



Ecoconnect

Series of MOEJ International Projects



Econnect: Series of MOEJ International Projects
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Climate Change, Waste/Recycle, Natural Environment/Biodiversity,
Air/Transportation, Water/Soil/Ground Environment, Environmental Education

Introduction

In September 2015, “the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 2015” was adopted at the United Nations. The agenda addresses three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social, and environmental. Also, as many of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are closely linked with the environmental dimension, it can be said that environmental problems are still considered as a commonly important issue to be overcome by the international community. In particular, many countries in developing regions are facing increasing problems such as urban air pollution, water pollution, deterioration of health environment, forest and soil degradation, loss of biodiversity, and marine pollution, due to the combination of various factors including population growth, urbanization, industrialization, and poverty. Moreover, the world is now facing wide-ranging issues such as climate change and acid precipitation due to transboundary pollutants discharged from many countries.

Such problems have threatened not only human life and health, but also endanger the base for development of future generations due to deterioration of environmental resources. In order to eradicate poverty and ensure that environmental wealth is passed on to future generations, it is necessary to tackle these environmental problems in line with the concept of “sustainable development.”

The Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MOEJ) has contributed to various types of international cooperation under the concept of Clean Asia Initiative (CAI). Japan has experienced serious industrial pollution and other environmental degradation in the process of its rapid economic development, and has overcome these problems through all-out efforts by the national and local governments, business sector, and each citizen. Today, Japan is working on the problems of waste disposal and other pollution issues related to everyday living, global warming and conservation of nature. By taking advantage of these experiences and technologies developed through such processes, Japan is promoting international cooperation to deal with environmental problems.

This policy catalogue aims to promote understanding and expansion of these activities by showing the menu of possible cooperative activities with the MOEJ, hoping that environmental cooperation with other countries and regions will be further enhanced.

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International Research Network for Low Carbon Societies (LCS-RNet)

Outline

This is a network of researchers supporting scientific policy making, policymakers, business people and other related stakeholders. Through policy dialogues, various workshops and annual meetings, the network conducts close talks and shares knowledge on necessary core topics to bring about a low-carbon society, and by reflecting results into policies, aims to support the transition to a low-carbon and resilient society.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Countries throughout the world

Progress and achievements

The International Research Network for Low Carbon Societies (LCS-RNet) was established when Japan, which chaired the G8 in 2008, advocated the necessity of activities to link policies and research, and participating countries agreed to this proposal. Activities began in 2009, with the Secretariat located in Japan (Institute for Global Environmental Strategies: IGES).

LCS-RNet is a research exchange network for countries around the world to share scientific knowledge needed to create a low-carbon society and to come up with new ideas to achieve this. At the same time, it supports timely policy implementation directly linking policy with research and provides a platform for dialogue between researchers and policymakers.

LCS-RNet was approved at the G8 Environment Ministers Meeting held in Syracuse, Italy in April 2007, and it is expected that knowledge from the network will be reflected at the top level in environmental policies worldwide. The results will also be used as inputs in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and related international institutions. Researchers will use results from the network to contribute proactively to drafting low-carbon and green-growth strategies in their respective countries.

At the Seventh LCS-RNet Annual Meeting held in Paris, France in June 2015, about 80 participants from 15 countries, 3 international organizations, and one aid agency attended. At the Meeting, discussions were held from researchers' perspectives on how financial and monetary policies can contribute to the transition to a low-carbon society, focusing on horizontal links between the energy system transition, the development of low-carbon cities and regions resilient to climate change, as well as low-carbon issues and their development processes. The content of the two-day discussions was compiled in a statement by the academic community. The statement was distributed at "Our Common Future under Climate Change", an event held in Paris in July 2015, and submitted to the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy of France as input for COP21.

Division in charge

Research and Information Office, Policy and Coordination Division, Global Environment Bureau

Relevant website

International Research Network for Low Carbon Societies (LCS-RNet)
<http://lcs-rnet.org/>

Last updated

December, 2015

Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific

Outline

Towards the creation of a sound material-cycle society by promoting 3R in Asian countries, the Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific was established in November 2009 under a proposal by Japan, as a platform for cooperation among a wide range of stakeholders including officials and representatives from governments of Asian countries, international organizations, aid agencies, the private sector, research institutions, and NGOs.

