

Session 4

*“Review and Future of the Northeast Asian
Environmental Cooperation”*

(Session 4)

Comments on NEAC' Past and Future

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NEAC has held its ninth conference since the first one has happened in Japan nine years ago. In the past nine years, NEAC became a welcome event among participating countries, because of its flexible topics and dialogue style which is in a not such a formal way. We really need NEAC to exchange the new progress on environment in each participating country.

From the past of the conference, we conclude that NEAC has gained the following positive progress:

-Becoming a forum successfully for participating countries and organizations to discuss broad issues of almost each aspects on environmental area.

-Providing a good opportunity for each member to exchange their experience and progress on environment in each country. The country like China has learned a lot by those exchanges from other members. The

experiences in the other countries have been beneficial for domestic environment work in the way or another.

-Since NEAC is the first regional dialogue forum in Northeast Asia among the environmental agencies, the conference has greatly increased the understanding on environmental policy carried out by different countries.

-The other very important role NEAC has taken is that it is like a catalyst, to start a new idea, to promote a new action. In my sense, the three countries' officials discussed tripartite environment ministers meeting among Japan, Korea and China during NEAC meeting in the very early stage. This year, the second tripartite environment minister meeting has been held in Beijing. I believe we could expect more idea being initiated in the future like this.

-The other characteristic of NEAC is that the meeting brings the people not only from national authority but also from local environmental agencies together to discuss environmental issues. That makes the meeting a good chance for local officials to share their experiences from each other. We would happy to see more and more people from different entities to be involved in the process.

Prospects on NEAC Meeting:

Next, I would like to put forward our expecting to NEAC in the future.

First, China would like NEAC to keep current policy dialogue function among member countries. Each member has obtained a lot by these dialogues; it is obviously a right direction.

Second, it is time to identify the priority policy area to NEAC. We would like to propose that NEAC could try to identify one or two priority policy areas in next NEAC meeting, and give these policies a following up discussion in the another coming meeting. In doing so, we may be able to compare the different policy impacts in different countries. In this way, we could make NEAC more effective.

Third, it seem to us that more people from different areas should be involved in NEAC, such as policy research scientists, people from industry and private sectors, also people from non profit or non government institutes.

Fourth, we would like to suggest the participating countries and organizations to consider using Internet to distribute NEAC's activities and achievements. This is important since we do believe the cooperation on environment in Northeast Asia will benefit the people in this region. It could be helpful to post people what we are doing here **and what we are going to do in the future.**

Thanks.

Environmental Cooperation in North-east Asia: Review and Prospects

*Presented by LEE Chang Heum,
Deputy Director of International Affairs Division,
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First of all, I would like to express my sincere thanks for having the opportunity to present an audience of such an important issue. I'd now like to briefly mention the status of environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia and offer a brief analysis of its future prospects, especially as it applied to NEAC

Last NEAC and NEASPEC meeting, it was emphasized that the linkages between environmental cooperation initiatives should be strengthened. However, in my perspective, we do not take any concrete action. At this point, I take note that NEAC will play a leading role for enhancing linkage for its characteristic as a policy forum.

Under this prerequisite, I would like to explain the present mechanism and strategy of environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia, and lastly suggest objective and roles of NEAC.

1. Overview of the Mechanism for Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia

Since 1992, Japanese and Korea government and International Organization, such as UNEP and ESCAP have initiated several multilateral programme and conference. The first Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation(NEAC) has been held in Niigata 1992. This meeting has made a role of policy dialogue forum to exchange policy and information and shared a view on environmental problems among governmental officials, experts in Northeast Asia.

The first meeting of senior officials (SOM) on Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia held in Seoul in 1993. In 1994, in its second meeting, member countries identified its three priority areas are as follows; energy and air pollution, ecosystem

management and capacity building. In the 6th meeting held in Seoul, they adopted vision statement on environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia and agreed to establish core fund. They also identified the Northeast Asian Center for Environmental Data and Training.

In recent, the initiative of TEMM is a significant progress in environmental cooperation. In the 2nd meeting held in Beijing this year, three ministers reaffirmed TEMM as a important forum for fostering regional environmental cooperation and sustainable development. The ministers also expressed their wishes to implement concrete project style cooperation among their three countries and agreed concrete nine project.

Joint Research Project on long-range Air Pollutants in China, Japan, and Korea(LTP) and Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) are carrying out modeling and monitoring of air pollutants. And in the 5th meeting of the Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northeast Pacific Region(NOWPAP) held in Incheon, Republic of Korea, the establishment of secretariat and the future work of the NOWPAP were discussed.

2. Limits of Environment Cooperation in Northeast Asia

Arguably the greatest problem is that a regional consensus on environmental cooperation has not been formed among Northeast Asian countries. Environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia is focusing on a strategic approach. Even though a certain framework and vision statement for environment cooperation in Northeast Asia has been adopted as part of certain programs, it is not clear to me that all the nation and especially their environment agencies, has actually built a common consensus on these principles and vision for environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia.

The second problem is that policy linkages between each program are insufficient. At present, a number of frameworks, such as TEMM, NEASPEC, NOWPAP and NEAC,

are operating separately in this region. We do not find any input and linkage mechanism within these boundaries of cooperation

Third, until now, a special measure for securing a budget and concrete projects has not been taken. Recent achievements in the framework of TEMM and NEASPEC are just initial stage.

Fourth, we do not have governing body to synthesize and enhance a synergy effect among the many cooperation activities in Northeast Asia..

3. Strategy for development of Environment Cooperation.

For the development of environmental cooperation in this region, in my perspective, the first step is to set up principles for environmental cooperation. In the process of building mutual understanding and principles, various stakeholders, such as experts, citizens, environmentalists as well as governmental officials, should jointly participate. To facilitate this, I believe that NEAC should continue and further strengthen its role as a policy forum.

The second step is to develop and strengthen each program's roles and functions. Even if TEMM focuses on the three countries of which it is presently composed, it could be organized as a supreme organization by securing other countries' involvement in future. NEASPEC would continue in its present role as high-level officials' policy dialogue to address institutional and financial issues at the inter governmental level. NEAC would serve as a policy forum to exchange national policy and information, to enhance public awareness and help facilitate cooperation between NGOs, local governments, and environment agencies.

Third, to enhance linkages between each program, it is possible that NEAC can play its role as an interim review meeting for other meeting such as TEMM and NEASPEC. And it is also recommended to hold an expert group meeting within NEAC's Framework.

4. Suggestion on the objective and roles of NEAC

A. Objective

(1) As environmental degradation accelerates throughout the region, and as it becomes clear that lasting solutions require increased involvement from local governments, the private sector and the public, the main objective of NEAC should be to promote free discussion and policy exchange, and to enable access to useful, accurate information at all levels.

(2) Through these activities, NEAC is aimed at contributing to effectively cope with domestic and regional and global environmental problems, such as air pollution, nature conservation, and water and waste management, and to ultimately lower pollution throughout North-east Asia.

B. Roles

(3) The NEAC should play several roles. Through the NEAC Mechanism the participation of various stakeholders can be enhanced. These include environmental institutions, local governments, and NGOs as well as relevant government ministries and agencies.

(4) Since it is largely a forum for maintaining an open policy dialogue, it serves as a basic foundation for other environmental programs. Its ties to other conferences and programs such as TEMM and NEASPEC should therefore be strengthened. To this end, host countries will present information and results generated through NEAC at the following TEMM and NEASPEC meetings. The host country will take measures to share NEAC's outcomes, such as publishing and reporting the presentation documents and agreed results.

(5) Considering the timing of conferences of similar programs, it is possible to promote various measures for providing TEMM and NEASPEC chances for holding interim reviews and expert group meetings in specific areas, such as transboundary air pollution, nature conservation and bio-diversity, within NEAC's framework.

C. Participating and Hosting Countries

(6) Six Northeast Asian Countries--China, D.P.R. of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, and Russia--will join this conference as member countries.

(7) Member countries would host NEAC meetings in turns. However, in case of special circumstances the venue can be changed by the conference participants.

(8) The host country would cover the expenses of two participants from each member country.

D. Agenda and Activities

(9) It is recognized that review activities are very important to examine the progress of domestic and regional measures according to outcomes of previous meeting.

(10) The conference consists of four sessions. Each session's agenda will include various environmental issues in Northeast Asia, and would be adopted in the previous meeting. In order to provide a policy basis for other environmental programs, approval items and ongoing projects of other environmental mechanisms can be considered in the process of selecting the agenda of NEAC meetings.

(11) In collaboration with local governments and private organizations, host countries can organize special activities, such as public symposia and exhibitions.

Framework on the objective and roles of NEAC

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NEAC—Achievements and Future Prospects—

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1. Introduction

Next year is the 10th anniversary of NEAC. Here at the 9th conference, it is significant for us to review NEAC's achievements in the past decade, identify its present status, and discuss its future in the next decade, among a variety of participants from national governments, local governments, international organizations and research institutes.

2. Major Regional Initiatives for Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia

2.1. History of cooperation

Environmental degradation is not limited to a specific country, but spreads over boundaries. Therefore, regional cooperation among nations is indispensable to solve trans-boundary issues. Activated policy dialogs among countries after the end of the Cold War, have also accelerated regional environmental cooperation.

Now let me start with an overview of environmental cooperation in Asia and the Pacific, especially in Northeast Asia.

<ESCAP Ministerial Conference>

The kickoff meeting was the ESCAP Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific in 1985, which was held in Bangkok, Thailand. This conference has been held every five years and has contributed to environmental policy dialog at the ministerial level.

<ECO ASIA>

In 1991, the first Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO ASIA) was held in Tokyo, Japan. In 1992, it proposed an environmental protection strategy for the Asia-Pacific region to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). ECO ASIA has been held every year and attended by environment ministers of member nations and representatives of international organizations. ECO ASIA has also contributed to environmental policy dialog.

<NEAC>

In 1992, the first Northeast Asia Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC) was held in Niigata Prefecture, Japan, as a forum for exchanging views and policy dialog among environmental experts. The participants of NEAC include national and local government officials, administrators of international organizations, and environmental specialists from research institutes and NGOs. NEAC succeeded the Japan – South Korea Environmental Symposium, which was formed in 1988. Thereafter China joined the symposium with the cooperation of UNEP, and the then Soviet Union and Mongolia joined as an observer status.

<NEASPEC>

In 1993, the North-East Asian Subregional Program on Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) was launched at the first meeting of senior officials in the region. The meetings of senior officials, which have been held every year,

have promoted the Program of NEASPEC through the endorsement of projects mainly related to air pollution issue and the preparation of the Sub-regional Center in Korea.

<NOWPAP>

In 1994, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) was adopted by four countries to follow the Northeast Pacific Regional Sea Program under UNEP's initiative, and to promote environmental cooperation for the protection of the marine and coastal environment.

<EANET>

In 1998, the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) joined by 10 countries, started its preparatory phase activities. The objective of this network is to carry out monitoring of acid deposition by harmonized methodology, and thus to create a common understanding of the state of acid deposition. It is scheduled to evaluate the results of its preparatory phase activities in the middle of the year 2000, and to hold a discussion toward its formal establishment.

<TEMM>

In 1999, the first Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM) among China, Japan and Korea was held in Seoul, South Korea. The second TEMM held at Beijing in February this year, announced the Ministers' wishes to have concrete project-style cooperation and to develop projects, in particular, of raising consciousness of environmental community, fresh water pollution and land-based marine pollution prevention and cooperation in the field of environmental industry.

The above-mentioned history does not cover all the frameworks in the region, but clearly shows that environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia has

made steady and definite progress.

2.2. Classification of Regional Initiatives and Position of NEAC

Next I would like to classify the above-mentioned regional initiatives according to their characteristics and make clear the position of the NEAC.

<Inter-governmental Frameworks>

The first category is an inter-governmental framework to consolidate regional cooperation on common environmental issues. The EANET, NEASPEC and NOWPAP correspond to this category for example.

<Regional Cooperation Projects>

The second category is a framework for creating and promoting regional cooperation projects on common environmental issues. The NEASPEC is a typical case in this category. The TEMM has showed its evolution from dialog at the first meeting into project-oriented framework at the second meeting.

<Policy dialogs>

The third category is a framework for promoting policy dialog, which contributes to sharing common understandings and to facilitating other frameworks. The ESCAP Ministerial Conference, ECO ASIA and TEMM are good cases to promote dialog at ministerial level.

<Position of NEAC>

Then the question is in what category the NEAC would be classified? The NEAC is basically an opportunity to promote policy dialog in such a way that the dialog is extended to the level of local governments, NGOs and etc as well as central government. Typically, the last NEAC meeting mainly

discussed the issues on local initiatives in regional cooperation under the participation of local governments in each country.

3. Evaluation of NEAC Achievements

Now let me step into the evaluation on the NEAC's achievements in the past decade.

<Pioneer of Policy Dialog>

First, NEAC was a pioneer of environmental policy dialog in North-East Asia. There had been no significant regional frameworks until the first NEAC was held in 1992. Therefore, NEAC was a kickoff event to provide a milestone for the formation of other frameworks in North-East Asian environment cooperation.

<Promoting Dialog among a variety of Entities>

Second, NEAC has promoted policy dialog among a variety of entities. In the past decade, NEAC has facilitated the participation of local governments, international organizations, research institutes and NGOs as well as central governments, and has provided the opportunities for discussing such appropriate agenda as "the Role of Major Groups Including Local Governments and NGOs to Assist Agenda 21" at the 4th Meeting and "Environment Conservation Initiatives of National and Local Authorities and Reflection of those Initiatives in Environmental Cooperation" at the last Meeting. It is only NEAC that has played such a role and it has contributed to sharing views and enhancing mutual understandings at various levels in North-East Asia.

<Promoting Dialog in Broad and Foresighted Issues>

Third, NEAC has promoted policy dialog in broad and foresighted

environmental issues. In the past decade, NEAC has covered the following issues, for example,

- Common Specific Issues: Prevention of Air Pollution (1992), Ground Water Preservation and Management (1998), Preserving Migratory Birds and Their Habitats (1998), Solid Waste Management and the Prevention of Illegal Trans-Boundary Movements of Wastes (1996), etc,
- Global Environmental Issues: Countries' Viewpoints and Measures on the Framework Convention on Climate Change (1995),
- Environmental Policy Methods: Market-Based Policy Measures for Environment Management (1993),
- Information Technology: Practical Use of the Internet in Environmental Cooperation (1999).

