

Joint Communiqué

The 22nd Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting

among Korea, China, and Japan

7 December 2021

Video Conference, hosted by Korea

Preamble

1. Minister HAN Jeung-ae 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 YAMAGUCHI Tsuyoshi of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan met virtually on 7 December 2021 for the 22nd Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM22).

Recent Progress in Environmental Policies in Korea, China, and Japan

2. The Ministers shared recent progress in environmental policies in each country since TEMM21. Minister HAN presented “Korea’s Journey towards Green Future”, Minister HUANG presented “Adhere to the Path of Green and Low-carbon Development, Build a Clean and Beautiful Homeland”, and Minister YAMAGUCHI presented “Review and Outlook of Japanese Environmental Policies”. The Ministers 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

3. The Ministers appreciated with satisfaction that the Tripartite Joint Action Plan 2015-2019 (TJAP 2015-2019) has been successfully concluded with significant achievements in improving the three countries capacity of environmental management, enhancing public awareness, and consolidating TEMM as a well-functioning tripartite cooperation mechanism for addressing regional and global environmental challenges as well as for achieving sustainable development.

4. Highlighting the importance of continuing and further strengthening TEMM cooperation in the time of global crisis caused by COVID19, the Ministers spoke highly of the three countries' concerted efforts to keep the cooperation momentum going by implementing the joint activities through online communication such as video conference.
5. The Ministers welcomed the results of the 7th and 8th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Air Pollution (TPDAP) respectively held in July 2020 and September 2021 as video conferences. They acknowledged that the implementation of the 2nd Five-Year Implementation Plan (2021-2025) will contribute to improving the air quality of the three countries with a particular focus on PM_{2.5} and O₃. The Ministers welcomed the cooperation progress made in implementing the Mid-Term Action Plan (2020-2024) of the Working Group I on Dust and Sandstorms (DSS WG I) through the 13th and 14th meeting respectively held in October 2020 hosted by China and in September 2021 by Japan. They also appreciated that the Working Group II on Dust and Sandstorms (DSS WG II) established its Mid-Term Action Plan (2020-2024) at the 13th meeting held in December 2020 hosted by Japan. The Ministers noted the collaboration between the DSS WGI and II through the DSS Extended Workshop held in September 2021 and encouraged the continued collaboration. They also appreciated the launch of DSS Portal website.
6. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 7th and 8th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Biodiversity respectively held in September 2020 hosted by Japan and in July 2021 hosted by Korea as video conferences which discussed goals, targets, indicators, implementation and monitoring mechanism, and measures for evaluation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to be adopted at the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 15) in Kunming, China, as well as measures against invasive alien species. They also welcomed that the three countries will strengthen further cooperation on biodiversity.
7. The Ministers welcomed the Joint Research on Cities towards Decarbonization and Sustainable Development that was approved by the three countries on the occasion of the 22nd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP22) to conduct in cooperation with Korea Environment Institute (KEI), National Centre for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC), and Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) with its outcome of good practices towards decarbonization and sustainable city. They also welcomed that the three countries will strengthen further cooperation on adaptation at city level.

8. The Ministers welcomed the outcome of the TEMM-NOWPAP Joint Workshop on Marine Litter Management held in September 2021 hosted by Japan including sharing about the progress of all actions pertaining to delivery of the G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter.
9. The Ministers welcomed the outcome of the 13th Sound Material-Cycle Society/Circular Economy/3R Seminar held in December 2019 in China and the 14th Seminar held in December 2020 virtually through which the three countries exchanged their policies on promoting circular economy and plastic waste reduction and management.
10. The Ministers noted the meaningful discussion about the latest regulatory information and experience on chemical management at the 14th and 15th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Chemical Management (TPDCM) and the Tripartite Expert Seminar on Chemical Management (TESCM) respectively held in November 2020 hosted by Korea and November 2021 hosted by China as video conference.
11. The Ministers noted the fruitful discussions to enhance multilateralism to achieve green recovery, carbon neutrality, biodiversity conservation, and the Sustainable Development Goals made at the 2nd P4G Seoul Summit, the 4th Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific, CBD COP15 – Part One and UNFCCC COP26 with the active participation of the three countries.