The objectives of the Forum include promoting high-level 3R policy dialogues, promoting the implementation of 3R-related project in Asian countries, sharing of institutional and technical information useful for 3R promotion, and creating a network among officials and representatives. Together with the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) and governments of the host countries, the Ministry of the Environment of Japan has been one of the organizers since the first Forum.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Asia and Oceania

Progress and achievements

The Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific has been held six times since the Inaugural Forum in Japan in 2009. Past Forums have had major outcomes such as the Hanoi 3R Declaration, a policy objective for 3R promotion in the Asia-Pacific region between 2013 and 2023, which was adopted at the Fourth Forum. At the Sixth Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific, held from 16 to 19 August 2015 in Male, Maldives, participants in attendance included ministers and vice ministers from 39 Asian countries and Pacific Island countries. Senior Vice-Minister of the Environment, Yasuhiro Ozato, attended as the representative of Japan. The major contents discussed at the Forum were as follows:

- (1) Trends and developments of 3R in the Asia-Pacific region;
- (2) Enabling a 3R interface in building sustainable cities and communities;
- (3) Sustainable tourism industry in Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
- (4) Industrial ecology grants for extended producers responsibility and sustainable material management;
- (5) Sectoral round-table discussion on economic opportunities provided by 3R, and reports on country major achievements on implementation of the Hanoi 3R Declaration and results of the national sectoral meetings;
- (6) Waste and freshwater nexus - 3R for water security in the Asia-Pacific region; and
- (7) 3R white paper in the Asia-Pacific region - a guiding document for improved decision-making towards effective implementation of 3R at local and national levels.

The chair's summary was adopted as the outcome document of the Sixth Forum.

Division in charge

Office of Sound Material-Cycle Society, Policy Planning Division, Waste Management and Recycling Department, Minister's Secretariat

Relevant website

Result of the Sixth Forum of the Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific
<http://www.env.go.jp/recycle/3r/en/>

Last updated

December, 2015

East and Southeast Asia Biodiversity Information Initiative (ESABII)

Outline

With the participation of East and Southeast Asian countries and related organizations, the Initiative promotes the compilation and provision of biodiversity information that is immediately available for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and conservation measures in each country. The Initiative also promotes the implementation of capacity development programs for taxonomy.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Asia

Progress and achievements

After holding three international meetings since the launch of the project in FY 2008, the ESABII intergovernmental meeting was held in Tokyo in December 2009, where a strategy for implementing the ESABII and the 2010-2011 work plan were agreed upon by the participating countries and organizations.

Division in charge

Nature Conservation Bureau, Biodiversity Center of Japan

Relevant website

East and Southeast Asia Biodiversity Information Initiative (ESABII)
<http://www.esabii.biodic.go.jp/>

Last updated

November, 2015

International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop

Outline

ICRI promotes the formulation of a continued international cooperation structure for the conservation of coral reefs and related ecosystems, and efforts of the coral reef protected area networks in the East Asia region.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Countries throughout the world

Progress and achievements

International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), an international framework for the conservation of coral reef ecosystems, is a voluntary initiative carried out by government organizations, international organizations, NGOs and others. ICRI was derived from the U.S.-Japan Common Agenda and its establishment was announced at the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1994. Japan has proactively participated in ICRI since its establishment and served as the ICRI Secretariat from 2005 to 2007 jointly with the Republic of Palau. It has once again been serving as the ICRI Secretariat since FY 2014 jointly with the Kingdom of Thailand.

At the general meeting held in Okinawa in FY 2014, a “resolution on promoting an integrated approach to community-based coral reef conservation and management emphasizing land-sea connectivity ” was adopted, and it was determined that reports on best practices would be compiled. With the adoption of the resolution, Japan, the ICRI Secretariat, collected and compiled examples of efforts made by various countries, and reported them to the general meeting held in Thailand in FY 2015. A collection of best practices has been published on the website and through SNS.

Japan, playing a leading role in the East Asia region, held East Asia Regional Workshop in October 2014 as a part of the “East Asia Regional Strategy on MPA Networks 2010 ” developed at the Sixth East Asia Regional Workshop in 2010. At this workshop, 22 participants from various countries including Japan, Indonesia and Thailand discussed various issues including the content of future workshops to be held in the East Asia region.

