

**Report on China-Japan-Korea Tripartite
Environmental Cooperation
and its Outlook**

Table of Content

Introduction	4
1. A Historical Review of the Tripartite Environmental Cooperation Mechanism	5
1.1 Start of Cooperation	5
1.2 Evolution of Cooperation	5
1.3 Distinctive Features of the TEMM Cooperation	8
2. Key Activities, Achievements and Useful Experience	9
2.1 Major Activities and Achievements	9
1) Air Pollution Control	9
2) DSS Prevention	9
3) Environmental Education	10
4) Biodiversity Conservation	11
5) Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response	11
6) Circulative Management of Resources/3R/ Transboundary Movement of E-Waste	12
7) Transition to Green Economy	12
8) Climate Change Response	13
9) Marine Environment Protection	13
10) Rural Environmental Management	14
2.2 Implications of Tripartite Environmental Cooperation	14
2.3 Useful Experience	17
3. Future Prospects	18
3.1 Cooperation Opportunities	18
3.2 Future Outlook	20

Introduction

The Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM) is the most successful

and longest-standing cooperation mechanisms within the framework of the Trilateral Summit Meeting of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea and has greatly contributed to building a clean and beautiful Northeast Asia since its launch in 1999. Especially in recent years, following the consensus in the Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation Among China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea of the 6th Trilateral Summit Meeting in 2015 (hereinafter referred to as Joint Statement), the three countries have proactively collaborated in the initiatives advocated by the leaders of the three countries, carried out environmental policy dialogues and reached consensus on important regional and global environmental issues, making significant contributions to the improvement of the environment in Northeast Asia.

As the highest-profile environmental cooperation mechanism in Northeast Asia, TEMM identified priority areas of cooperation respectively at TEMM1, TEMM11 and TEMM16, and established and implemented the two-phase *Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation* (hereinafter referred to as *Joint Action Plan*). Fruitful results have been achieved in many of the priority areas under the Joint Action Plans such as air pollution control, dust and sandstorm (DSS) control, environmental education, chemical management, transboundary movement of e-waste and transition to green economy.

On the occasion of TEMM20, this report has been developed to review the extraordinary journey of the tripartite environmental cooperation, showcase the outcomes of the pragmatic cooperation and plan for the future.

1. A Historical Review of the Tripartite Environmental Cooperation Mechanism

1.1 Start of Cooperation

In November 1999, at the ASEAN Plus China, Japan and ROK (APT) Summit in Manila, capital of the Philippines, leaders of China, Japan, and ROK officially launched cooperation among the three countries within the APT framework. At the 1st APT Leaders' Meeting, leaders of the three countries proposed an initiative to strengthen environmental cooperation and dialogue, which laid a political foundation for the tripartite environmental cooperation. In order to follow through on the initiative, the TEMM mechanism was put in place in 1999.

1.2 Evolution of Cooperation

The tripartite environmental cooperation is centered on TEMM and is comprised of a number of multi-layer cooperation mechanisms that involve government authorities, research institutes and the civil society. TEMM is held alternately among the three countries on an annual basis, where the parties update one another on their latest environmental policies, address regional and global environmental issues and seek to promote sustainable development in the region. Outcome of the sessions are presented in Joint Communiqués. From 1999 to 2018, 20 sessions of TEMM have been held.

In order to fully implement the outcome of TEMM and promote pragmatic cooperation, environmental authorities of the three countries, based on their cooperation needs, have identified priority areas for the TEMM cooperation and formulated and implemented the two-phase *Joint Action Plan for the priority areas*. The work and activities in each area as specified in the *Joint Action Plan* are jointly carried out by the relevant authorities of the three countries.

TEMM is the highest-level inter-governmental cooperation mechanism in the area of environmental protection in the Northeast Asian region. Since TEMM1 in Seoul, Korea the three countries' environmental cooperation has made remarkable achievements in goal and agenda setting, concept development and implementation. TEMM has played a key role in promoting regional environmental cooperation and sustainable development and is becoming the most important result-oriented environmental cooperation mechanism in Northeast Asia.

To date, the tripartite environmental cooperation centered on TEMM has undergone three stages in its evolution.

Stage I: 1999-2009, Foundation Stage. The three countries worked together in six priority areas, including raising the awareness of a shared environmental community, increasing information exchanges, strengthening environmental research cooperation, promoting cooperation in environmental protection industry and technologies, taking appropriate measures to prevent air pollution and protect the marine environment, and further strengthening conservation of biodiversity and addressing global environmental challenges such as climate change.