In this way, NEAC has timely planted "seeds" in its agenda setting and has produced "fruits" of communication in foresighted environmental issues.

4. Suggestions for the Future of NEAC

Lastly I would like to present two suggestions for the future of NEAC in the upcoming decade. The question is how to develop the NEAC roles in North-East Asia based on its past achievements.

<Facilitating Partnerships at Various Levels>

First, NEAC should take a role to facilitate the establishment and consolidation of the regional partnerships at such various levels as central and local governments, research institutes and NGOs, by extending activating its existing activity of dialog.

For instance, local governments have much experience in such resident-oriented measures as spatial planning and monitoring. NGOs are

engaged in such grass-root activities as afforestation and environmental education. It is significant for local governments and NGOs in North-East Asia to share common experiences and address common issues jointly. In this context, NEAC could be a catalyst for local governments and /or NGOs to take such partnerships in the region. To be more specific, NEAC may provide such side-events as workshop and symposium among local governments and/or NGOs in the region.

<Inputting NEAC Outcomes to Other Frameworks>

Second, NEAC should positively input its outcomes into other frameworks' activities in North-East Asia. As I mentioned before, NEAC has so far been successful in its expert dialog under appropriate agenda setting. It is, therefore, high time to utilize outcomes of dialog to more concrete projects or more binding agreements.

One way is for NEAC itself to jump up to another type of framework like project-oriented one. It would, however, cause nothing but overlapping frameworks. Therefore, it is more efficient and realistic way for NEAC to be linked with other project-oriented frameworks like NEASPEC. Here I would like to focus on NEASPEC as a linking target.

Then the next question is how the linkage between NEAC and NEASPEC could be materialized and how the input from NEAC to NEASPEC could be institutionalized. There seem to be several options for the linkage. Here I would like to show two examples of options for discussion.

The first option is that NEAC would be identified as some expert meeting in the framework of NEASPEC. This is an example of direct linkage in the sense that NEAC would be merged in NEASPEC.

The second option is that NEAC would accompany a back-to-back

meeting of NEASPEC. This is a case of indirect linkage because they would keep their organizational independence.

These options need to be carefully examined through comprehensive consideration on the effectiveness of input, the independence of framework, the consistency of membership, etc.

I have just outlined NEAC achievements and made a rough sketch on the future of NEAC so far. I do hope for further analysis and discussion on this important issue in order to make sure the development of NEAC in the upcoming decade. Thanks a lot for your listening.

△ HISTORY of COOPERATION ▽

1985 **ESCAP Ministerial Conference**



1991 **ECO ASIA**

“Environmental Congress for Asia and the Pacific”

1992 **NEAC**

“Northeast Asian Conference on
Environmental Cooperation”

1993 **NEASPEC**

“North-East Asian Subregional Program of Environmental
Cooperation”

1994 **NOWPAP**

“Action Plan for the Protection, Management, and Development
of Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest
Pacific Region”

1998 **EANET**

Preparatory phase of
“Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia”

1999 **TEMM**

“Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting”



CLASSIFICATION based on Major

≡ Activities of Regional Initiatives ≡

*Inter-governmental
Frameworks*

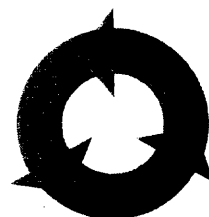
NOWPAP NEASPEC

*Regional Cooperation
Projects*

NEASPEC TEMM

Policy Dialogs

NEAC TEMM



≡ EVALUATION of NEAC Achievements ≡

*⌘ Pioneer of
Policy Dialog*

*⌘ Promoting Dialogs
in broad and foresighted
issues*



*⌘ Promoting Dialogs
among a variety of Entities*

the Future of NEAC



Facilitating Partnerships at Various Levels

- ★ Central and Local Governments,
- ★ Research Institutes,
- ★ International Organizations,
- ★ NGOs

Inputting NEAC Outcomes to Other Frameworks



Linkage with NEASPEC

1 Direct Linkage

~ NEAC as an expert meeting of NEASPEC ~

2 Indirect Linkage

~ NEAC accompanying a back-to-back meeting of NEASPEC ~

Review and Future of Northeast Asian Environmental Cooperation

The Ninth Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation

26-28 July, 2000 / Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Presented by Eldev- Ochiryn ERDENEBAT

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Ministry of Nature and Environment

1. Introduction

The Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Co-operation (NEAC) has been held 8 times and at last meeting in Maizuru city, Japan it was suggested that at the next meeting in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia participating countries need to review NEAC activities and consider future direction.

II. Overview of environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia.

To achieve the goal of sustainable development in the 21st century it is necessary to strengthen the regional and sub-regional cooperation by reinforcing the existing environmental cooperation network, and implementing of new joint activities in the field of environment protection.

Table 1 shows Institutional development for Northeast Asian Environmental cooperation.

Table 1

**Institutional development for Northeast Asian
Environmental Cooperation**

Intergovernmental	Interagency	Non-governmental
Senior officials Meeting on Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia - First Meeting: Seoul,	Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Co-operation -First Meeting: Niigata,	- Seoul Symposium: UNCED and Prospect on the Environmental regime in the 21 st Century, Seoul, September, 1992

<p>February 1993</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Second Meeting: Beijing, November 1994 - Third Meeting: Ulaanbaatar, September, 1996 - Fourth Meeting: Moscow, January 1998 - Fifth Meeting: Kobe, February 1999 	<p>Japan, October, 1992</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Second Meeting: Seoul, Korea, September, 1993 -Third Meeting: Hyogo, Japan, October, 1994 -Fourth Meeting: Pusan, Korea, September, 1995 -Fifth Meeting: Beijing, China, 1996 - Sixth Meeting: Niigata, Japan, October, 1997 -Seventh Meeting: Cheju, Korea, October, 1998 -Eighth Meeting: Maizuru, Japan, October, 1999 -Ninth Meeting: Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, July, 2000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Symposium on Northeast Asia Environmental Cooperation, Irkutsk, August 1993 Northeast Asia and North Pacific Environmental Forum - Fairbanks, Alaska, USA, 1994 - Kushiro, Japan, 1995 Khabarovsk, Russia, 1997
<p>Northwest Pacific Action Programme (NOWPAP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -First Experts Meeting: Vladivostok, October, 1991 -Second Experts Meeting: Beijing, October, 1992 -Third Experts Meeting: Bangkok, November, 1993 -First Intergovernmental Meeting: Seoul, September, 1994 Second Intergovernmental Meeting: Tokyo, November, 1996 Third Intergovernmental Meeting: Vladivostok, April, 1998 Forth Intergovernmental Meeting: Beijing, April, 1999 	<p>Environmental Congress for Asia and the Pacific (Eco-Asia)</p>	
<p>East Asia Acid Deposition Monitoring Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Yokohama, March, 1998 		

From here we can see multilateral environmental cooperation which has been created since 1990s and have served as a forum for environmental cooperation. Besides this there are several bilateral cooperation:

China – Korea Agreement on Environmental Cooperation

Korea - Japan Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Environmental Protection

Japan – China Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Environmental Protection

Korea – Russian Agreement on Environmental Cooperation

Mongolia - China Agreement on Environmental Cooperation

Mongolia - Russia Agreement on Environmental Cooperation

Russia – Japan Agreement on Environmental Cooperation

III. Regarding the NEAC

Within the cooperative framework there have been organized international symposiums and conferences on environmental issues in this region. Among them the Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental cooperation plays an important role for exchanging information and experiences on environmental policies and management between the countries in the region. Since it launched in 1992, the Conference has been organized annually, and each time hosted by different country of the region. This year for the first time Mongolia is hosting the 9th Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation with kind financial assistance from Government of Japan.

Table 2 shows history of NEAC meeting, subjects that has been discussed and major outcomes.

One of major achievements of NEAC is that it has facilitated involvement of central and local government, research institutes, NGO's, private sector and international organizations to be together and consider environment problem of the region. It also gives chance to be timely informed of each other's latest development on environmental policies.

IV. Future of NEAC

Some suggestions for the future of NEAC.

- We would like to keep current policy and function of NEAC as it is.
- There is a need to identify NEAC's priority areas. For example in case of Mongolia we have pressing problem such as air pollution in the big cities, desertification.
- NEAC gives chance to the participating countries meet annually and freely exchange opinions, get latest information about environmental activities which is very important. It should be further strengthened.
- As I mentioned earlier there is a lot of activities going on in this region, such as the NEASPEC, Tumen River Development Programme, Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia, Environmental Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECOASIA) etc. and there is no linkage between them, therefore it's good if NEAC can consider it.
- In the first meeting in Niigata, Japan, it was generally agreed that the Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation should be held regularly, in the principle on an annual basis, preferably hosted each time by different countries in the region. Past activities showed that country like Mongolia due to financial situation can't organize such kind of meeting and bear expenses. Today's Conference is a good example of collaboration.
- At the last meeting in Maizuru, Japan there was suggestion to use Internet during the preparatory work to the NEAC-9. It was successfully implemented. We had very good connection with Japan and all documents were received via e-mail. It should be strengthened further.

Table 1. Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation

Year of Initiating and place	Participating countries	Subjects discussed	Outcome
First meeting: Niigata, Japan, October, 1992	China, Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Russia, United nations bodies: UNEP, UNDP, ESCAP	- Air pollution - Water pollution - Waste management - Nature conservation	- Set up an information sharing and exchange network, to conduct joint surveys and monitoring activities including on acid rain, coastal and inland water pollution and biodiversity, and to carry out collaborative research and training program in some of the specific subject areas.
Second meeting: Seoul, Korea, September 1993	China, Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Russia, United nations bodies: UNEP, UNDP, ESCAP, The United Nations University (UNU)	- Market-based policy measures for environmental management - Pollution measuring methods including criteria and units, and its inter-calibration - Exploration of the joint research topic and its implementation - Classification of hazardous wastes - Experiences and roles of the local government in the NEA environmental cooperation	Participants expressed the need for an expansion of various exchanges of manpower, information, experiences, and technology in the environmental area, in order to enhance the mutual understanding among the countries that will ultimately contribute to the improvement of the regional environment.
Third meeting: Hyogo, Japan, September, 1994	China, Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Russia, United nations bodies: ESCAP	- Sustainable cities - Conservation of biological diversity - Strengthening cooperation	Discussions covered the preparation and implementation of environmental protection policies in each country and the promotion of sustainable development in the region. The Conference acknowledged the need for an integrated regional strategy as well as national strategies for achieving sustainable development. Two cooperative activities were proposed at this conference: - The preparation of a report on Urban Sustainability for the Northeast Asian region, in close cooperation with international agencies, such as the UN - The creation of a directory of contacts in central governments, institutes and relevant agencies

Fourth meeting: Pusan, Korea, September, 1995	China, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Russia, United nations bodies: UNEP, UNDP, ESCAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Roles of local governments and NGOs -Cooperative measures on the trans-boundary movement of pollutant -Viewpoint & measures on the framework convention on climate change -Experience and measures on toxic chemicals management -Urban environmental problems 	<p>who are working in the field of environment in this region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants concluded that concrete measures for regional environmental cooperation on issues of common interest were necessary. Specifically, participants acknowledged the merits of formulating an Action Plan of the conference which would entail the mutual exchange of annual reports, environmental laws, statistics, and so on.
Fifth meeting: Beijing, China, October, 1996	China, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Russia, United nations bodies: UNDP, WHO, WB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The recent development of environmental policies, legislation and management in each participating country in the context of pursuing sustainable development -Solid waste management and the prevention of illegal trans-boundary movement of wastes -Cleaner production technologies and integrated pollution control -Global environmental issues: climate change, bio-diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Korean delegation proposed to establish Northeast Asian Climate research Center - Russian delegation proposed to develop possibilities for the creation of regional programmes and projects on the items discussed.
Sixth meeting: Niigata, Japan, October, 1997	China, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, United nations bodies: UNEP, ESCAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Acid rain -Wide range water pollution control -Biodiversity conservation -Cleaner production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Among the activities to promote regional cooperation, two programs were recognized as effective efforts in harmonizing existing activities in the region: Acid deposition monitoring network in East Asia, advocated by Japan, and Expert Meeting for Long-range Transboundary Air pollutants in Northeast Asia, organized by the Republic of Korea.
Seventh meeting: Cheju, Korea, 1998		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coordination for preserving migratory birds and their habitats -Ground water preservation and management -The development and application of sustainable development indicators -Hazardous air pollutant management 	<p>At the session on Cooperation for the Preservation of migratory Birds and Their Habitats, special mention was made of the recent successes in transboundary regional protection and the need for similar projects in the future. The participating countries recognized the importance of Korean proposals for fostering international cooperation for the conservation of migratory birds, including the development of a regional agreement on the conservation of migratory</p>

Eighth meeting: Maizuru, Japan, 1999		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Environmental conservation administration measures by local authorities -Environmental cooperation initiatives by local authorities -Aimed at addressing climate change problems: domestic policy measures and steps of environmental administration bodies themselves as consumer and executor -Practical use of internet in environmental cooperation 	birds and their habitats and the establishment of a committee for this purpose. The participants agreed to discuss on the next meeting in Ulaanbaatar, "Review and future of Northeast Asian Environmental cooperation"
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All-Russian Research Institute for Nature Protection

9th Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation

July 26-28, 2000

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Review and Future of the Northeast Asian Environmental Cooperation

I would like to take the occasion to repeat principal position, which was pointed in the keynote speech that since the start and till present days the Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Conference played very considerable role for strengthening our efforts in the field of environment protection and promoting sustainable development in the region.

The beginning of new millenium and the threshold of the 10th Conference give a good inspiration to consider our past and make priorities for the future.

