

Joint Communiqué

1. At the invitation of Mr. Xie Zhenhua, Minister of the State Environmental Protection Administration of the People's Republic of China, Minister Koike Yuriko of the Environment Ministry of Japan and the Minister Han Myeong Sook of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea visited Beijing, where the three Ministers met for the Fifth Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM) on December 13-14, 2003. The Ministers also paid a courtesy call to H.E. Zeng Peiyan, Vice Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China, at the Zhongnanhai, Beijing on December 13, 2003.
2. The Ministers are encouraged by the Joint Declaration on the Promotion of the Tripartite Cooperation among the three countries, signed by leaders of the three countries in Bali last October. In the field of the environmental cooperation, they also recalled the significance attached to TEMM for its leading role in the regional environmental cooperation by the leaders of the three countries at the 2001 Trilateral Summit. They agreed that TEMM should play more important roles in strengthening regional and global environmental cooperation to realize the content of the Declaration.
3. The Ministers reflected upon the last informal meeting held on the sidelines of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg last year and noted the importance of integration of economic development, social development and the environment protection. Recognizing that healthy environment is prerequisite to social and economic sustainability, they reaffirmed their commitment to contributing to international efforts for sustainable development. They also discussed concrete ways to work on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.
4. The Ministers reviewed the progress made in environmental management in their respective countries since the Fourth TEMM. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the new targets set by the Government of China for improving the environment while promoting economic growth, which aims to increase by fourfold the current level of GDP in the next 20 years. They shared the view that the domestic environmental efforts of the three countries are vital to the enhancement of human society and should be supported by the international community. They agreed to step up their concerted efforts for regional and global environmental improvement.
5. The Ministers highly regarded the achievements of the various TEMM projects and pledged their support for the expansion and continued productivity of these

projects. They also attached great importance to children's environmental education and promotion of human resources exchange.

6. Regarding global environmental issues, the Ministers expressed strong concern over their alarming severity and commended the positive steps taken by the international community to tackle these issues. The discussion covered, *inter alia*, climate change, biodiversity, ozone depletion, and acid deposition. The Ministers agreed to further deliberate on these issues when they meet on the occasion of major international conferences.
7. The Ministers reflected on the outcomes of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Milan, Italy, on December 1-12, 2003. The Ministers recognized that the three countries should exert all possible efforts towards the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC. They further recognized the importance of Kyoto Protocol in addressing global climate change and strongly urged those countries which had not ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so as soon as possible to ensure its prompt entry into force and effective implementation thereof. The Ministers noted with appreciation the continuous efforts of the three countries to address climate change which is a pressing issue requiring global participation in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities.
8. The Ministers noted with pleasure that Korea will be hosting the 8th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) which is scheduled to convene in Jeju Island on March 29-31, 2004. Recognizing that this is the first time that the Governing Council will convene in Asia, they decided to cooperate closely for the success of this session. As an initial step, the Ministers agreed to publish a brochure detailing the nature of TEMM's work and its results since 1999.
9. Understanding that TEMM is an action-oriented cooperation body designed to counter global and regional environmental problems, the Ministers emphasized the need for TEMM's reinforcement and extended role in global and regional environmental endeavors. To this end, they agreed to make sustained efforts for instilling the TEMM's guiding spirit- the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect for collective well-being- to the rest of the Asian region.
10. Regarding air pollution, the Ministers noted that acid deposition is a serious problem faced by China, Japan and Korea, and reaffirmed their commitment to actively promote the activities of the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) and joint research on Long-range Trans-boundary Air Pollutants in Northeast Asia (LTP).
11. The Ministers paid attention to dust and sandstorms (DSS), which have become

exacerbated by droughts and land degradation in Northeast Asia. Recognizing the necessity of capacity building for environmental management as well as promoting monitoring and early warning network system for DSS, they agreed to make joint efforts to develop related projects.

12. Concerning the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) led by UNEP with the goal of preserving the marine and coastal environment of the Northwest Pacific, the Ministers agreed that it is important to establish Regional Co-ordination Unit (RCU) as soon as possible and to further collaborate for active promotion of NOWPAP activities.
13. The Ministers concurred that the next TEMM would be held in Japan. The date and venue will be proposed by the host country and subsequently confirmed by Korea and China.
14. The Ministers expressed their deep satisfaction with the outcomes of this year's meeting as well as the friendly atmosphere that prevailed. Minister Koike Yuriko and Minister Han Myeong Sook conveyed their gratitude to Minister Xie Zhenhua for his warm welcome and hospitality.

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