Major achievements in this stage include the following: first, it is made clear that tripartite environmental cooperation should be strengthened to enhance their abilities

to jointly meet environmental challenges. Second, a mechanism is established to facilitate the implementation of cooperation projects. Third, domestic policies and best practice in addressing regional and global environmental issues have been shared, the ability to collaboratively cope with regional and global environmental issues has been improved, and the influence of environmental cooperation is on the rise. TEMM was declared by the 1st China-Japan-Korea Trilateral Summit Meeting held in December 2008 to be one of its key components.

The second stage: 2010-2014, Deepening Stage. At TEMM11 held in Beijing in June 2009, the three countries identified ten priority areas for their environmental cooperation, namely, Environmental Education, Environmental Awareness and Public Participation, Climate Change, Biodiversity Conservation, Dust and Sandstorms (DSS), Pollution Control, Environment-Friendly Society/3R/Sound Resource Recycle Society, Transboundary movement of E-Waste, Sound Management of Chemicals, Environmental Governance in Northeast Asia, and Environmental Industries and Technologies. Based on the ten priorities, the environmental authorities of the three countries jointly introduced the Joint Action Plan (2010-2014), which was adopted at TEMM12 in May 2010 and was written into the 2020 China-Japan-ROK Cooperation Outlook jointly published by the governments of the three countries in 2010.

Major achievements at this stage include the following: first, the cooperation models for the priority areas have been developed, which encompasses information collection and sharing, joint academic research, and policy exchange and project delivery. Second, the improved TEMM mechanism with its three-tier meeting structure (on the ministerial level, director-general level and working level) allowed more effective coordination and further strengthened partnership. Third, the three parties made necessary investment in capital, technology and human resources, and involved various stakeholders including the government, research institutes, businesses and experts, leading to expanding the scope of cooperation.

The third stage: 2015-2019, Steady Development Stage. In April 2014, TEMM16 was held in Daegu, ROK. The meeting identified nine new priority areas for environmental cooperation from 2015 to 2019, namely, Air Quality Improvement, Biodiversity, Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response, Circulative Management of Resources/3R/Transboundary Movement of E-Waste, Climate Change Response, Conservation of Water and Marine Environment, Environmental Education, Public Awareness and Corporate Social Responsibility,

Rural Environmental Management, and Transition to Green Economy. In April 2015, TEMM17 was held in Shanghai, China. The *Joint Action Plan (2015-2019)*, which covered 37 activities under the nine priority areas, was officially adopted at the meeting. At the 6th China-Japan-ROK Trilateral Summit Meeting held in 2015, the three countries issued the first Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation and recognized the cooperation achievements of the three countries in the field of the environment.

Major achievements at this stage include: first, the results of cooperation in various fields have become increasingly apparent while the cooperation continued to be deepened and broadened, and a distinctive tripartite environmental cooperation model took shape. Second, a good coordination and communication mechanism was established to jointly deal with regional and global environmental issues. Third, the influence of the tripartite environmental cooperation has increased in the global and regional environmental governance landscape.

1.3 Distinctive Features of the TEMM Cooperation

1) Resilience without Interruptions

Northeast Asia has one of the most complicated political and security landscape in the world. Since its inauguration in 1999, TEMM has continued for 20 years despite changes in the situation in Northeast Asia. The meeting has never suffered from interruptions even at times when the three countries' political relations encountered great difficulties, demonstrating the strong resilience of the tripartite environmental cooperation. This is a distinctive feature that sets the TEMM cooperation apart from other regional environmental cooperation mechanisms in the world.

2) Steady Progress with a Step-by-Step Approach

In the past 20 years, based on mutual respect and mutual trust, the tripartite environmental cooperation has been making steady advances. TEMM has taken a step-by-step approach in expanding and deepening the cooperation, which has successfully turned agreements into actions. Now TEMM is not only an environmental cooperation mechanism for the three countries, but also an important platform for building a beautiful Northeast Asia.

3) Synergetic Development through Openness and Inclusiveness

Though the TEMM cooperation is tripartite, it is an open mechanism that has sought to engage with other Northeastern Asian countries and the international community at large. The three countries have witnessed progress in one another's domestic environmental governance and have maintained close ties with multilateral environmental agreements such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as well as regional programs including the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET), and Long-range Trans-boundary Air Pollutants in North East Asia (LTP) and the Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region (NOWPAP), and thus have had a profound impact on the way countries participate in global and regional environmental governance.