To summarize the principal directions of our work, first of all, I need to stress the importance of exchanging the information. The presented materials, which contained the experience of different countries, help to find out cases of successful practice and to build a potential in future. To bear in mind that one never knows where the most interesting solution may arise, I would like to say, that the interesting and useful solutions come in the most cases during meeting and conference between people form different points of views, different countries and different traditions.

Also the idea of the Conference of changing place of meeting seems to be very fruitful. It serves as a good basis for better understanding and gives a good lesson of local practice and methods for environmental protection. But I need to point that still Russian territory was neglected and we need to improve it in the nearest future.

It is well known that the most environmental problems go far beyond national boundaries and become international in nature. The international efforts and initiatives in the field of environmental protection very often are the crucial

points for achievement results. Pooling of financial and technical resources among Northeast Asia countries is a quite effective way in seeking practical methods to common environmental problems.

The necessity of cooperation in the way of building sustainability in the region was stressed in the Conference almost in every considered issue. Among the main trends there are: exchange of information in different field of environmental protection, including environmental legislation, creating clean production, air pollution control, water pollution control and water supply, air pollutant management and biodiversity conservation and so on. The different ideas and practical ways of cooperation were presented in every topic. Also we held some special session, concentrated on the cooperation initiatives, as example, environmental cooperation initiatives of local authorities, cooperation in protection of migratory bird species and their habitats in Northern Asia etc.

In spite that the plenty of proposals and methods for cooperation were discussed in the Conference, there were not so many of them realized in practice. Several of the successful examples of cooperation belong to the field of territorial protection. Now the main worldwide using principle for territorial conservation is the development of the network of protected areas. This is a one of the unique way to conserve the species, which need a huge territory for survival, to conserve migrating species and to save diversity of widely dispersed but rare species.

Taking it into account, Russia is developing the network of the territory for biodiversity protection in the Northeast Asia. Today some of these areas are included to the Ramsar list and also to the Ramsar network for migrating species and special program under Wetlands International in Asia is in progress. It means that international cooperation in the field of migrating species protection begins. But, the examples of successful project in the field of network building are still not enough for supporting sustainable ecosystems in the region and for providing the protection of rare and endangered species.

We are just mentioned in the session "Extension of Network of the Special Protected Areas and Capacity Building" about several transboundary protected area projects. They are could serve as a model for development another projects. Taking into account, that in-situ conservation is the most sufficient way for protection of rare and endangered species, we would like again to outline the very strong necessity of international cooperation for protection the Siberian tiger, Far-eastern leopard and Snow leopard. Especially, urgent joint measures in the field of establishing the protected area still are needed to protect the Far-eastern leopard.

A new promising project for biodiversity conservation in transboundary area is an establishment of international zapovednik "Dauriya" including participation of three neighboring countries: China, Mongolia and Russia. It helps to conserve rare and endangered species at this territory and strengthening efforts to support sustainable ecosystem.

Apart from global problems concerning the nature conservation in this region there are many problems of local significant, which must be solved in the framework of bilateral agreements between neighboring countries on the base of common benefits.

For example the nature conservation in the Primorsky Region and Khabarovsk Krai in Russia is impossible without active participation of China. We have a good examples of our cooperation with China also on use of Russian technologies in southern provinces of China.

The following directions are determined as priorities in the field of China-Russia cooperation: organisation, research and maintenance of strictly protected natural territories, being of joint interest for China and Russia; development and realisation of the joint programme on the protection, rehabilitation and introduction into nature of the Przewalski Horse; the increase of effectiveness of use of the resources of energy by exchange of experience and technologies; monitoring and regulation of the pollution of surface water, including transboundary water streams and international lakes based on watershed approach; biotesting and bioindicative investigations of anthropogenous environmental impact assessment; application of space means for investigation and solution of regional ecological problems; control of radioactive pollution; technical cooperation in field of assessment of influences on environment, ecological expertises and development of normatives; ecological-informative provision of projects in nature protection. Some of them have received a successful implementation in practice, the other is elaborating, but several fields still have no realizations.

We are hope also to fruitful results, which would be gained within the framework of cooperation according to the general agreement between Nanjing Institute of Environmental Sciences of SEPA (China) and All-Russian Research Institute of Nature Protection (Russia). This agreement implies widely exchanged views on nature conservation and biodiversity, pesticide environmental impact assessment and management, agricultural waste disposal and comprehensive utilization, eco-monitoring, library exchange, waste treatment techniques; trial waste treatment techniques; strengthen exchange and visit of scholars between two institutes.

We suppose that the increasing of cooperation between Northeast Asia countries serve our interests. Stronger and closer cooperation in the field of environmental protection will support a more sustainable growth of the region.

NEAC have contributed a lot to the promotion of environmental cooperation in the region. In the Conferences the list of priorities in different fields of environmental protection was prepared. Some of Conference recommendations were successfully implemented in practice. But in some fields there are not so many examples of collaboration as would be appropriate. Therefore we need to elaborate some measures for reinforcement our efforts and way for making our proposals more efficient. The one of possible way for providing effectiveness in our work to give attention for the topics which were studied at previous Conference and make special review for their development and implementation.

Other principal component for strengthening of our efforts is more actively highlight opportunities for partnership with the donor organizations. Unfortunately, the modern practical works of international sponsor organizations are not coordinated well enough and their activities come by parallel lines. It is very useful start to coordinate the works of these bodies as in national as in international levels to stop spending means in parallel works.

In resume I would like to say that it is clear that the Conference gives an impetus for initiating the joint environmental projects on local as well as on regional levels. In present time the Conference has a very good prospect to enlarge it's effects in future.

Whither NEAC ?

An Overview of the Past, Present and Future of Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia

**Presented at:
The 9th Northeast Asian Conference
on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC)
26-28 July, 2000, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**

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and

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A Historical Perspective

- Globalization of environmental problems, perceptions and policy responses

as evidenced by the 1972 Stockholm Conference
(UNCHE) . UNEP created within the UN system

- The need for regional cooperation increasingly recognized, even prior to the Stockholm Conference, to address issues of common concern, particularly concerning the conservation and management of internationally shared natural resources

e. g. international waters and semi-enclosed seas
fisheries
migratory birds and animals

- Regional approaches promoted by UNEP

e. g. Establishment of Regional Offices within UNEP
Institutional support to UN Regional Economic
Commissions, including ESCAP
Regional Seas Programme

- Paradigm shift from “environmental protection” to
“sustainable development”

World Conservation Strategy (1980)

WCED (the Brundtland Commission) report (1987)

- The Rio Earth Summit (UNCED 1992)

Agenda 21 calls for global partnership and enhanced
cooperation at regional and subregional levels.

Regional Environmental Programmes in the Asia-Pacific Region

I. The Region As a Whole: the RAP for ESSD

- The 1st Ministerial Conference of ESCAP on Environment and Development held in 1985, releases the 1st State of the Environment report for Asia and the Pacific.
- The 2nd Ministerial Conference adopts a "Regional Strategy for ESSD."
- Regional Action Programme 1996-2000 adopted by the 3rd Ministerial Conference.
- The 4th MCED (to be held in Kitakyushu, Japan in early September 2000) is expected to adopt a revised RAP, 2001-2005, emphasizing its ownership by member countries while calling for further regional cooperation and subregional delivery.

II. Subregional Environmental Programmes

Southeast Asia

- ASEAN Sub-regional Environmental Programme (ASEP I~III, 1977~1992) and subsequent Strategic Plans of Action on Environment. Coordinated by the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN) and at various levels of government, serviced by the ASEAN secretariat.
- ASEAN Agreement on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (1985, has not entered into force)
- Cooperation Plan on Transfrontier Pollution (1995), and Regional Haze Action Plan (1997)
- East Asian Sea Action Plan (1981~ , revised in 1994)
- The Mekong River Commission (MRC) revived and the Agreement on Cooperation for Sustainable Development of the Mekong River Basin signed in 1996

The South Pacific

- South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) and the South Pacific Action Plan on Marine Environment adopted in 1982
- Noumea Convention for the Conservation of Natural Resources and the Environment (1986)
- SPREP as an international organization established in 1992 (came into being in 1995)
- Revised Action Plans, and a new Strategy document being prepared for adoption later this year (2000)

South Asia

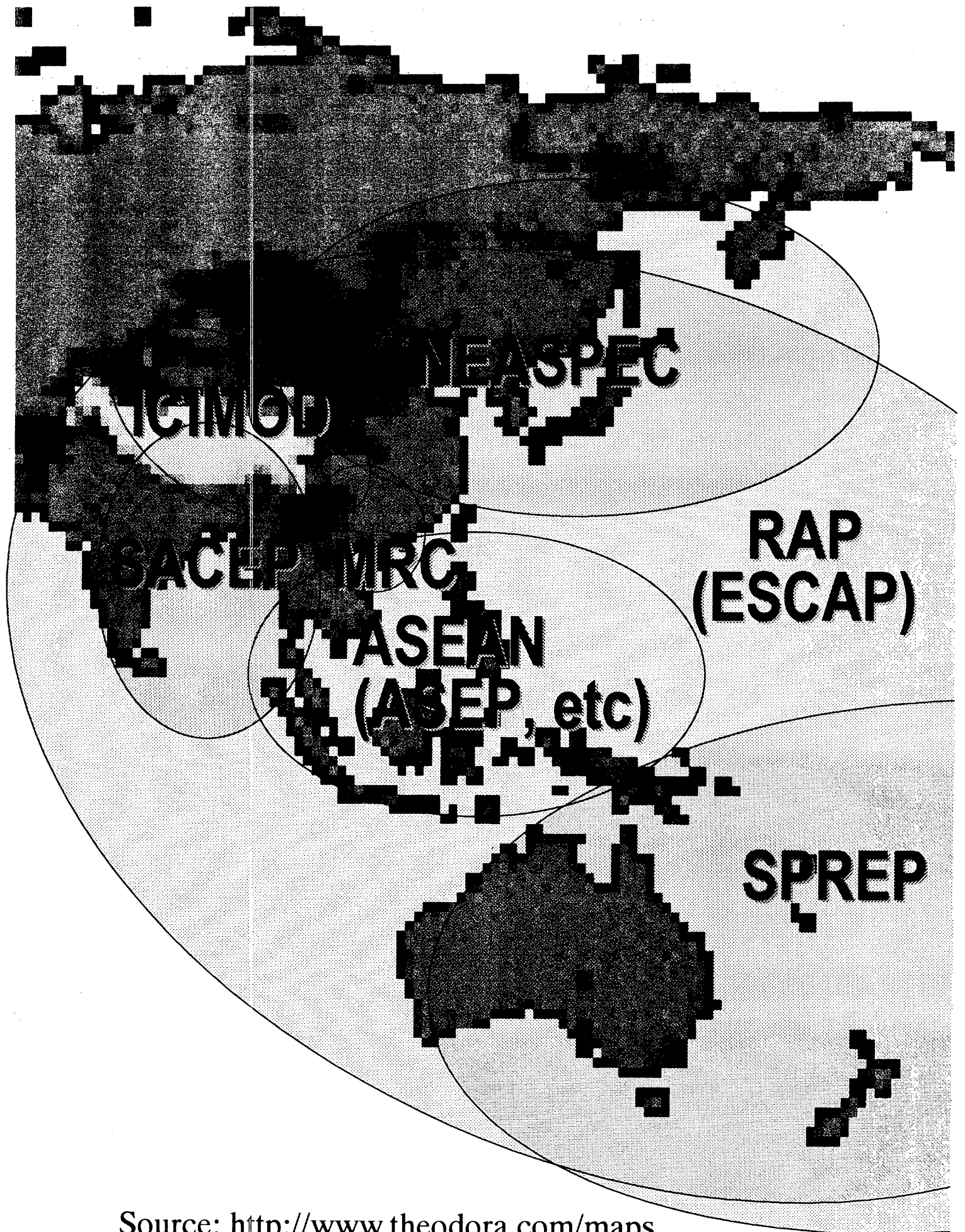
- South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) established in 1981
- South Asian Seas Action Plan (1995)
- Male Declaration on Prevention and Control of Air Pollution and its Likely Transboundary Effects (1998)

Hindu Kush/Himalayas

- International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) established in 1983
- Initial work programmes, followed by core programmes and regional collaborative programmes

Central Asia

- International Fund for the Aral Sea (IFAS)



Source: <http://www.theodora.com/maps>

Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia

- The burgeoning (almost bursting) emergence of multilateral as well as bilateral programmes and forums, in the post-UNCED period
- At different levels of international and national governance, with a multiple layer of actors and participants
- With different geographical and thematic /issue coverage
- With different institutional arrangements (if at all)

I. Cooperation At the Subregional Level

A. Intergovernmental Programmes and Forums

Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC)

- An outgrowth of the Japan-ROK Environmental Symposium held since 1988, NEAC was first organized and hosted by Japan in 1992, and continues to be held annually in different participating countries, largely funded by the Environment Agency of Japan (EAJ).
- Has turned into a forum for exchange of information and policy dialogue on a wide range of topics among environmental authorities of national and local governments and other experts, often held in conjunction with a symposium open to the public.

Northeast Asian Subregional Programme on Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC)

- The establishment of NEASPEC agreed at the 1st Meeting of Senior Officials (SOM) on Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia held in Seoul, ROK in 1993. Since then, holding highly formal meetings through diplomatic channels every one or two years, serviced by the ESCAP secretariat.
- The framework NEASPEC adopted at the 3rd SOM, held in 1996 in Mongolia
- 3 priority areas identified (energy and air pollution, ecosystem management, and capacity building), and a number of projects carried out with funding from ADB.
- Moving toward a more permanent structure with the establishment of a core fund, strongly promoted by ROK.

Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region (NOWPAP)

- The latest addition (1994) to the Regional Seas Programme of UNEP, and still in the formative stages of institutional structure, specific action plans and projects.

Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM)

- Building on existing bilateral agreements for environmental cooperation between China, ROK and Japan, elevated in 1999 to a trilateral ministerial meeting on a regular (annual) basis, with possibilities to carry out agreed cooperative projects.
- Priority areas: a) raising awareness and the sense of "environmental community" among the 3 countries; b) global environmental issues such as biodiversity and climate change; c) air pollution and marine environment; d) environmental technology, industry, and research

Tumen River Area Development Programme (TRADP)

- Basically a regional economic development programme for the Tumen River among the 5 riparian states of China, North and South Korea, Mongolia, and Russia) promoted by UNDP.
- A Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and the Tumen Programme Environmental Action Plan developed to deal with international water pollution and loss of biodiversity, with a \$ 5 million funding from GEF over two years in 2000.