Division in charge

Biodiversity Policy Division, Nature Conservation Bureau

Relevant website

Website of ICRI
<http://earw.icriforum.org/>

Last updated

November, 2015

Contribution to the United Nations University

(Project for implementing activities under the International Partnership for the *Satoyama* Initiative)

Outline

Contribute to the implementation of activities under the International Partnership for the *Satoyama* Initiative toward the realization of societies in harmony with nature.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Asian countries and other countries throughout the world

Progress and achievements

The IPSI partnership constitutes of 172 organizations including 16 government organizations as of November 2015. The Sixth IPSI Global Conference is scheduled to be held in Siem Reap, Cambodia in January 2016.

Division in charge

Global Biodiversity Strategy Office, Biodiversity Policy Division

Relevant website

Satoyama Initiative
<http://satoyama-initiative.org/en/>

Last updated

November, 2015

EAAFP: East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership

Outline

EAAFP is a framework for international cooperation, aimed at protecting migratory waterbirds and their habitat in the East Asia and Australian regions.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Australia, Japan, U.S., Russia, Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, Cambodia, China, Bangladesh, Thailand, Mongolia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Myanmar and Viet Nam

Progress and achievements

There are currently 34 partners made up of 17 countries, 6 international organizations, 10 international NGOs and one company. In Japan, there are 32 sites participating in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Network which is established under EAAFP. The Eighth Meeting of Partners (MOP8) of EAAFP was held in Kushiro City, Hokkaido, Japan in January 2015.

Division in charge

Wildlife Division, Nature Conservation Bureau

Relevant website

East Asian - Australasian Flyway Partnership
<http://www.eaaflyway.net/about/the-partnership/>

Last updated

November, 2015

Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP)

Outline

APAP facilitates collaboration on protected areas management in Asia.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Asia

Progress and achievements

APAP aims to promote sharing best practices and innovative solutions for issues facing protected areas among national and sub-national governments in Asia.

In response to the call for its establishment at the First Asia Parks Congress held in Sendai City, Japan in November 2013, APAP was formally established at the Sixth World Parks Congress held in Sydney, Australia in November 2014.

Japan and IUCN Asia Regional Office (the APAP Secretariat) are currently serves as the first co-chairs.

In November 2015, a Workshop on Cooperative Management of Protected Areas was held in Ishigaki City, Japan under the auspices of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan.

Division in charge

National Park Division, Nature Conservation Bureau

Relevant website

Asia Protected Areas Partnership
<http://www.asiaprotectedareaspartnership.org/>

Last updated

November, 2015

Regional EST Forum in Asia

Outline

The objectives of the Regional EST Forum in Asia are as follows:

- (1) Facilitate policy dialogues and provide a strategy for sharing best practices, policy instruments, tools, technologies, in relations to various aspects of EST among Asian countries.
- (2) In consultation with the subsidiary expert groups, facilitate and provide necessary advisory support for the formulation of national EST strategies and action plans on EST for selected countries.
- (3) Support the implementation of the action plans into practice through the participation of international organizations and international development and donor agencies.
- (4) Help establish linkages with other ongoing regional and international activities/initiatives in promoting EST.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Asia and other regions

Progress and achievements

The Regional EST Forum in Asia has been held nine times, since the first forum held in Nagoya, Japan, in August 2005. As major outcomes of the past Forums, the Aichi Statement (2005), the Seoul Statement (2009), the Bangkok Statement (2010), the Bali Statement (2013) and the Colombo Statement (2014) have been adopted for the promotion of EST in Asia. In 2007, the Kyoto Statement was adopted by city mayors, declaring intent on actions at the city level. At the Ninth Regional EST Forum in Asia, recently held in Katmandu, Nepal from 18 to 20 November 2015, participants including senior government officials (mostly from Environment Ministries and agencies in charge of transport management) from 26 Asian countries, transport experts and representatives from international organizations were in attendance. The major achievements of the Forum are as follows:

- (1) Representatives from 26 Asian countries were in attendance, sharing policies and progressive examples on EST through discussions focusing on transportation resilient to disasters and adaptation to climate change based on COP21.
- (2) On the road to the targets shown in the Bangkok Statement 2020 which was adopted at the Fifth Forum in 2010, efforts of the countries were presented and interim summary of the efforts was provided. Participants committed to making further progress with EST towards the achievement of the target.
- (3) With the presentation of national EST strategies (2015-2040) that the government of Nepal has been developing, participants discussed how to secure resilient and sustainable transportation in Nepal.
- (4) It was agreed to hold workshops for South Asia and Southeast Asia as a new initiative for promoting EST. It was also agreed to hold the next Forum in Lao PDR.