2. Key Activities, Achievements and Useful Experience

2.1 Major Activities and Achievements

1) Air Pollution Control

The three countries have convened five sessions of the Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Air Pollution (TPDAP) and promoted cooperation in a range of areas including policies and technologies for air pollution prevention and control, the prevention and control of PM_{2.5}, VOCs, O₃ and other pollutants from road and non-road sources, and air quality monitoring and assessment. To further promote cooperation in air pollution control, at the 2nd TPDAP in 2015, two working groups (Working Group I devoted to scientific research on prevention and control, and Working Group II tasked with technology and policy on air quality monitoring and prediction) were established. The two working groups hold regular joint seminars for mutual exchanges and cooperation.

2) DSS Prevention

Two working groups were established to address the issue of dust and sand storms (DSS), a regional environmental challenge. Working Group I (monitoring,

forecast and early warning) shares the DSS monitoring data on an annual basis, conducts research model comparison and publishes research reports. Working Group II (prevention and control) focuses on assessing the effectiveness of DSS control and vegetation restoration in the north of China and proposes technical counter-measures and management approaches to restore vegetation in desertification areas so as to reduce DSS hazards. Cooperation in DSS control has been going on for quite some time with a well-established mechanism. 13th sessions of DG-level meetings, 12 steering committee meetings, 10th WG I meetings, 10th WG II meetings, and the 3rd WGI-WGII joint workshops have been organized, which have enhanced exchanges and cooperation in DSS monitoring and assessment technology.

3) Environmental Education

Four cooperative activities have been carried out in promoting environmental education, including the Tripartite Environmental Education Network (TEEN), the compilation of children's readers on environmental protection, Tripartite Environmental Training and the Youth Forum. (1) Within the framework of the TEEN, 18 meetings of coordinators and 18 seminars on environmental education have been organized. The project has increased the exchanges in regional environmental education and enhanced the quality of regional environmental education. With its sound foundation, the project has put together numerous well-known environmental education institutions and experts from the three countries and has become a flagship project in the field of environmental education. (2) Joint efforts have been made to leverage primary education resources and compile children's readers on environmental protection. Teaching observations and experience sharing have been conducted with the Tripartite Children's Reader on Environmental Protection serving as the teaching material, further enriching the outcomes of the TEEN project. (3) The Tripartite Environmental Training program has organized 17 training sessions, which has led to extensive participation by the environmental authorities of the three countries, raised the awareness of officials on regional environmental issues and environmental cooperation and created a platform to facilitate their exchanges. The program has become an important part of regional environmental cooperation. (4) The Youth Forum is based on TEMM. It is held every year back-to-back with TEMM and reports to TEMM on the latest development of its cooperative activities. It therefore

has a sound foundation and high profile. The youth exchange activities have engaged the young people in the three countries and raised their environmental awareness and sense of responsibility.

4) Biodiversity Conservation

The three countries attach great importance to cooperation under the framework of the CBD and support one another in the preparation of the Conference of the Parties (COP). Five sessions of the Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Biodiversity have been organized, which have strengthened the exchange of policies in the areas of biodiversity and genetic resource access and benefit-sharing (ABS). Possible ways to deep cooperation in science and technology have been discussed, and trail-blazing collaboration has been launched in the field of invasive alien species control.

5) Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response

To date, twelve sessions of the Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Chemical Management and expert seminars have been held, during which information on the latest developments in chemical management policies was exchanged. Joint research on fish chronic toxicity tests have been conducted, existing chemical risk assessment techniques have been shared, and joint action plans have been developed. The cooperation mechanism, by promoting information exchange on chemical management policies and regulations, has significantly improved the ability of each country to manage chemicals and played a positive role in preventing chemicals from causing major adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

6) Circulative Management of Resources/3R/ Transboundary Movement of E-Waste

Eleven Tripartite 3R and Transboundary Movement of E-Waste Seminars have been held, and notable progress has been made in the alignment of circular economy policies, transboundary movement of e-waste, disaster waste management, and city refuse recycling. A hotline liaison mechanism for e-waste transfer has been set up, which has played an important role in facilitating information exchange and cooperation in the transboundary movement of e-waste. The competent agencies of

the three countries have also jointly organized the Basel Forum for Asia, in a bid to forge a unified research network for research institutions in the Asia-Pacific region.