B. Cooperative Network of Local Governments

Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments

- Established in 1996, with 34 local governments from 5 countries of the region participating, with a coordinating body and rotating secretariat provided by the host local government.
- Subcommittee on Environment established in 1998

C. NGO Networks and Forums

North Asia and North Pacific Environmental Partnership (NAPEP, formerly known as NEANPEF)

Atmosphere Action Network East Asia (AANEAE)

And many others working on single issues, especially on migratory birds and wetlands

II. Multilateral Cooperation Covering East Asia/ Asia-Pacific Region

A. Intergovernmental

Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET)

- With preparatory work initiated by EAJ in 1993, the pilot phase was started in 1998, and is expected to go into full operation at the end of 2000. So far, largely funded and secretariat services provided by Japan, but some form of cost-sharing is being sought.

Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO ASIA)

- An informal forum for exchange of information and policy dialogue among environmental ministers of the Asia-Pacific region initiated by EAJ in 1991, meeting on a yearly basis, funded and serviced by EAJ.
- Some projects are being carried out under its authority:
 - e. g. ECO ASIA Long-term Perspective Project (LTPP)
 - ECO ASIA Information Network (ECO ASIA Net)

Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar on Climate Change

- A regional forum for exchange of information and views related to climate change initiated EAJ in 1991, being held every year in various parts of the region, has now become institutionalized in the UNFCCC/Kyoto Protocol process, with the participation of many relevant international organizations, including the UNFCCC secretariat and GEF. But continues to be funded mainly by JEA.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

- Though mainly a policy forum for economic cooperation established in 1989, growing importance is attached to dealing with environmental issues:

e. g. The 1st APEC Environmental Ministerial Meeting held in 1994 issued an "APEC Environmental Vision" Statement.

A three-pronged environmental work programme:

- 1) integration of environment and development;
- 2) sustainable cities, clean technologies, and the marine environment; and 3) long-term focus on food, energy, environment, economic growth, and population.

Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN)

- An intergovernmental network to promote research on long-term changes in the earth's climate, ocean and terrestrial systems, established in 1995, with its headquarters in Kobe, Japan

B. Intergovernmental, with NGO Support

Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Protection Strategy

- Formulated in 1994 at the 7th Meeting of the Ramsar Convention CCP, leading to the establishment of:

e. g. Northeast Asian Crane Site Network Center (1997)
East Asian Australasian Shorebird Network Center (1997)

C. NGO Initiatives

Asia-Pacific NGOs Environmental Conference (APNEC)

- First held in Bangkok, Thailand in 1991, and has since met every one or two years, with participation of NGOs and scholars from countries of the region. Promoted and financial arrangements facilitated mainly by the Japan Environment Council (JEC), has published its first NGO White Paper on Environment in Asia in 1998 (in Japanese) and in 1999 (in English)

There are many others predating UNCED, such as:

Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)

Asia Pacific People's Environment Network (APPEN)

Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia

	IG or Non-G	Geographic coverage	Thematic coverage	Inst'l ar'ts/ Secretariat	Funding
NEAC	IG	NEA	C	Host country	EAJ & host countries
NEASPEC	IG	NEA	C (3 priority areas)	SOM/ ESCAP	ADB, ESCAP as necessary
NOWPAP	IG	NEA	Marine environment	UNEP	Countries & UN system
TEMM	IG	NEA (China, ROK, Japan)	C (4 priority areas)	MOEs	3 Gov'ts
TRADP	IG	NEA	pollution, biodiversity	UNDP	UNDP, GEF and other donors
Ass'n of NEA Reg. Gov'ts	Local gov'ts	NEA	C	Rotating	Local gov'ts
NAPEP	Non-G	NEA + North Pacific	C	Exec. com'ttee/ IGES	External sources
AANEAP	Non-G	NEA	Atmosphere	ROK NGOs	External sources

* IG: intergovernmental (includes inter-ministerial/agency level)

* Non-G: non-governmental

*C (thematic coverage): comprehensive

	IG/ Non-G	Geographic coverage	Thematic coverage	Inst'l ar'ts/ Secretariat	Funding
RAP	IG	AP	C	ESCAP	Countries & UN system
ECO ASIA	IG	AP	C	EAJ	EAJ
EANET	IG	EA	Acid deposition	EAJ (interim)	EAJ (interim)
Reg. Seminar on CC	IG	AP	Climate change	EAJ	EAJ/ UNFCCC etc
APEC	IG	AP & N&S America	C	APEC Sec.	Self
APN	IG	AP	C (global)	GOJ/ Hyogo	GOJ/ Hyogo
Migratory Waterbird Strategy	IG/ Non-G	AP	Migratory waterbirds	Ramsar Convention sec.	Self
(e.g.) NEA Crane Network	IG/ Non-G	NEA	Cranes	Network	Self/ External sources
APNEC	Non-G	AP	C	ROK/ Japan	JEC/ External sources

* IG: intergovernmental (includes inter-ministerial/agency level)

* Non-G: non-governmental

* C (thematic coverage): comprehensive

Major Features of Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia

- Compared to other subregions, the relatively recent (post-UNCED) emergence of a multitude of subregional environmental programmes, forums and bilateral agreements
- Some of these appear to be comprehensive in their scope of activities or issues to be dealt with (NEAC, NEASPEC, TEMM, NAPEP, ECO ASIA, etc.), or are at least intended to be so, while some focus on a single issue (EANET, Crane Networks).
- Some multilateral initiatives target the subregion of Northeast Asia, while some others target the whole region of East Asia or, more broadly, Asia and the Pacific.
- The initiatives were established through different channels. There has been little coordination among them, and there is considerable overlap and redundancy.
- Some do not have clear, long-term goals.
- Many do not have a solid institutional structure and secure source of funding, except for those provided largely by Japan.
- Priority areas identified include air pollution (acid rain), inland and coastal water pollution, loss of biodiversity and deforestation.
- The status of participating countries differs from one initiative to another, depending on the international membership of the host country/organization.
- The assistance and involvement of international organizations such as UN/ESCAP, UNEP, UNDP, and ADB have been crucial in facilitating such initiatives.

Prospects for the Future

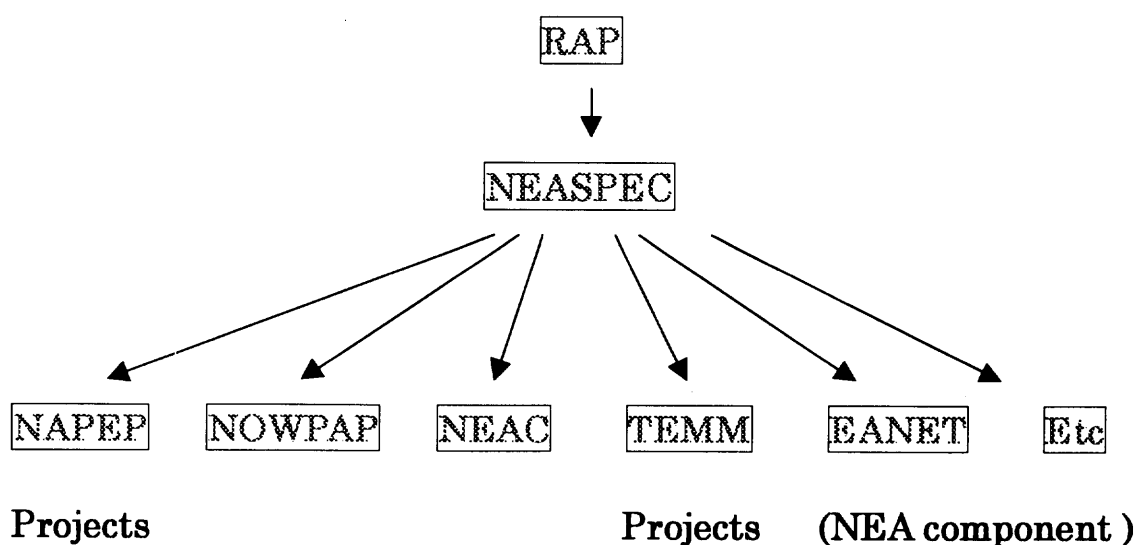
- Difficulties remain, especially in respect of the complex geopolitics of the subregion and the predominance of Japan as the single largest source of bilateral financial/technical assistance.
- But there are hopeful signs as well. South Korea's economy has quickly recovered from the "IMF shock", and coupled with the recent détente between North and South (a flurry of new diplomatic moves in the region surrounding North Korea), the ROK is playing an increasingly active leadership role in promoting multilateral environmental cooperation.
- Let a hundred flowers bloom? Definitely "Yes," especially in the early formative stages of environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia.
- However, there is clearly a need now to establish a systematic relationship among all the initiatives that will create synergy for strengthening cooperation among the various programmes and forums, including NEASPEC, NEAC, TEMM and NAPEP, by defining the role of each mechanism for environmental cooperation.

Conceptually, there are two options to put this into effect:

Option A: Hierarchical Model

- NEASPEC to provide the overall framework for environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia as an official intergovernmental programme, itself within the framework of RAP 2001-2005 and beyond. All other existing programmes, projects, and forums would become a component (or a medium for implementing a part) of NEASPEC.
- NEASPEC would be designed to serve as a truly comprehensive programme of action, clearly setting out its objectives, goals and strategies, identifying priority areas and projects, providing for collaboration and partnerships with the private sector businesses, NGOs and scientific/research communities, and supported by an institutional structure built on a solid financial basis.

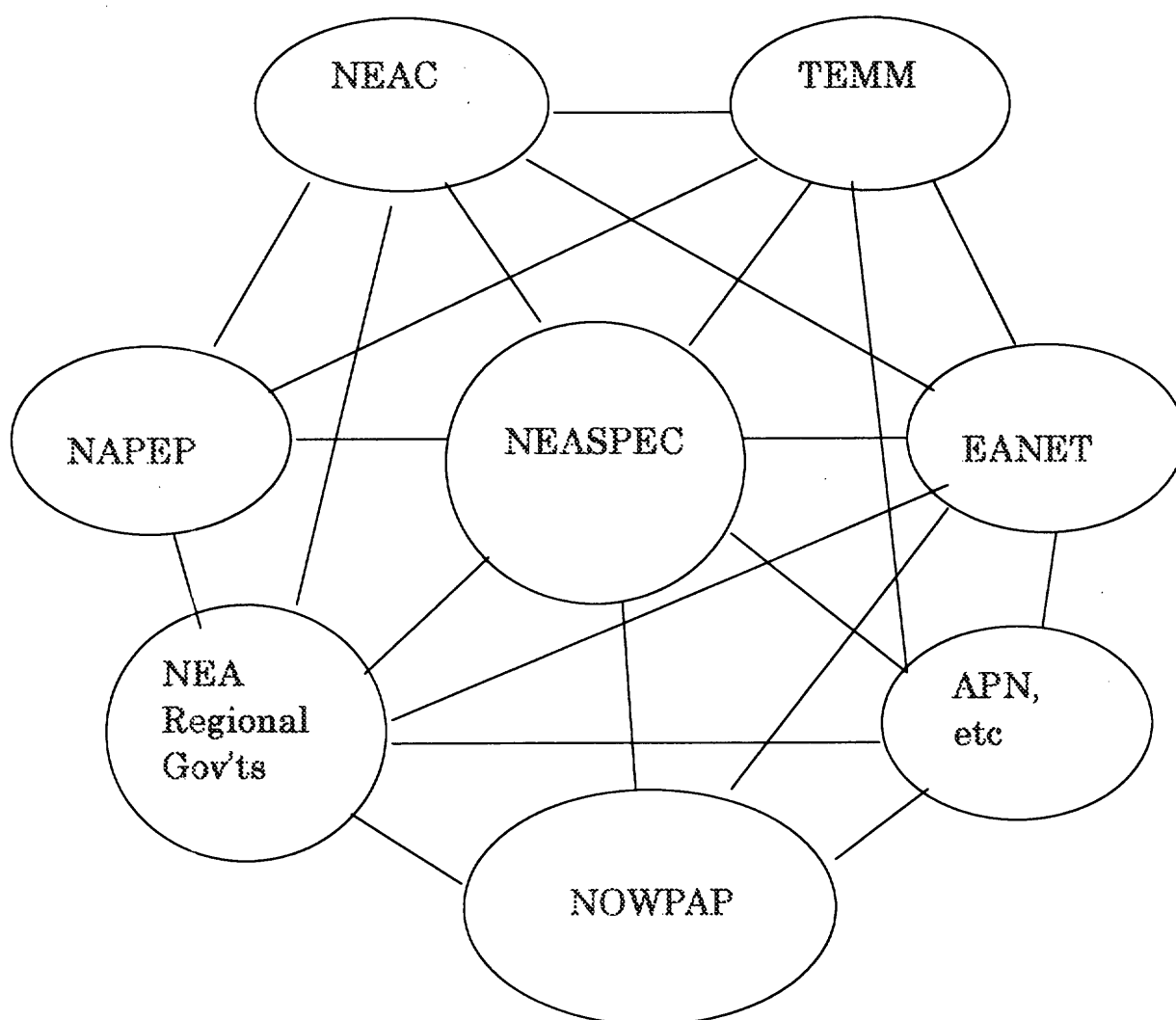
Option A: Hierarchical Model



Option B: Horizontal/Multi-layer Linkage Model

- With NEASPEC at the hub of a wheel, linkages with other programmes and forums would be provided by means of, for example, joint planning and implementation of projects, holding joint or back-to-back meetings and workshops, or by linking each other on the Internet.

Option B: Horizontal Linkage Model



N.B. : The two models are not mutually exclusive, and in reality, elements of both will have to be utilized, as exemplified in the “modular multilateralism” of the Baltic Sea region (See attached paper by Wakana Takahashi, p.13-15.)