Division in charge

Environmental Transport Policy Division, Environmental Management Bureau

Relevant website

Environmentally Sustainable Transport <http://www.env.go.jp/en/air/est/>
 Environmentally Sustainable Transport (Efforts in Asia) <http://www.env.go.jp/en/air/est/asia.html>
 Press release concerning the result of the Ninth Regional EST Forum in Asia
<https://www.env.go.jp/en/headline/2198.html>

Last updated

November, 2015

Technical Assistance for Measures against Asbestos in Asian Countries

Outline

Japan's experiences and technologies related to asbestos are shared with Asian countries by way of field studies, workshops and so on.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Asia

Progress and achievements

A team of officials and experts was sent to the Philippines in mid-February 2010. The team met and exchanged information and opinions with officials of the Environment Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-EMB, the contact on the Philippine side), other related government agencies, industry association and trade unions. Field trips to manufacturing plants and research institutions were also conducted.

The workshop was co-sponsored with the government of Indonesia and held in mid-March 2010 in Jakarta, with the participation of Laos, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam. Participants shared information and exchanged opinions on present situations and challenges of their own countries. Japan's experiences and ongoing measures were presented together with a demonstration of asbestos analysis methods and explanations.

Division in charge

Air Environment Division

Relevant website

Technical Assistance for Measures against Asbestos in Asian Countries
<http://www.env.go.jp/en/headline/headline.php?serial=1318>

Last updated

November, 2015

Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA)

Outline

WEPA is an activity proposed by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan at the Third World Water Forum held in Kyoto in 2003 aiming to improve the serious water environment issues facing Asia.

With cooperation from 13 partner countries in the region, WEPA focuses on strengthening governance of water environment in Asia, through creating networks, collecting and sharing information and building capacity of related stakeholders.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam (WEPA partner countries)

Division in charge

Water Environment Division

Relevant website

Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA)
<http://www.wepa-db.net/>

Last updated

November, 2015

Model Project for Improvement of Water Environment in Asia

Outline

To promote and support overseas development (in the Asia-Pacific region) of excellent water treatment technology held by water-related companies in Japan, this project carried out feasibility studies and field studies for the implementation of household and industrial waste water disposal using treatment technologies of private companies selected in an open call. The project aims at constructing actual business models, and looking into effective support for business development. As of FY 2015, 16 projects have been adopted.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Asia and Oceania

Division in charge

Water Environment Division

Last updated

November, 2015

Sino-Japan Cooperation on Water Environment

Outline

Based on the Joint Statement on the Further Enhancement of Cooperation for Environmental Protection (April 2007), policy support projects are carried out to reduce water pollution in China.

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

China

Progress and achievements

Based on the Sino-Japan Cooperation Model Project in the Field of Decentralized Sewage Treatment (Model Project) established in May 2008, model projects in decentralized sewage treatment have been carried out in six regions in rural China. In addition, under the 12th 5-year plan, ammonia nitrogen was designated as a pollutant for total pollutant load reduction and , the Environmental Ministers of China and Japan signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Model Projects of Total Pollutant Load Reduction (Ammonia Nitrogen) in April 2011. Based on these memorandums, model projects were implemented in three regions in rural China to develop waste water technology to respond to each local situation.

Based on a memorandum between the Director-Generals of China and Japan, joint research on the improvement of livestock waste water treatment has been conducted since April 2015.

Division in charge

Water Environment Division

Last updated

November, 2015

Promotion of Co-benefits Approach

Outline

A co-benefits approach aims to achieve environmental pollution control and climate change measures simultaneously. The concept was incorporated into the Declaration of the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit in 2008 and is increasingly recognized internationally. **The Hatoyama Initiative*** emphasized that the relevance of a co-benefits approach should be fully considered when extending support to mitigation actions of developing countries. The Ministry of the Environment is engaged in bilateral and multilateral cooperation as well as the development of an evaluation methodology.

