confirmed by Korea and China.

Closing

25. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the success and fruitful outcomes of TEMM20. Minister NAKAGAWA Masaharu and Minister KIM Eunkyung extended their deep appreciation to Minister LI Ganjie, the Chinese government, Jiangsu provincial government, and Suzhou municipal government for hosting the meeting and the great hospitality accorded to all participants.

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