Alternatively, since Option B is closer to the present state of affairs, it could be adopted in the near term, in transition in the longer term to Option A.

What is the Role of NEAC?

- NEAC was started primarily as a forum for exchange of information and policy dialogue among environmental ministries/agencies of participating countries, but over the years has developed into an open and flexible channel of communication and discussion among environmental authorities of both national and local governments as well as experts from scientific and NGO communities.
- The range of topics covered by NEAC is very broad and comprehensive, often taking up issues which are only now emerging on the horizon or those related to other policy domains, sectors and disciplines.

In either of the two options, NEAC can play a vital role by providing expert views on setting the agenda and priorities for NEASPEC, and by acting as a channel of communication between different programmes, forums, and other stakeholders, or even as a catalyst in implementing some of the programmes and projects.

In Conclusion,

Some Personal Observations & Suggestions

- (1) De-emphasize the role of Japan (and of EAJ) as the predominant financier and promoter of bilateral environmental programmes and projects in the subregion.
- (2) At the same time, more Japanese support should be directed towards subregional, multilateral programmes and mechanisms.
- (3) We are very much encouraged by, and strongly support, the ROK's leadership and various initiatives (such as TEMM) in taking the subregional/multilateral approach to environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia.
- (4) NEAC should become a truly open, transparent and comprehensive forum/process for promoting cooperation and partnership among environmental authorities (national and local governments), private sector businesses, civil society organizations (CSOs), and research/academic communities.
- (5) But it should NEVER become a project-based or project implementation mechanism.



Review and Future
of the Northeast Asian Environmental Cooperation
: From an institutional viewpoint

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
Environmental Governance Project
Takahashi, Wakana

July 2000

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Acronyms

AANEA	Atmosphere Action Network East Asia
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALGAS	Asian Least-Cost Greenhouse Gas Abatement Strategy
AMM	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (Meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers)
AMME	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APN	Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASOEN	ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment
CBSS	Council of the Baltic Sea States
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CO	carbon monoxide
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
COMECOM	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
EANET	Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia
EAS	East Asian Seas Action Plan
ECO-ASIA	Environment Congress for Asia and Pacific
EMEP- LRTAP	Co-operative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-Range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
GEF	Global Environment Facility
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LRTAP	Long-Ranged Transboundary Air Pollution
LTPP	Long-term perspective project (for ECO-ASIA)
KOICA	Korean International Cooperation Agency
MRC	Mekong River Commission
NAPEP	North Asia-Pacific Environment Partnership
NEAC	Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation
NEANPEF	Northeast Asia and North Pacific Environmental Forum (now, renamed NAPEP)
NEASPEC	North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation
NGOs	Non governmental organizations
NO _x	nitrogen oxide
NOWPAP	Northwest Pacific Action Plan
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and
SACEP	South Asia Co-operative Environment Programmes
SAP	Strategic Action Programme (for TRADP)
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SOM	Meeting of Senior Officials (for the NEASPEC)
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TEMM	Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (ROK, China, and Japan)
TRADP	Tumen River Area Development Programme
UNCSD	United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UN/ECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UN/ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP/ROAP	United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office of Asia and Pacific

1. Introduction

Northeast Asia includes the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Japan, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), Mongolia, and the Russian Far East. The subregion extends from arctic to semi-tropical zones. High population density, high rate of consumption of natural resources and the pressures of rapid industrialization with inadequate environmental management have made Northeast Asia one of the most polluted subregions in the world. It has suffered environmental deterioration in terms of air pollution (including acid rain), coastal and inland water pollution, soil pollution, loss of biodiversity and desertification. Some of this damage has extended beyond the boundaries of the area.

Northeast Asia lacked a centralizing political, economic or social force until the late 1980s due to a diversity of systems. Except for certain bilateral initiatives, there was little cooperation on environmental issues. The end of the Cold War, however, led to joint efforts to promote multilateral environmental cooperation. Agenda 21, agreed upon during the Rio Summit in 1992, helped to promote regional and subregional environmental cooperation: a number of cooperative programs, plans and forums have been advocated and extended through multiple channels, including this NEAC Conference, NEASPEC, TEMM and NOWPAP.

It is not surprising, however, that institutions of Northeast Asian environmental cooperation have drawn criticism in the last decade. Environmental institutions are often seen as weaker than institutions in other areas, such as trade or security (Tay, 2000). The mechanism for cooperation has been characterized as unsatisfactory, with insufficient links between initiatives. Another criticism is that some initiatives failed to clarify long-term goals. Few regional environmental initiatives have a structure or financial foundation.

It is high time for Northeast Asia to review the steps taken thus far and examine what should be the next step.

This paper is a study of the past and future of Northeast Asian environmental cooperation. In addition to describing the programs, forums, conferences and other initiatives in the region as well as in East Asia or Asia-Pacific as a whole, it will examine the actors, processes and institutions of subregional environmental cooperation. It questions by whom and how environmental cooperation has been addressed, identified and promoted; how does each actor interact with others; what is the nature of the basic subregional cooperative mechanisms to respond to environmental issues; and how the economic and political pictures of Northeast Asia have influenced the subregional environmental cooperation mechanisms.

Through these examinations, this paper aims to expose the weaknesses and inadequacies of Northeast Asian environmental cooperation mechanisms, and to provide the future prospects. The conclusion offers suggestions for future.

2. Overview of Northeast Asian Environmental Cooperation

Considering the geographical scope and the diverse economic and political systems of the Asia-Pacific region, UN organizations emphasized collaboration at subregional rather than regional levels. Plans and programs facilitated by such organizations are South Asia Co-operative Environment Programmes (SACEP), various environment plans and programs developed under the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

Although lagging behind other subregions in the Asia-Pacific, Northeast Asia has begun to attach importance to promoting environmental cooperation. In the 1990s, the subregion began to show signs of progress on multilateral environmental cooperation.

This Chapter provides an overview of cooperative initiatives being undertaken in Northeast Asia on both multilateral and bilateral bases.

2.1. Multilateral Cooperation within Northeast Asia

Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC)

The origins of multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia can be traced back to the year 1988 and the Japan-South Korea Environmental Symposium. The symposium was co-hosted by the respective environmental agencies in Japan and South Korea. UNEP cooperated, China participated, and the Soviet Union and Mongolia attended as observers. It thus developed into a forum for exchanging information and exploring the possibilities for regional cooperation between the five countries.

The Rio Summit in 1992 raised the desire to further develop the framework provided by the symposium, and the Japanese Environment Agency soon hosted the Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC).

The NEAC provided government organizations associated with the environment from five countries in Northeast Asia including Japan, South Korea, China, Mongolia and Russia and international organizations such as UNEP and UN/ESCAP with the chance to meet every year. Before the NEAC, cooperative programs undertaken on bilateral bases were run one at a time, usually by some type of joint committee. There existed no comprehensive framework for multilateral cooperation. Thus, the NEAC was organized as a forum for exchanging information from these individual programs undertaken by various countries. Japan, South Korea and China have hosted NEAC in turn, and Mongolia is host for the ninth meeting now in 2000.

North-East Asian Subregional Program on Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC)

While NEAC is a forum for frank dialog on strategies between environmental government organizations, local governments and specialists, NEASPEC represents cooperation on environmental issues via foreign ministries (Oversea Environmental Cooperation Center, 1994).

The establishment of NEASPEC was agreed to on the first occasion of the Meeting of Senior Officials of Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia (SOM) in 1993, hosted by UN/ESCAP. Its proponent was South Korea. Since then, highly formal meetings have been held every year or every two years as part of the program.

Its three priority areas are identified as follows: energy and air pollution; ecosystem management; and capacity building. At the 3rd SOM, held in 1996 in Mongolia, "the NEASPEC framework" was adopted and agreement was reached on basic structures and activities. Several fundamental projects on energy and air pollution have been identified and even implemented with the help of ADB financial aid.

NEASPEC aims to develop its own firm financial mechanisms rather than ad hoc project-based funding, and establishment of a core fund was agreed upon in March 2000. South Korea will contribute 100,000 dollars to the fund. NEASPEC is the region's only comprehensive environmental program that has been implemented in concrete ways. It is expected to fulfill a central role as a comprehensive and intergovernmental program in the subregion.

Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP)

The Northwest Pacific Action Plan, NOWPAP, offered a framework which allows parties to focus on problems on a more specific and individual basis, such as coastal and marine pollution. Unlike the NEASPEC and the NEAC, which were regional initiatives, the NOWPAP was advocated by UNEP.

The Regional Sea Program took off from the regional level approach recommended at the 1972 Stockholm Conference and led to remarkable developments as subsequent action plans were formulated -- the Mediterranean Action Plan of 1975 and the Barcelona Convention of 1976. The approach has spread to other regions in the world, and there are now 14 Regional Sea Programs in operation, with more than 140 seacoast countries participating in various plans.

One of these plans is NOWPAP, in which four Northeast Asian countries participate: China, Japan, South Korea and Russia. These four countries adopted action plans at the first intergovernmental meeting held in Seoul in 1994.

Northeast Asian and North Pacific Environmental Forum (NEANPEF, renamed NAPEP)

A non-governmental regional network, the North Asia-Pacific Environment Partnership (NAPEP), was inaugurated in 1992 (originally named the Northeast Asia and North Pacific Environmental Forum). Comprised of environmental experts and NGOs from subregional countries, it has promoted exchanges of information and expertise between environmental NGOs through workshops and mobilization of resources to support specific projects, particularly for ecosystem management undertaken by member NGOs in the region.

Several workshops and conferences, attended by representatives of NPOs, governments, business, universities and think tanks from China, Mongolia, Russia, South Korea, Japan and the U.S. have been held.

Some participants at the workshops recommended joint research into sustainable ecological development in the Douman Jiang and Amur river regions and the establishment of an international advisory group consisting of an operating committee, a secretariat and expert groups to support NAPEP activities.

Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM)

A concerted effort at a ministerial level has also begun. Following a proposal from South Korea during the 6th United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in May 1998, the Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM) between China, Japan and South Korea was held in Seoul in January 1999. The three ministers recognized that facing environmental challenges in the Northeast Asia had become critical and that it was time to come together and intensify environmental cooperation.

The TEMM ministers agreed on priority areas requiring increased cooperation: a) raising awareness of the three countries' "environmental community" and stimulating information exchange; b) strengthening cooperation on global environmental issues, such as biodiversity and global warming; c) preventing air pollution and protecting the marine environment; and d) enhancing cooperation on environmental technology, the environmental industry and environmental research.

In order to achieve these tasks, the TEMM ministers emphasized the need for more cooperation not only between their respective governments' environmental agencies, but also between NGOs, research organizations and local governments. They also recognized that while using existing frameworks to realize these objectives is ideal, sometimes new working groups must be formed and contact points secured.

The TEMM is expected to be held on a yearly basis. The 2nd TEMM was held in Beijing in February 2000, where the ministers of the three countries agreed to develop and work on specific projects -- in particular focusing on raising consciousness of environmental community, fresh water pollution and land-based marine pollution prevention and cooperation in the field of environmental industry. The three countries have already initiated the concept project proposals, and steps have been taken toward implementation.

Tumen River Area Development Programme (TRADP)

On the economic cooperation front, the Tumen River Area Development Programme (TRADP) is facilitated by UNDP and aims to promote regional economic cooperation between China, South Korea, North Korea, Mongolia and Russia. A Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Principles governing the TRADP was written in 1995.

The Tumen Region has achieved economic development at the expense of the environment and has been threatened by environmental degradation, namely, inland and coastal water pollution, biodiversity loss, deforestation and air pollution.

In response to the memorandum, a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) was created for the purpose of developing an effective long-term regional strategy for dealing with international water pollution and loss of biodiversity. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) decided to sponsor the SAP with 5 million dollars over a two-year period, and the program was launched in May 2000.

The Tumen Programme Environmental Action Plan was also developed in parallel, focusing

on transborder pollution and other forms of regional environmental damage, such as trade in endangered species. The Action Plan identified four program areas with detailed project proposals. TRADP member states are currently seeking investment and donor assistance for implementing such projects.

North East Asian Crane Site Network Center

The North East Asian Crane Network Center was established in 1997, based on the "Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Protection Strategy." The strategy was formulated at the 7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetland (Ramsar), in which actions and priorities to protect migratory water birds and their habitats in Asia and the Pacific were identified.

There are eighteen network sites from six countries, namely, China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, Mongolia and Russia. In addition, the East Asian Australasian Shorebird Site Network was also established in 1997, based on the Strategy, in which 24 sites from 10 countries participate. Also, the East Asian Anatidae Site Network was launched at the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetland held in Costa Rica in May 1999.

2.2. Multilateral Cooperation covering East Asia/ the Asia-Pacific region

Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET)

The Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET), a multilateral initiative, targets the countries of Northeast Asia. The Environment Agency of Japan advocated its establishment. Attending member states from Northeast Asia include China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia and Russia. It aims to develop a common understanding of the region's "acid rain" problem. Its preparatory-phase activities began in 1998, and full operation is expected to start by the end of 2000.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

Covering a much broader geographical area of the Asia-Pacific, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, inaugurated in 1989 and including 18 member economies, also began to work toward integrating environmental and economic concerns. The member economies from Northeast Asia include China, Japan, South Korea, Russia, and Taiwan.

The First Environmental Ministerial Meeting held in 1994 developed an "APEC Environmental Vision Statement." Since this statement and other declarations, APEC has developed a three-pronged environmental work program: namely, 1) integration of environmental and economic considerations in APEC's working groups; 2) attention to sustainable cities, clean technologies, and the marine environment; and 3) long-term focus on food, energy, environment, economic growth, and population.

Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN)

On the scientific front, the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) was established in 1995 for the purpose of strengthening links between the scientific community and policy makers in the Asia-Pacific Region. The intergovernmental network aims to promote, encourage and support research on long-term change in the earth's climate, ocean and terrestrial systems as well as research on related physical, chemical, biological and socioeconomic processes.⁵ Its member states from Northeast Asia are: China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia and Russia.