7) Transition to Green Economy

Four sessions of Tripartite Roundtable on Environmental Business have been convened to discuss sustainable city practice, corporate environmental and social responsibility practice, environmental labeling, air quality improvement policies and cooperation, air quality improvement technology exchanges and cooperation, and the exchange of soil pollution remediation technologies. In order to respond to the call of the leaders of the three countries, the Tripartite Cooperation Network for Environmental Pollution Prevention and Control Technologies have been established to support the tripartite collaboration in environmental protection industry and technologies. Tripartite exchanges and dialogues on environmental pollution prevention and control technologies have been enhanced to promote the sharing of information on pollution prevention and control technologies in the region, encourage joint research by research institutes, so as to achieve industrial cooperation in the field of environmental pollution prevention and control technologies. Joint efforts have also been made to raise environmental awareness in the three countries to jointly address environment pollution and improve the region's technical capability to prevent and control environmental pollution. Two sessions of the Tripartite Joint Exhibition on Environmental Industry and Technologies and Cooperation Forum have been held to create an institutionalized exchange mechanism. The Tripartite Environmental Labeling Working Group Meeting is organized every year to discuss the development, opportunities and cooperation in the field of environmental labeling. The three countries' environmental labeling agencies jointly developed nine common standards for environmental labeling, such as the revision of common standards for copiers and common standards for textiles. They have also decided on the procedures for mutual recognition of environmental labeling and set up an information platform for the common standards of the three countries' environmental labeling.

8) Climate Change Response

The three parties have maintained cooperation under the UNFCCC and reached a number of consensus on climate change issues in the Joint Statement. The Tripartite

Seminar on Climate Change has been organized and agreement on climate change response policies and actions, as well as experience sharing in climate change mitigation and building low-carbon and environmentally friendly cities.

9) Marine Environment Protection

The three countries support cooperation in marine environment protection under TEMM and NOWPAP. The TEMM-NOWPAP Joint Workshop on Marine Litter has been taken place once a year since 2015, and the marine litter focal point meeting has been held on an annual basis. In the Joint Workshop, the participants have shared the information on each country's present and future researches on marine litter including microplastics, and recognized the importance of further progress on researches including the harmonization of monitoring methodologies on microplastics. The three countries have shared each country's annual progress and plans of policy works and research activities, and promoted the harmonization of microplastics monitoring methodology in the focal point meeting.

10) Rural Environmental Management

Two sessions of the Tripartite Rural Environment Policy Dialogue have been organized to facilitate policy discussions on rural environmental management and set up an information-sharing platform which would help to improve rural environmental management. Particular focus has been given to the treatment of rural sewage and utilization of livestock and poultry waste. A mechanism for the timely sharing of rural environmental policies has been put in place to improve rural environmental management in the three countries. Tripartite technical cooperation in rural environmental governance has been strengthened to promote advanced and applicable technologies. Research on launching pilots and demonstration programs on rural environmental governance has been conducted. Personnel exchanges and capacity building have also been promoted, and the tripartite rural environmental policy and technology exchange platform has been set up to improve rural environmental governance.

2.2 Implications of Tripartite Environmental Cooperation

1) Growing Importance Given to Ecological and Environmental Protection

The 18th Congress of the Communist Party of China incorporated ecological conservation into the five-sphere integrated plan for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. In March 2018, the 13th National People's Congress wrote ecological conservation into the Amendments to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and decided to establish a new Ministry of Ecology and Environment, which integrates the former Ministry of Environmental Protection with the relevant functions of other six government authorities including climate change response, emission reduction, marine environmental protection, supervision and prevention of groundwater pollution, highlighting the Chinese government's determination to further strengthen ecological conservation and environmental protection.

The cabinet of Japan has adopted the 5th basic environment plan in April, 2018 which is the long-term and comprehensive direction of environmental policy, based on the Basic Environment Act. The plan has adopted the concept of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda including sustainable development goals (SDGs) to embody the integrated improvement of environment, economy and society. The message of the plan is development of innovative solution from the aspect of socio-economic system, lifestyle, and technologies, and to realize simultaneous solution with social, and economic issue by environmental policy to improve quality of life in a long term. The plan also promotes the new concept, “sound social-ecological and material-cycling sphere” with the autonomous decentralized society which shares the local resources including human and natural resource, energy, and helps each other.

The new administration of the Republic of Korea which took office in May 2017 announced that enhancing the quality of life for the people would be the priority goal of the government's work in 2018. In the environmental front, the government made four commitments as following: building a foundation for national sustainability by shifting the way of using energy, resource and land; bringing a substantial improvement in environmental quality through introducing effective countermeasures against fine dust and reinforcing the chemical safety network; promoting environmental policies “for the people and with the people” such as proactively responding to environmental risks, strengthening the relief schemes for environmental

damages, and broadening public access to environmental information; and creating jobs through the innovation in environmental industry.

