

Chairperson's Summary
The 12th Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation
November 24-26, 2003
Toyama, Japan

1. The 12th Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC) was held on November 24-26, 2003 in Toyama City, Toyama Prefecture, Japan. The conference was organized by the joint efforts of the Ministry of the Environment, Japan, Toyama Prefecture, Toyama City, and the Northwest Pacific Region Environmental Cooperation Center (NPEC). Delegates from central and local governments and research institutions of the People's Republic of China, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation, as well as the representative from United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), participated in this conference.
2. The subjects discussed at the 12th NEAC were as follows:
 - a) Preservation of the Marine Environment
 - b) Creating a Recycling Society
 - c) Environmental Cooperation Initiatives by Local Authorities
3. The conference opened with an introductory speech by Mr. Toshiro Kojima, Director-General of the Global Environment Bureau of the Ministry of the Environment, Japan, followed by welcoming addresses from Mr. Yutaka Nakaoki, Governor of Toyama Prefecture, and Mr. Masashi Mori, Mayor of Toyama City.
4. Following the opening ceremony, NEAC held a symposium on Dust and Sandstorms (DSS) with a large audience. The symposium was composed of a keynote speech and a panel discussion, which aimed to deepen the understanding of DSS for all participants. A keynote speech entitled "Behavior of KOSA particles over the Taklamakan desert: Effect of KOSA on the environment in East Asia," informed the monitoring of DSS (KOSA or Asian dust). The speech drew attention to the fact that the understanding of DSS was not high, that DSS events are essentially relating with global environment, and that international cooperation is essential for DSS research. In the panel discussion, most of the panelists highlighted the results from their monitoring. It was especially noted that establishing a DSS forecast and early warning network for Northeast Asia is important and that each country is encouraged to facilitate sharing DSS

monitoring data and technical skills in the region. The remarks were also expressed from some participants that the recent severe impacts of DSS were partly due to the desertification of grasslands. The conference took note of several initiatives presented by some participants including ADB-GEF project which attracted much attention.

5. Preceding the sessions, the representatives of each country and international organization presented their recent development of environmental policies. The conference noted the following points:
 - a) Many initiatives have already developed.
 - b) They cover a variety of issues from local to global environmental issues and from urban pollution to natural resource management.
 - c) These presentations updated the perception of each participant.
 - d) They were a good basis for further discussion.

The conference recognized that the 8th Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council and the 5th Global Ministerial Environmental Forum would be held in March 2004 on Jeju Island.

6. Session one, “Preservation of the Marine Environment” focused on the various efforts for both onshore and offshore environment. The conference noted the following points:
 - a) Marine issues cover a variety of aspects from pollution to fishery, natural resource management, integrated coastal management, and environmental risk assessment and management.
 - b) In this regard, marine issues play as “show-window” to achieve sustainable development.
 - c) Many approaches have been practiced to mobilize initiatives of environmental conservation by applying a mixed policy, which can include monitoring, regulation, research, information, education, investment strategy, and economic instruments.
7. Session two, “Creating a Recycling Society” focused on the various efforts from both the public and private sectors in each country. The conference noted the following points:
 - a) To create a recycling society, it is important for various actors to share the responsibilities and financial burdens.

- b) Local governments should take the main role in this field whereas national governments should play an important role for institutional support. At the same time, international cooperation should also be promoted.
 - c) Establishing framework for achieving sustainable development should be promoted through enhancing capacity building, economic incentives, and technology development.
8. Session three, “Environmental Cooperation Initiatives by Local Authorities” focused on the various efforts pursued by local governments of each country. The conference noted the following points:
- a) Various types of international cooperation of local authorities have already developed in this region.
 - b) To promote this kind of cooperation, it is important to exchange information from experiences at every opportunity, such as this conference.
 - c) Local authorities have great potential to enhance participation through stakeholders such as the public, businesses, and NGOs into the international environmental cooperation.
9. All participants welcomed the proposal by the Republic of Korea to host the 13th NEAC in 2004. The dates, venue, duration, and agenda of the conference will be decided by the host country in collaboration with the other participating countries at least three months prior to the meeting.
10. The participants expressed their appreciation for the gracious hospitality of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, Toyama Prefecture, Toyama City, and NPEC. Also, mutual gratitude for the successful conclusion of this 12th NEAC was exchanged.