Environment Congress for Asia and Pacific (ECO-ASIA)

Inspired by the Rio Summit, the Environment Agency of Japan initiated the Environment Congress for Asia and Pacific (ECO-ASIA), with the objective of fostering policy dialogue and cooperation among environmental ministers of participating countries.

While ECO-ASIA was originally intended as an informal forum of information exchange

among ministers, it now includes the "ECO-ASIA Long-term Perspective Project (LTPP)," which aims to identify environmental policies that can contribute to the long-term sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region. The project identifies major environmental issues confronting the region, examines their connection to socioeconomic issues, and forecasts social economic and environmental issues that may arise from various development scenarios for the regions.

2.3. Bilateral Cooperation

One feature of environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia is the predominance of initiatives undertaken between two countries rather than among more than two. Japan occupies a unique position in the region as a highly industrialized country that contributes development assistance and other aid to countries throughout the world. Japan's government now emphasizes environmental cooperation as an important part of economic cooperation and promotes bilateral environmental cooperation as a facet of development assistance¹.

Most notable among such bilateral initiatives are those between Japan and China. In the 1990's, the volume and quality of cooperation on environmental matters rose. Grants, technical assistance and yen loans have been made through various organs of government and aid organizations².

Since environmental projects usually fail to contribute directly to economic growth, however, the governments of developing countries have been less than enthusiastic about asking for environment-related assistance, particularly when it comes to industrial pollution and global environment-related initiatives.

So, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry developed in 1990 the "Green Aid Plan," which places importance on reducing industrial pollution and promoting efficient energy use (Economic Cooperation Division, Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Japan, 1997). In addition to Indonesia and the Philippines, China is considered high priority in this respect.

The trend is growing towards cooperative projects undertaken between the local governments of China and Japan. The cities of Kita-kyushu and Hiroshima can be cited as encouraging examples of this. Cooperative projects initiated by the private sector are also developing, including technological projects³.

In parallel with the gaining momentum of various cooperative initiatives, the framework to support these activities are also evolving.

In March 1994, the Japan-China Environmental Conservation Cooperation Agreement was signed. The Japan-China Environmental Conservation Joint Committee has met annually since in order to coordinate the overall activities stipulated in the agreement. The committee, which relevant government agencies attend, reviews the existing state of cooperative initiatives and considers new projects.

The Sino-Japan Friendship Center for Environmental Protection, established in Beijing in 1996, has performed a central role acting as a liaison on matters related to environmental cooperation. In 1996, the Japan-China Comprehensive Forum on Environmental Cooperation was started to exchange ideas.

Bilateral summits have also produced initiatives. At their summit in 1997, the leaders of Japan and China reached an agreement on environmental cooperation in the 21st century,

¹ Adopted as a cabinet decision in June 1992, Japan's ODA Charter stipulates that one of four key factors to be considered is "pursuit in tandem of environmental conservation and development."

² For information related to environmental concerns and economic cooperation in Northeast Asia, see Ryo Fujikura's "The Current Status and Problems Relating to Japanese Economic Assistance and Its Impact on Environmental Preservation in the Asian Region," in the International East Asia Research Center, *Higashi Asia no Shiten* (view on East Asia), March 1998, page 122-133 (in Japanese).

³ For information on China-Japan Environmental cooperation, see the Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center (OECC), *Collected Data of Examples in Japan-China Environmental Cooperation*, commissioned by the Environment Agency in 1998, March 1999.

including two major initiatives: "Japan-China Environmental Development Model City Plan"⁴ and "Environmental Information Network"⁵.

Meanwhile, developmental and environmental assistance for China is a great concern for many donor countries. The China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development, a high-level non-governmental advisory body, was established in 1992. Its stated purpose is "to further strengthen cooperation and exchange between China and the international community in the field of environment and development." It was established with the objective of promoting cooperation in the field of environmentally sensitive development with China and the international community⁶.

Japan has sent members to the council and has participated enthusiastically. Japanese private sector groups have also participated.

Environmental cooperation between Japan and South Korea is not at the level of Japan-China cooperation in terms of quality or volume. The background to this gap is that yen loans and grant aid from Japan to South Korea recently ceased on the judgment that the Korean economy has already graduated from the stage of requiring assistance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan, 1998). The initiatives that do exist on environmental training, joint research cooperation and information exchange on environmental technology at the level of central and local governments are somewhat lackluster.

Nonetheless, there is a trend toward development of a framework supporting cooperation between Japan and South Korea. The Japan-South Korea Environmental Conservation Cooperation Agreement was signed in June 1993. The Japan-Republic of Korea Environmental Conservation Joint Committee meets annually based on the agreement. The committee's chief function is to coordinate and plan cooperative projects between the two countries, and currently 21 projects are under way⁷.

Summits began to address furthering environmental cooperation between the two countries. In one declaration (<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/korea/joint9810.html>) adopted in October 1998, the two leaders agreed that both governments would cooperate closely on resolving various global issues that transcend national borders and that are becoming new threats to the security and welfare of the international community.

They also agreed that both countries would promote Japan-South Korea environmental policy dialogue in order to strengthen cooperation on various issues concerning the global environment, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and measures to fight acid rain.

A plan of action was created, specifying that the two nations investigate possibilities for communication and dialogue on environmental strategies, for strengthening environmental cooperation in the Northeast Asian region, for starting joint research on environmental hormones (endocrine disrupters) and environmental industry. Based on this declaration, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) have developed a joint training program for improvement of the water environment, targeting neighboring developing countries in East Asia.

Joint environmental initiatives between Japan and Korea are moving from "assistance" to "an equal cooperative relationship". There is room for much further development in this new equal-footing relationship.

By contrast, environmental cooperation between Japan and Mongolia proceeds under

⁴ The Model City Plan calls for the selection of model cities for environmental programs. Model cities include aggressive strengthening of environmental regulations, Japan's assistance (including ODA loans with preferential terms for environmental projects and technical assistance). These environmental measures, designed to reduce air pollution and acid rain, for example, should also be designed to generate successes that will encourage extension of conservation efforts and wider adoption of environmental policies throughout China. The three cities are currently Dalian, Chongjing and Guiyu. See <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/summary/1998/8.html>>.

⁵ The project is to set up computers for processing environmental information at a hundred locations throughout the country, establishing a nationwide environmental network centered on the Sino-Japan Friendship Center for Environmental Protection located in Beijing.

⁶ See Web site of China Council <<http://www.harbour.sfu.ca/dlam/index.html>>

⁷ Of the 21 projects so far, six are environment-related. (Environment Agency of Japan materials).

Japanese leadership. An economic crisis struck Mongolia after the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) under the former Soviet Union stopped extending assistance in 1991.

The urgency of Mongolia's need for assistance was recognized at a summit in London the same year, and Japan began increasing financial assistance, becoming Mongolia's largest donor country.

Japan-Mongolia relations have since experienced a considerable turn for the better in comparison to the Cold War era, and bilateral cooperation on the environment has gone smoothly. Cooperative projects range from technical cooperation, including hosting trainees and sending experts, to grant and yen loan projects in forestry management, subterranean water development and power generation plants.

Japan and Russia announced in 1993 an Economic Declaration to develop economic and trade relations. The Japanese government has increased the quality and volume of official development assistance (ODA) to assist Russia's reform efforts. The ODA ranges in use from emergency humanitarian assistance to technical and financial assistance.

The Russian Far East, in particular, has grown increasingly important to the deepening of Russian-Japanese relations. Almost half of Japanese humanitarian aid went to this region. There has been a little emphasis on environmental cooperation between the two countries. Cooperation on the environment between two countries has been slow in the making. In April 1991, the Japan-Soviet Environmental Protection Cooperation Agreement was signed, and Russia agreed to inherit the terms of the agreement intact after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Although the agreement does not call for a joint committee as other bilateral agreements have done, a meeting between Japan and Russia was held in January 1994. The two sides agreed to start joint research on marine ecology in the Japan Sea.

There are basically no initiatives on the environmental front between Japan and North Korea, simply because they have no diplomatic relations.

Bilateral initiatives in Northeast Asia without Japan are emerging, most notably between South Korea and China.

South Korea has shifted from being a recipient to a donor country. The government established the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) in 1987 and the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in 1991. South Korea joined the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1996. Main recipient countries are Asian, in particular China. Korean environmental ODA to China is expanding.

Environmental cooperation between South Korea and China does not necessarily center on ODA, however. In October 1993, an Agreement on Environmental Cooperation between the two countries was signed; they agreed to promote cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, in the areas of information exchange, technology transfer and joint research.

The Korea-China Environmental Cooperation Joint Committee has met each year in line with the agreement, and 12 bilateral projects have been launched. Major projects among the 12 include the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Project. This comprehensive project includes Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis activities, a strategic action program and environmental improvements. The UNDP is also involved with this project and expenses are provided for by GEF⁸.

Thus, environmental cooperation initiatives between China and South Korea have been promoted based on equality and mutual benefit. This applies to statements during recent summits on environmental cooperation.

At their summit in China in 1999, the two countries agreed to raise the profile of their relationship from its present status as a cooperative friendship to a comprehensive partnership for the 21st century. Such a partnership would expand cooperation in a variety of fields including government, security, economy, culture, the environment and human communications.

Other bilateral cooperation agreements in the region include ones concluded between China and Mongolia and between South Korea and Russia.

⁸ See Web page of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea, <<http://www.mofat.go.kr/main/etop.html>>

3. Assessment of Northeast Asian Environmental Cooperation Mechanisms

3.1. Major Features

- During the first half of the 1990s, a large number of subregional environmental programs, forums and bilateral agreements emerged. Some of these appear to be comprehensive initiatives (TEMM, NEASPEC, NEAC, NAPEP, TRADP, and ECO-ASIA), while some focus on a single issue (NOWPAP, EANET, and Crane networks).
- Some multilateral initiatives target the subregion of Northeast Asia, while some target the whole region of East Asia or, even more broadly, Asia and the Pacific.
- The status of participating states differs from one initiative to another, depending on the international membership of the host country/organization⁹.
- The initiatives were established through different channels, including environment ministers, official diplomatic channels, officers of environment agencies and ministries, NGOs, academics. There has been little coordination of the various channels. Consequently, some initiatives contain considerable redundancy.
- Some initiatives failed to clarify their own long-term goals.
- Environmental issues identified as priority include air pollution (acid rain), inland and coastal water pollution, loss of biodiversity and deforestation. Although countries in the subregion have attached importance to the first three issues, there seems little interest from governments, civil society or NGOs in combating desertification (UNEP, 2000)¹⁰.
- Transboundary pollution has been not seen as immediate a threat as domestic problems, and most countries in the subregion consider it a future threat rather than a present emergency. There has been little scientific consensus on the issue. So, governments have had little incentive to deal with transboundary pollution. The trend is changing recently, however.
- Most of the regional environmental initiatives have no institutional structure or financial foundation.
- The assistance of international organizations such as UN/ESCAP, UNEP, UNDP and the ADB (Asia Development Bank) has been crucial in facilitating such cooperative initiatives.

Subregional cooperation in Northeast Asia has existed for less than a decade. In contrast, European cooperation has more than 30 years of history; and ASEAN, more than 20 years. Northeast Asia has established permanent policy-dialogue forums and identified issues to be tackled jointly. Some of the initiatives are approaching the second stage -- collecting scientific data through environmental monitoring. It may be too early to judge the appropriateness and effectiveness of current environmental cooperative mechanisms.

Environmental cooperation has moved forward slowly. Some of the cooperative initiatives have stagnated in terms of institutional and financial development. The economic and political situations of Northeast Asia have constrained the development of environmental cooperation mechanisms, resulting in stagnation.

⁹ For example, North Korea attends NEASPEC, for which UN/ESCAP provides an interim secretariat, because it is a participating country of the United Nations. However, it does not attend NEAC, EANET or ECO-ASIA which are not hosted by UN organizations but countries in the subregion. In addition, North Korea cannot receive assistance from the ADB, to which it does not belong. Taiwan has no access to many initiatives due to its unstable position in international politics, whereas it is a member of APEC and the ADB.

¹⁰ Yet countries in the subregion are trying to strengthen their national policies individually. China, after experiencing severe floods mostly due to destruction of natural forests, has expressed deep concern on the issue. Much international assistance has been spent on afforestation.

3.2. Weaknesses

Absence of regional organizations

The EC/EU has seen a number of successes on environmental cooperation, such as efforts in unifying environmental standards in connection with economic activity in trade and manufacturing. As for long-ranged transboundary air pollution (LRTAP) control, the LRTAP Convention itself was facilitated and coordinated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), which has provided minimal secretariat services to its member states. And, compliance has been very high.

It should be pointed out that EC/EU financial and technology transfer mechanisms have official and unofficial links with the LRTAP Convention. This apparently made it easier for the member states to comply with the LRTAP Convention and its protocols.

It should also be pointed out that EC/ EU directives on regulating air pollutant emissions have encouraged certain countries to comply with the Convention.

Unlike the EC/EU, ASEAN did not create a strong central bureaucracy but provided minimal and largely administrative support to member states through the ASEAN Secretariat (Tay, 2000). It has developed many regional environmental action plans, three ASEAN environmental programs (1978-1992), two strategic action plans (1994-), and transboundary pollution action plans (1995-) (ASEAN Secretariat, 1994, 1995).

The institution supporting those plans and programs is well-structured, consisting of ASEON (ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (AMME), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM, Meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers) and the ASEAN Summit meetings (Kato and Takahashi, 2000). Consequently, ASEAN has managed to develop a comprehensive and strategic environmental cooperative framework with few redundancies.

Northeast Asia, however, is characterized by the fact that no comprehensive regional organization equivalent to EC/EU or ASEAN exists.

So, there has been virtually no one to coordinate the initiatives on environmental cooperation. The functions and activities of each subregional program, plan and forum may overlap. In fact, redundancies seem inevitable in Northeast Asia. For example, the role of NEASPEC and NEAC resembled each other at their primary stages, although the situation has improved since¹¹.

Many now point out that Northeast Asia needs to create a systematically coordinate all the initiatives and thereby create a synergy for strengthening cooperation.

Absence of a regional organization such as ASEAN or the EC adversely affects the institutional and financial arrangements of each program since each initiative must start negotiations from scratch.