2) Increasing Consensus on Environmental Cooperation

TEMM is the only multilateral ministerial-level dialogue mechanism for environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia. Since its creation, the mechanism has played a key role in building consensus, identifying priority areas for cooperation and drawing blueprints for the future. The three countries cooperate on the basis of openness, transparency, mutual trust and respect for each other's common interests and differences. Under the leadership of the mechanism, the three countries have shelved disagreements to the maximal extent and sought consensus throughout the cooperation process. Significant achievements have been made in identifying priority cooperation areas, formulating a two-phase action plan and implementing specific cooperation projects. After 20 years of hard work, TEMM is seeing growing consensus and has become an important channel through which the three countries address the environmental issues in Northeast Asia.

3) Improved Cooperation Mechanism

TEMM has made a sound decision-making mechanism at all levels to effectively implement the cooperative activities in key areas and promote the gradual improvement of regional environmental quality. The three countries have established cooperation mechanisms and research working groups in such areas as air pollution, DSS control, biodiversity conservation and electronic waste management to develop work plans and deliver cooperation projects, and notable progress has been made. It is particularly worth mentioning that a hotline mechanism was set up to deal with transboundary movement of e-waste, and collaboration in DSS monitoring and early warning, together with joint research on DSS prevention and control, has achieved heartening results in coping with key environmental issues in the region.

The three countries, through TEMM, update one another on their stances on such important global environmental issues as the Sustainable Development Agenda, climate change and biodiversity conservation, and carry out specific cooperative activities within the framework of TEMM, including convening climate change seminars and biodiversity policy dialogues, etc. TEMM has become an effective mechanism for the three countries to exchange views on regional and global environmental issues.

4) Enhanced Environmental Governance Capabilities

TEMM has enhanced the environmental protection capabilities of the three countries through policy dialogues and technical cooperation and has effectively raised public awareness. In the early days of the cooperation, the TEEN workshops and training programs were launched and have continued to this day, which provided a platform for information exchange and experience sharing among environmental educators, young people and environmental officials in the three countries, raised environmental protection awareness among young people and students, and improved the officials' capabilities in environmental management. In addition, the three countries have also actively carried out cooperation in the field of environmental protection industry and signed an agreement on the establishment of a “Tripartite Environmental Pollution Prevention Technology Cooperation Network” in 2016. The network will build a platform to facilitate tripartite exchanges and cooperation in environmental protection industry and technologies to further improve pollution control capability of the three countries.

5) Increasing Influence in Global and Regional Environmental Governance

With the increasing influence of Northeast Asia in the global environment landscape, the China-Japan-Korea environmental cooperation has attracted growing attention from the international community. In 2016, the UNEP, in its *Global Environment Outlook 6*, gave a detailed introduction and positive evaluation of the role and success of TEMM, demonstrating the increasing influence of the tripartite environmental cooperation in global and regional environment governance.

2.3 Useful Experience

The tripartite environmental cooperation has travelled an extraordinary journey in the past 20 years. The cooperation could not have achieved such success without the following three pieces of valuable experience:

1) A Strong Sense of Mission to Safeguard Ecological Safety and Build a Beautiful World.

In the past 20 years of environmental cooperation, the governments of China, Japan and Korea have come to a deep understanding that we only have one Earth, and that ecological changes have a direct bearing on the survival and development of mankind. As the world's major economies, the three countries shoulder great responsibilities in the world's pursuit of sustainability and are increasingly aware that

ecological conservation and reining in environmental pollution are pressing and arduous tasks that call for immediate actions, and thus government officials and non-government advocates are forging ahead with a strong sense responsibility for future generations and unyielding perseverance. It is such a sense of mission that has driven the three countries to navigate through changes in the political landscape in Northeast Asia and hold tight to the principle of meeting environmental challenges through cooperation. Their dedication to safeguarding ecological safety is unshakable and they are full of confidence in building a beautiful Northeast Asia and a beautiful world.

2) Sincere Partnership

Friendship comes from sincerity and cooperation builds on mutual trust. China, Japan, and Korea have different national conditions and are at different stages of development. They have different understandings of some issues in sustainable development and their interests differ. Government officials involved in environmental cooperation have learnt from practice that a constructive and sincere partnership featuring equality, peace and inclusiveness that transcends differences in political and social systems and ideologies and abandons all confrontational factors between nations is conducive to international environmental cooperation. In the past 20 years, we are delighted to have witnessed sincere tripartite cooperation based on mutual understanding, which has become a powerful driving force for the in-depth development of environmental cooperation among the three countries.