Adoption of Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation 2021-2025

12. Recalling the commitments made at the Trilateral Summits and stated in the Joint Statement on Environmental Cooperation in 2015 and the Trilateral Cooperation Vision for the Next Decade in 2019, the Ministers adopted the Tripartite Joint Action Plan 2021-2025 (TJAP 2021-2025) which prescribes the vision, principles,

and objective of the tripartite environmental cooperation for the period by 2025 and sets out the specific actions and implementation plans in the following eight priority areas adopted at TEMM21:

- (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

13. The Ministers shared the commitment to the successful implementation of the TJAP 2021-2025 through efforts among the three countries. They expected that carrying out the joint actions will contribute to achieving global goals such as Sustainable Development Goals, UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement as well as to promoting green transformation in the region and to tackling environmental issues of the three countries' common interest. They also encouraged continued and enhanced participation of various stakeholders such as youth, businesses, academia, local government and civil society in the implementation of the TJAP based on the consensus among the three countries.
14. The Ministers will submit the TJAP 2021-2025 to the 9th Trilateral Summit which is to be held in Korea.
15. The Ministers acknowledged the contribution of Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) in the framework of TEMM and welcomed continuous collaboration with TCS under the TJAP 2021-2025.

Promoting Green Recovery from Global COVID-19 Pandemic

16. The Ministers underlined the importance of exerting wisdoms among the three countries to strive to minimize the impacts of the global COVID19 pandemic on the economy, the society, and the environment. They shared the view that the actions to build forward better and greener from COVID19 need to promote the

transition to a green, low-carbon/decarbonized/carbon neutral, and resilient economy in light of their respective national circumstances as well as the effective protection of the environment, with the idea of prioritizing ecological conservation and achieving green development. The Ministers expressed willingness to make the best use of the TEMM mechanism for exchanging the policies and best practices relevant to the green and inclusive recovery from COVID19 and also to share experience through other platforms such as the Online Platform on Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from COVID19.

Advancing TEMM Cooperation

17. The Ministers highlighted the significant steps they have made recently to commit to achieve net-zero GHG emissions or carbon neutrality respectively and to strengthen policies to reach the goal. The Ministers emphasized the urgent need to increase their efforts to control and reduce emissions through accelerated action and implementation of domestic mitigation measures, especially in the critical decade. The Ministers emphasized the importance of further collaboration with various stakeholders and sharing good practices for the climate actions of local governments. The Ministers welcomed the adoption of the arrangement on the implementation of the Article 6 (market and non-market mechanisms) of the Paris Agreement, and emphasized the importance of the implementation of Article 6 for emission control and reduction. The Ministers expressed their willingness to call on other countries to set long-term goals and strengthen policies to implement the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, and cooperate with them as appropriate.

18. The Ministers welcomed the adoption of the Kunming Declaration at the Part One of CBD COP15, which was successfully convened in October 2021 in Kunming, China. They decided to work closely together to ensure the development, adoption and implementation of an effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework to reverse the current loss of biodiversity and ensure that biodiversity is put on a path to recovery by 2030 at the latest, towards the full realization of the 2050 Vision of “Living in Harmony with Nature”. The Ministers also stressed the importance of the protection and restoration of endangered species and conservation of ecosystems such as forests and wetlands as carbon sinks.

19. The Ministers expected that the three countries will expand their cooperation including exploring the possibility of “Trilateral+X” cooperation and strengthening their collaboration in broader multilateral environmental processes on the issues of common interest such as marine plastic litter, biodiversity, and carbon neutrality. They decided to encourage close cooperation among the three countries at upcoming major environmental events in regional and global scale including the Resumed 5th Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2), CBD COP15 – Part Two, UNFCCC COP27, and 2022 G20 Environment Ministers Meeting.
20. Recognizing the importance of research cooperation which would provide scientific basis for policy cooperation, the Ministers noted with appreciation the cooperation among the National Institute of Environmental Research (NIER) of Korea, the National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) of Japan, and the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences (CRAES) of China under the Tripartite Presidents Meeting (TPM). They were willing to encourage TEMM to interact with the TPM which is an independent platform for finding and facilitating research collaborations, so that the two tripartite mechanisms mutually support each other.

TEMM23

21. The Ministers decided that TEMM23 will be held in 2022 in China. The date and venue will be proposed by the host country and confirmed by Japan and Korea.

Closing

22. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the fruitful outcome of TEMM22. Minister HUANG Runqiu and YAMAGUCHI Tsuyoshi expressed their deep appreciation to Minister HAN Jeoung-ae for hosting the meeting.

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