The European Commission has provided administrative support in developing and implementing European environmental plans. The ASEAN Secretariat has done likewise. No such regional organization exists in Northeast Asia to provide such a service. UN/ESCAP has taken responsibilities of NEASPEC secretariat, whereas the EANET interim secretariat is at Japan's Environment Agency. Talks on where to located full-scale secretariats have mostly broken down.

Most initiatives in Northeast Asia have had shaky financial foundations. The costs of implementing the EC's environmental plans have been covered by sturdy financial mechanisms. ASEAN, unlike the EC, has not covered the costs of implementing the environmental cooperation plans and programs but has instead sought to attract and coordinate external funding.

Northeast Asia, by contrast, has no regional organization to provide such services. So, most environmental cooperative initiatives have suffered from a scarcity of financial resources.

¹¹ NEASPEC later began to implement a small number of technical assistance projects on air pollution control, and it has played a central role in Northeast Asia as an official intergovernmental program for subregional environmental cooperation. NEAC, on the other hand, has provided a frank forum for exchange of information and views on a wide range of topics, including the use of innovative techniques and policy instruments and the role of local governments.

One exception is EANET: its preparatory activities have been sponsored by the government of Japan, a promoter of the program, as a part of its ODA¹². Yet, Tokyo prefers that every member state either share the financial burden to some extent or ask for donations from Japan.

Limit of the role of UN Organizations

The absence of a powerful regional organization resulted in enhancement of the role of UN organizations in facilitating and catalyzing subregional environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia.

UN/ESCAP has placed one priority on promoting subregional cooperation on the environment. For Northeast Asia, it has played the role of interim secretariat of NEASPEC. It has also striven to promote communication and has sometimes endeavored to persuade the ADB to provide funding for implementing NEASPEC projects.

Along with UN/ESCAP, UNEP has also attached importance to the subregional approach, and has provided technical assistance for a number of projects developed under subregional environmental programs.

The most notable contribution of the UNEP in promoting subregional cooperation lies in its catalytic and coordinating role to initiate the Regional Seas Programme, which includes NOWPAP and East Asian Seas (EAS) Action Plan.

The UNDP's main task is to assist developing countries adopt integrated approaches focusing on managing natural resources to improve the livelihoods of people living in poverty. It also provides financial and technical assistance to subregional environmental initiatives in the developing world. GEF has provided technical assistance grants to projects proposed for Northeast Asia in the areas of biodiversity and climate change, including a project on preparation for a Strategic Action Programme for the TRADP.

In this way, UN organizations have conducted various activities underlining their catalytic and coordinating role in promoting regional and subregional cooperation on environment. There is, however, a limit to the role of UN organizations.

UN/ESCAP and UNEP-ROAP are tasked with covering the entire Asia-Pacific region with limited human and financial resources, meaning they are very limited when it comes to what they can offer the subregion of Northeast Asia.

For example, UN/ESCAP has played a significant role in establishing and facilitating subregional environmental programs, namely, SACEP, ASEAN programs, SPREP and NEASPEC. Once such subregional programs are fully established, however, the UN/ESCAP hopes they come to stand on their own feet with the support of the countries in the subregion.

In the case of NEASPEC, UN/ESCAP has acted as interim secretariat since 1997. Most countries in the subregion want UN/ESCAP to continue to take the responsibility, while the UN/ESCAP wants to give up the position.

Different National Perspectives

Northeast Asian countries have significant differences in their viewpoints and approaches to environmental cooperation.

China has suffered devastating environmental deterioration, including heavy industrial pollution, desertification, inland water and coastal pollution. China believes subregional cooperation should be focused on these issues.

China is quite sensitive to the use of the term "transboundary" as it does not wish to be seen by other countries as causing pollution that threatens environmental conditions in territories outside its borders.

Since most countries in East Asia are developing ones with limited resources in terms of science, personnel and finances, China believes developed countries in the subregion should offer substantial financial support for the establishment and operation of environmental programs as

¹² Japan published "Initiative for Sustainable Development (ISD) at the dawn of the 21st Century" in 1997, which stated that Japanese ODA provides financial and technical aid to developing countries in the region for use in EANET activities.

well as technical assistance to projects in their priority areas.

Japan has long worked to satisfy China's demands through financing and implementing a number of environmental projects in China as part of its ODA, as earlier mentioned.

Japan apparently believes multilateral initiatives should not overlap with its bilateral and existing multilateral assistance projects but instead focus on monitoring of the state of the environment and transboundary pollution. Japan also appears wary of multilateral initiatives out of concern that such an initiative could become another channel for development assistance. Japan has suggested that subregional countries should share the burden to some extent.

Japan places priority for multilateral programs on areas such as marine pollution, acid rain, air and water pollution. Japan has recently expressed deep concern for climate change.

South Korea is keener to promote multilateral environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia. It apparently believes that multilateral initiatives should include both technical projects as preferred by China and monitoring-type environmental management projects as preferred by Japan (Valencia, 1998).

So, South Korea has tried to mediate between China and Japan by proposing priority projects of NEASPEC be energy and air pollution. It seems that South Korea prefers the presence of international organizations in such multilateral initiatives. It has suggested coordinating mechanisms for environmental cooperation be channeled by financial and technical assistance from international organizations including UNDP, UN/ESCAP and ADB.

Russia and Mongolia need financial and technical assistance to protect their environments. The priorities for Russia include ecosystem management and more practical and action-oriented programs (Valencia, 1998), whereas Mongolia attaches importance on natural disaster (drought), nature and wildlife protection, and air pollution.

Similarly, it should be pointed out that, even in a single country, there exist divergent and sometimes competing viewpoints. These days, not only environment ministries/agencies but trade, energy, agriculture, foreign affairs, fisheries, transportation and other ministries have taken action regarding the environment. Officials from different ministries have different perspectives, their own jurisdictions and their own interests.

Although a number of attempts have been made to strengthen multilateral initiatives on environmental cooperation, such attempts have been hindered by competing interests.

Limited Participation of Citizens and NGOs

In this subregion, at the domestic level, the role of the public and NGOs in environmental activities has been limited, except civil society movements against industrial pollution as observed in Japan and South Korea, and nature and wildlife conservation activities. There lack appropriate mechanisms for bringing the public and NGOs into full play.

Nevertheless, each country attempts to introduce certain mechanisms to promote public participation in environmental protection activities. In most countries, the media have played a significant role in increasing public awareness of environmental conditions, and have worked with NGOs to get official responses.

NGOs' participation in multilateral environmental cooperation has been limited in Northeast Asia thus far. One exception is nature and wildlife conservation. The North East Asian Crane Site Network, launched in 1997, welcomes public participation, and has encouraged information exchange and sharing of the experience of wetlands sites important to cranes. The network was facilitated by an international NGO, the Wetlands International Asia Pacific and Wetlands International. A number of NGOs in the subregion as well as governmental organizations collaborated on the network.

In other important areas, the role of citizens and NGOs in environmental protection has been limited.

3.3. Future Prospects

Need to further subregional environmental cooperation

Considering the weaknesses of environmental cooperative mechanisms, enhancing

cooperation in Northeast Asia may be difficult. Nevertheless, the need exists and can be summarized as follows:

- a) In Northeast Asia, transboundary acidic precipitation, coastal and inland water pollution, will likely become critical problems in the future, although there is little consensus yet among scientists of the countries concerned on the geographic extent and scale of such transboundary flux and its adverse effects. The subregion has also faced desertification and loss of biodiversity. The size of the subregion seems to offer an appropriate framework for rational utilization of the region's natural resources and mitigation of the effects of environmental degradation. Cooperation is needed to tackle the issues.
- b) In Northeast Asia, there was little observable trend toward regional economic integration until the 1990s, when there was some economic cooperation, such as TRADP. These opportunities underscore the need for environmental cooperation in the subregion.
- c) Northeast Asia was separated into West-East camps during the Cold War era, and memories of the hot as well as cold wars remained. Northeast Asia has no mechanisms in place for maintaining its own regional peace and security. Some countries have been unable to establish normal diplomatic relations with each other. Several cases of territorial disputes remain unsolved. Considering these circumstances, the belief that regional stability and peace can be enhanced through the development of a framework for environmental cooperation is intuitively appealing (Schreurs & Pirages eds., 1998; Matsushita et al., 2000; Yonemoto, 1998).

However, It should be noted that environmental cooperation does not automatically result in the promotion of peace and security. In fact, states don't always participate in ongoing initiatives in the subregion due to certain political obstacles. In order to promote regional stability through the development of environmental cooperation, programs need to be carefully designed with special consideration given to the existing geopolitical dynamics in the subregion.

Lessons from the European experience

The experience in other regions of furthering subregional environmental cooperation offers a good guide for Northeast Asia.

The long-ranged transboundary air pollution control in Europe is one of the most successful cases in the world. Agenda 21, as adopted at the Rio Summit, suggests the experience of the Europeans with their programs needs to be shared with other regions of the world.

The brief history is as follows: In Europe, the OECD responded to a request from Scandinavian countries to inaugurate a multilateral monitoring program of acid rain in 1972. The OECD program was taken over by UNECE in 1977, and renamed the Co-operative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-Range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP-LRTAP).

The LRTAP Convention was agreed upon in 1979. Although the convention itself regulated no air pollutants, protocols on 30% reduction of sulfur emission and on NO_x emission control were adopted in 1984 and 1988.

The Second Sulfur Protocol was agreed upon in 1992. Calculation using a computer model enabled the protocol to set a different target of emission reduction for each country.

As for scientific fact-finding processes, Northeast Asia apparently tries to follow the footsteps of Europe. In fact, EANET has invited EMEP experts to their meetings for advice and information. The current stage of EANET is roughly equivalent to the middle of the 1970s when the OECD program was initiated. This region needs to develop a scientific consensus on emissions monitoring and estimation of the transmission of air pollutants.

As for institutional arrangements and processes, it might be too early to judge whether East Asia will follow the European experience because Northeast Asia has less than 10 years of experience.

There are many differences between the two regions. East Asia apparently has more difficulty than Europe reaching a consensus, due to a lack of economic, political and social homogeneity. As mentioned earlier, the LRTAP Convention has been well maintained by strong

links to EU policies and aid programs, whereas there is no regional organizations equivalent to the EC/EU in East Asia. Also, a byproduct of the political goal of improving East-West relations during the Cold War was the promotion of the establishment of the LRTAP in Europe. These regional characteristics of Europe assisted the enhancement of multilateral cooperation.

Considering these factors, it is improbable that East Asia will follow in Europe's footsteps. It does not, however, mean that there are few lessons to be learned from the European experience. In Europe, EC/EU environment aid programs have been formally and informally linked with EU common policies on environment and other regional policies such as the LRTAP Convention.

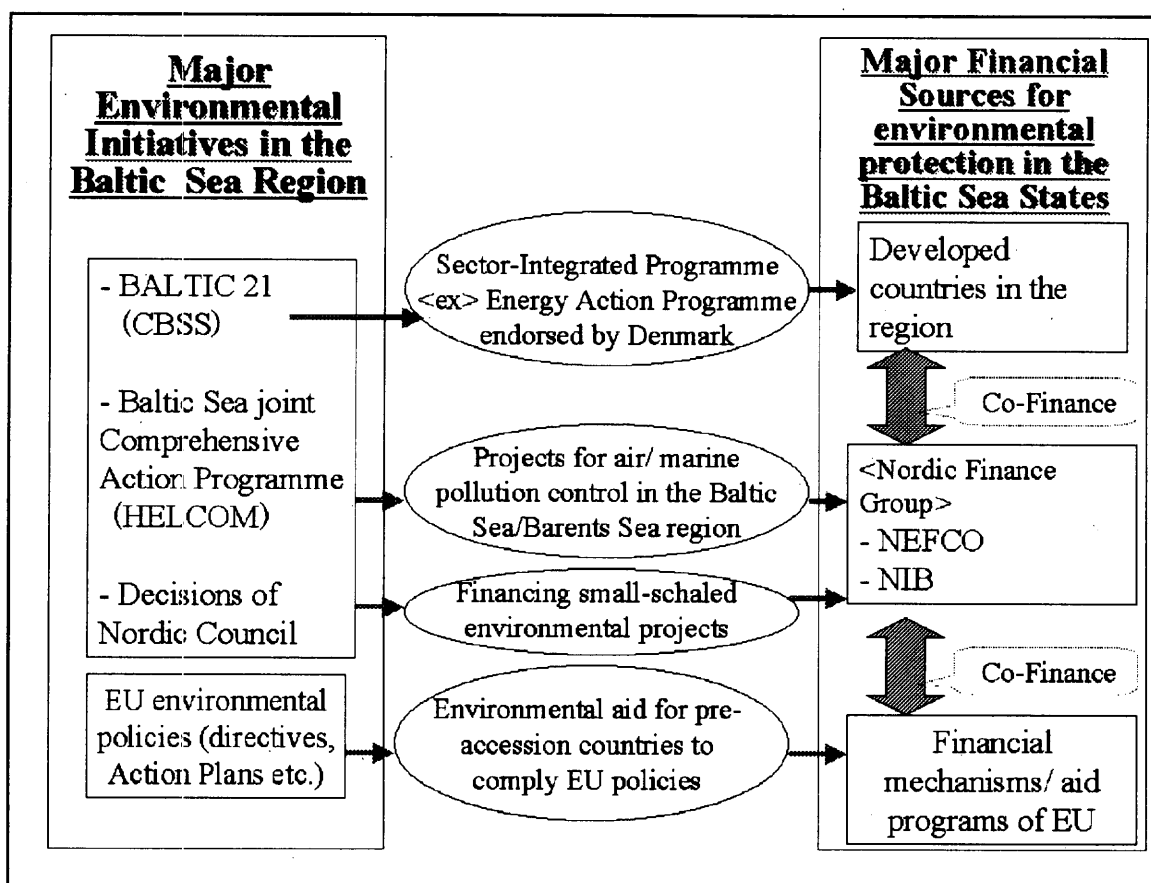
This linkage approach is applicable to Northeast Asia in promoting cooperation in a strategic and cooperative way. It is also observed in the Baltic Sea region. Although the subregion has no legally-binding environmental policies equivalent to EC/EU directives, there are several multilateral cooperative frameworks. Such frameworks include the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)¹³, the Nordic Council¹⁴, and the Helsinki Commission¹⁵.