3) Result-Oriented Cooperation

The core of environmental protection lies in action. The progress in the tripartite environmental cooperation could not have been possible without the scientific attitude of seeking truth from facts, the professionalism featuring the pursuit of excellence, and the pragmatic and result-oriented work style. In each and every stage of the cooperation, be it agenda and goal setting, planning or implementation of agreement, it is critical to seek truth, tell the truth, introduce genuinely effective measures, make practical decisions and aim for real progress. In the past 20 years, the countries, by implementing the two-phase joint action plan, solving problems and delivering specific projects, have managed to deepen their cooperation and achieved positive results. This spirit of pragmatic cooperation is a valuable asset for the tripartite environmental cooperation.

3. Future Prospects

3.1 Cooperation Opportunities

The world today is undergoing great development, big changes, and major adjustments. As the international situation is undergoing complex and profound changes, the world economic growth still faces many uncertainties, and regional and global environmental issues have become increasingly outstanding. Regional and global environmental crises, such as regional environmental pollution and large-scale ecological destruction, global climate change, acid rain, land desertification, transboundary pollution, marine pollution, loss of biodiversity and soil erosion, are threatening the survival and development of mankind.

Green development is the theme of the times. The adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda has created a new path towards sustainable development. The signing of the *Paris Agreement* has effectively promoted the implementation of the UNFCCC and proposed a blueprint and vision for global response to climate change and green and low-carbon development after 2020. It is therefore a milestone in the history of human climate governance. The *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets are the overall frameworks that guide conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and serve as a good starting point for the pursuit of the 2050 Vision for biodiversity “Living in harmony with nature”.

Humanity is becoming a community of shared future with highly integrated interests and increasing interdependency. As important participants in global governance, the three countries will be able to contribute to the global environmental governance by strengthening tripartite environmental cooperation. They are parties to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol and share the responsibility in addressing climate change, and should play a more important role in international cooperation in climate change. The three countries are all committed to implementing the sustainable development pathway, promoting sustainable development in Northeast Asia and working together to meet regional and global environmental challenges. 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, tap cooperation potential, expand cooperation scope and continue to push cooperation to a new level.

3.2 Future Outlook

Countries around the world have reached broad consensus on achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and fulfilling the Paris Agreement and the CBD's Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Global environmental governance will enter a new era, in which the tripartite environmental cooperation will play a more pivotal role in global environmental cooperation. The three countries should work together to build a new type of partnership based on win-win cooperation and create a community of shared interests, responsibilities and future, contributing to global ecological safety and sustainable development.

1) 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. While consolidating the existing cooperation mechanisms, it is important to further tap cooperation potential, explore new cooperation ideas, take new cooperation approaches, so as to bring the tripartite environmental cooperation to a new level and create new highlights in environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia.

2) It is important to implement the initiatives of the Leaders' Meeting and deepen cooperation in various fields in the *Joint Action Plan (2015-2019)*. The three countries will strengthen policy dialogues and experience sharing to jointly address key regional environmental issues such as air pollution and DSS. International cooperation will be enhanced to conserve regional biodiversity and collaborate in the field of genetic resources access and benefit-sharing. Personnel exchanges and capacity building will be strengthened to raise awareness of regional environmental protection and corporate social responsibility. Closer cooperation will be conducted in such areas as chemical management, environmental emergency response, circulative management of resources /3R/transboundary movement of e-waste, climate change response, conservation of water and marine environment, rural environmental management and transition to green economy.

3) The countries will expand cooperation channels, further enrich cooperation and promote various forms of exchanges and cooperation involving the 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 in the field of environmental protection.

4) A more proactively response to global and regional environmental issues will be introduced. The three countries should strengthen communication and consultation in global and regional environmental issues such as implementing the 2030 SDGs, coping with climate change, implementing the strategic plan of CBD and establishing post-2020 global biodiversity targets, in a bid to make unremitting efforts to promote global environmental governance.

Looking into the future, the tripartite environmental cooperation enjoys broad prospects. Strengthened environmental cooperation will not only benefit the three countries themselves, but also improve the environmental quality in Northeast Asia and even East Asia and make significant contributions to global environmental governance. The next 20 years will surely be more exciting!