* **The Hatoyama Initiative:** http://japan.kantei.go.jp/topics/2009/1216initiative_e.pdf

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

China, Mongolia and Indonesia

Progress and achievements

1. Bilateral cooperation

- Joint research and studies for model projects are underway with China and Indonesia, following the respective ministerial agreements in 2007. Documents on the continuous cooperation for co-benefits approach were signed by the ministers of Japan and China in April 2011, and between the ministers of Japan and Indonesia in July 2015. Measures against air pollution have been carried out in China, and capabilities and examination for waste water treatment have been strengthened in Indonesia.
- In Mongolia, along with the strengthening of capabilities, demonstration projects on measures against air pollution under the co-benefits approach have been carried out since 2014.

2. Multilateral cooperation

- The “Asian Co-benefits Partnership” was launched in November 2010, at the “Better Air Quality 2010 (BAQ2010)” conference in Singapore. The objective of the partnership is to mainstream a co-benefits approach and promote co-benefits type projects in Asia. Efforts for the dissemination and promotion of the co-benefits approach have been made through regular conferences, the launch of an exclusive website and the publication of the “Co-benefits white paper”.
- The project supports research for integrating the co-benefits approach into city planning and other plans in developing countries by developing tools to measure effectiveness of co-benefits and preparing data contributing to policymaking.

3. Development of evaluation methodology

- A Manual for Quantitative Evaluation of Co-Benefits Approach to Climate Change Projects was developed in FY 2009. Efforts are underway to disseminate the methodology for quantitative evaluation of the accompanying environmental control benefits (co-benefits) of CDM and other project implementations.

Division in charge

International Cooperation Office, Environment Management Bureau

Relevant website

Co-benefits Approach <http://www.kyomecha.org/cobene/e/>

Last updated

November, 2015

Environmental Leadership Initiatives for Asian Sustainability (ELIAS)

Outline

The Ministry of the Environment has been working on the following three projects to embody the efforts to develop environmental leaders through partnership among industry, academia, government and civil society under the ELIAS:

- (1) Developing and disseminating model higher education programs
- (2) Establishing a “multi stakeholder consortium for developing environmental leaders,” a framework of cooperation among all stakeholders from industry, academia, government and civil society for the purpose of developing environmental leaders
- (3) Developing a network of higher education institutions in the Asia-Pacific region committed to developing environmental leaders (Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network (ProSPER.Net))

Countries/ Regions subject to the measures

Asia and Oceania

Progress and achievements

1. Developing and disseminating model higher education programs

The Ministry of the Environment started the “Project on Model Higher Education Programs for Developing Environmental Leaders in Asia” so that Japanese higher education institutions would develop environmental leaders specified in the Environmental Leadership Vision in cooperation with Japanese companies, government and nonprofit organizations, as well as higher education institutions in Asia. After public solicitation for universities considering such programs, the Ministry selected six universities (Ibaraki University, University of Tokyo, Keio University, Chubu University, Shinshu University and Kochi University) in FY 2008, and five universities (Iwate University, Tohoku University, Sophia (Jochi) University, University of Shiga Prefecture and Osaka Prefecture University) in FY 2009. This is a three-year project for each university.

2. Establishing a “multi stakeholder consortium for developing environmental leaders”

In collaboration with the “Environmental Consortium for Leadership Development” established in March 2011, the Ministry of the Environment is developing and promoting educational programs for environmental leaders’ development in higher education institutions and companies, and working on the promotion of voluntary development of environmental leaders in companies (operation of an award system, etc.).

3. Developing a network of higher education institutions in the Asia-Pacific region committed to developing environmental leaders

In June 2008, the Ministry of the Environment, in cooperation with the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), started a network of higher education institutions committed to integrating sustainability in their postgraduate education and research programs, which is called “ProSPER.Net (Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network).” As of June 2015, the network boasts a roster of 34 participating higher education institutions from Japan, China, Republic of Korea, ASEAN countries, India, Australia, and other countries.

Division in charge

Office for Promotion of Environmental Education, Environment and Economy Division,
Environmental Policy Bureau

Relevant website

Environmental Leadership Initiative for Asian Sustainability <https://edu.env.go.jp/asia/en/>
Environment Consortium for Leadership Development <http://www.eco-lead.jp/english/about/>
ProSPER.Net <http://prospernet.ias.unu.edu/>

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