Each framework has made its own objectives clear and worked out various environmental action plans and programs. Such decisions have been efficiently linked with multilateral and bilateral environmental aid of Scandinavian countries (See Figure in the next page).

¹³ CBSS is attended by the foreign ministers of 11 countries -- Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden -- and the European Commission. Aiming to promote sustainable development in the region, the CBSS worked out Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region (named 'Baltic 21') and its action program. Baltic 21 was adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the CBSS in 1998 (Baltic 21 Secretariat, 1999).

¹⁴ The Nordic Council is a forum for co-operation between Nordic parliamentarians and between parliamentarians and governments in the Nordic region. It was established in 1952 and is attended by Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

¹⁵ The Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, the Helsinki Convention was signed in 1974. Through the Convention, the Baltic Sea States established a commission, the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, known as the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM). It is participated by the nine Baltic Sea States, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and also the European Economic Community (EEC). Recognizing the importance of a long-term perspective, Helsinki Commission adopted "the Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme" in 1992.



Source: Takahashi, W.

<Figure. Linkages between environmental initiatives and environmental aid in Baltic Sea Region>

It is expected that Northeast Asia can draw more lessons from the Baltic Sea region (than from the EC/EU) since there are similarities between the two subregions. That is, countries within the two subregions differ widely in terms of economic, social and environmental preconditions.

The Baltic Sea region's experience may be applied to Northeast Asia in the following ways:

- Linkage between regional common policies and aid programs¹⁶: regional/subregional (multilateral) initiatives are based on the spontaneous cooperation among countries in the region. Sharing of the financial burden between member states is desirable, in principle. Since it is difficult, however, for the developing countries in a region to implement such programs or plans, financial and technical assistance from developed countries and international institutions are indispensable.
- Linkage between bilateral and multilateral aid: Bilateral aid is based upon the diplomatic judgment of the two countries concerned. On the other hand, multilateral aid can attach importance to regional priorities¹⁷. However, multilateral aid has little capacity to finish on

¹⁶ For example, the Baltic 21 Action Programme focused on several sectors of crucial importance to the region—agriculture, energy, fisheries, forests, industry, tourism and transport—and on spatial planning (Baltic 21 Secretariat, 1999). Each sector has one or two lead parties. For the energy sector, Denmark takes responsibility and uses its ODA to implement the program.

¹⁷ In the past, there was little multilateral assistance targeting Northeast Asia except for the aid provided through international institutions/banks. In recent years, however, Japan, United States and South Korea have expanded

its own due to financial constraints, so it requires maintaining ties with bilateral aid and private investment.

- Application of sector-integrated approach and multi-effect approach: These approaches are applied to environmental action programs in Europe and the Baltic Sea region. The multi-effect approach recognizes the fact that the same pollutant is often relevant for several of the environmental problems. Reduction of emissions to address one problem will help to address others. For example, reductions of CO₂ emissions to address climate change also reduce SO₂, NO_x and CO emissions, hence reducing acidification, and improving tropospheric ozone and urban air quality (CEC, 1997). It is therefore important to take this into consideration when working out programs for effectively reducing pollutants. Although priorities for developed countries and developing countries differ, the application of a multi-lateral approach may possibly reconcile their interests.

On the other hand, the sector-integrated approach suggests that "rather than be directed solely at each environmental issue, the strategy of action program ... [needs to] create a new interplay between the main groups of actors (government, enterprises, the public) and the principle economic sectors ... through the use of an extended, and integrated range of instruments" (CEC, 1993). This can most efficiently be done within the overall framework within which all activities are integrated and coordinated.

As mentioned earlier, several cooperative efforts in various issue-specific fields with the involvement of several countries concerned coexist and are well coordinated in the Baltic Sea region. (These initiatives vary in their member states.) This concept is called "modular multilateralism" (Ivanov, 1999) -- "each 'module' entails more than individual bilateral and multilateral cooperation." That is, "each 'module' may encompass a number of common or shared interests that cannot be effectively secured" through a cooperative effort. It is assumed that this concept is applicable to Northeast Asia, where no comprehensive and overall initiatives exist, but several cooperative initiatives exist.

4. Conclusion: Suggestions for Furthering Cooperation

It is relatively easy to show the difference between Northeast Asia and other regions such as the Baltic Sea region and Europe. More difficult is the task of offering constructive lessons to be drawn from Northeast Asia's precursors, while recognizing the different economic, social and political realities. Northeast Asia is a unique subregion in terms of political, economic and social variety, so the region cannot shape its future only by borrowing know-how from other region/subregions' experience. The following are some suggestions:

First, a collective effort is needed to draw up a comprehensive list of issues critical on national and subregional levels in Northeast Asia. The list also needs to show what has already been done by whom and how; and what has not yet been done. In order to complete the task, the active participation of all parties concerned is required.

Taking the list into consideration, the subregion needs to enhance environmental cooperation based on the above-mentioned 'modular multilateralism.' Northeast Asia is characterized by the fact that participating states differ from one initiative to another, depending on the host, and some initiatives cover the subregion of Northeast Asia, while others cover the whole of East Asia or, even more broadly, Asia and the Pacific.

It seems those seeking regional environmental cooperation, in principle, tend to pursue the attendance of all the parties in all the subregional areas, even if no overall framework exists in this subregion. Thus, as Ivanov (1999) argues, various combinations of participants should be permitted, depending on the issue and capacity.

In order to make each 'module' more than an individual initiative, each initiative needs to be open to links with many other parties. It is desirable that the NEAC opens its door not only to

trilateral initiatives on multilateral development aid projects. This trend is expected to continue.

officials of environment agencies/ministries, but also to local governments, academics and NGOs. Likewise the EANET welcomes the participation of newcomers, and new countries such as Laos decided to attend it in 1999.

Northeast Asia needs to create systematic coordination between all the initiatives, in particular initiatives undertaking similar/related subjects. To make it easier, the first step to be taken would be to set up a system to maintain transparency and full disclosure. Recently, some regional and subregional initiatives have set up their own web-pages on the Internet¹⁸. This trend should grow.

The subregion needs to develop processes to link the regional/subregional initiatives with multilateral and bilateral aid programs, as the Baltic Sea region has done. Each initiative has faced financial constraints. Considering the fact that regional cooperation is based on spontaneous initiatives among the countries, sharing the financial burden is a necessity. Countries need to continue negotiations with patience. Thus far the willingness of a country to share some of the financial burden has depended on the country's enthusiasm for the initiative and its ability to pay. Taking developing countries' difficulties into consideration, developed countries and international institutions need to provide financial and technical assistance.

A comprehensive and strategic environmental action plan should be developed for medium and long-term objectives. Such action plans have already succeeded in other regions and subregions such as the EU, the Baltic Sea region and ASEAN. It is also recommended that the plan (program) applies the above-mentioned "multi-effect approach" and the "sector-integrated approach."

It would be better if the plan can identify not only major measures but also concrete instruments, the time-frame, sectors/actors concerned, and financial mechanisms, as the Fifth EU environmental action program did. In a sense, the ECO-ASIA long-term perspective project tries to draw out such a plan. For the working process of such an action plan, highly official (ministerial leveled) meetings such as TEMM, ESCAP ministerial meeting and "Rio + 10" will offer an important opportunity.

It is desirable long-term objective that Northeast Asia create a framework in which all parties in the subregion attend. With reference to the political security situation in this subregion, this objective will not be easily achieved. There has been some reason for optimism, such as realization of North-South Korea summit and North Korea's expected participation in ARF.

It will be international organizations and NGOs that will act as media for the countries in the subregion. Apart from the UN/ESCAP, UNDP and UNEP, it is expected that the ADB and APEC will play a significant role in this area. Taiwan, whose status in international law is unstable, participates in both ADB and APEC as "Chinese Taipei." If Russia and North Korea join, the ADB could be a good medium linking the two countries.

On the other hand, NGOs have played a big role promoting regional cooperation in the area of ecosystem conservation. International NGOs and NGO networks have promoted the North East Asian Crane Site Network, in which 18 sites from six countries in the subregion including North Korea and Japan participate. Taiwan participates in Atmosphere Action Network East Asia (AANEAE), a network of NGOs in East Asia, in which NGOs from seven countries including China, Taiwan and Hong Kong participate¹⁹. It is worth remembering that only NGOs can link all countries in Northeast Asia.

¹⁸ Those include: EANET, TEMM, TRDAP and the Crane Network. Collaborative activities of NEASPEC are also introduced in UN/ESCAP homepage.

¹⁹ The countries include: China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Russia and Taiwan.

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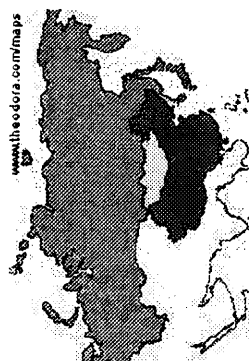
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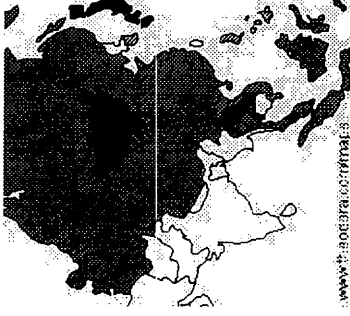
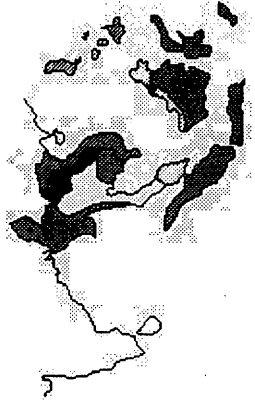
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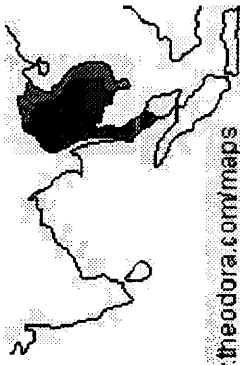
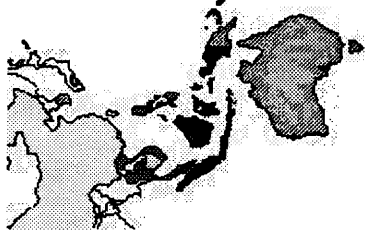
Major Subregional (Multilateral) Initiatives for Environmental Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific

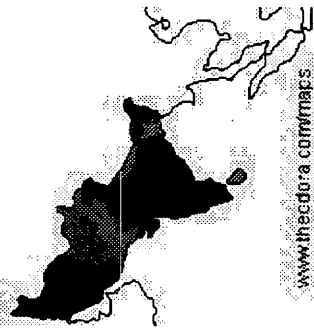

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Title	Participating Countries	Profile	Major Events
(1) Northeast Asia			
NEASPEC	China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, North Korea, and Russia	Comprehensive and intergovernmental programme of environmental cooperation. Facilitated by the UN/ESCAP.	1993 1 st Senior Official Meetings (Seoul) 1996 Adoption of the "Framework for the NEASPEC" (Ulaanbaatar)
NEAC	China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, and Russia	An annual forum for government officials of environmental agencies and other environmental specialists.	1988 Japan-Korea Environmental Symposium 1993 1 st Conference
NOWPAP	China, Japan, South Korea and Russia	Intergovernmental programme for protecting and managing (transboundary) marine environmental issues in Northwest Pacific. Endorsed by UNEP.	1994 1 st Intergovernmental Meeting and adoption of the Action Plan
TEMM	China, Japan and South Korea	An annual meeting of the tripartite environment ministers	1999 1 st Meeting 2000 2 nd Meeting
TRADP	China, North Korea, Mongolia, Russia and South Korea	TRADP promotes regional economic cooperation. Apart from investment and trade, transport, tourism, human resource, development, telecommunications and energy, environmental sector has been given priority.	1995 Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Principles signed 1997 GEF decided to finance in developing a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) 2001 Action Programme (expected)
NAPEP(formerly NEANPEF)	China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, Mongolia, Russia, and USA (Alaska, etc.)	A non-governmental network of environmental experts and NGOs	1992 NEANPEF formed in Seoul 1993 Irkutsk meeting and workshop, Russia 1996 Kushiro meeting and workshop, Japan 1997 Amur River workshop, Russia 1998 Dornin/Yueyang workshop, China



Title	Participating Countries	Profile	Major Events
(2) East Asia			
			 www.theodora.com/maps
EANET	China, Indonesia, Japan, ROK, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Russia, Thailand, Vietnam, (Laos)	Intergovernmental network for acid deposition monitoring. Endorsed by the government of Japan.	1993 1 st Expert Meeting 1997 1 st Intergovernmental Meeting 1998 Preparatory-Phase Activities 2000 Full operation(expected)
(3) ASEAN (Southeast Asia)			
			 www.theodora.com/maps
ASEAN	Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam	Under the framework of ASEAN, many cooperative efforts have been initiated.	1977 ASEAN Environment Plans (~1992) 1985 Agreement on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources(not enter into force) 1989 1 st ASOEN 1994-8 Strategic Plan of Action on Environment 1995 Cooperation Plan on Transboundary Pollution 97 Regional Haze Action Plan

Title	Participating Countries	Profile	Major Events
(4) Mekong River			
Mekong River Commission (MRC)	Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam	An intergovernmental organization for cooperation on all fields of sustainable development, utilization, management and conservation of the water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin.	 <p>www.thedura.com/maps</p> <p>1957 Creation of the Committee for coordination of investigation of the Lower Mekong Basin</p> <p>1978-95 Interim Mekong Committee (without Cambodia)</p> <p>1996 Signing of the Agreement on the cooperation for the sustainable development of the Mekong River Basin</p>
(5) East Asian Sea			
East Asian Sea Action Plan	Australia, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, ROK, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam	Intergovernmental programme for protecting and managing (transboundary) marine environmental issues in East Asian Sea. Endorsed by UNEP.	 <p>1981 Action Plan for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas</p> <p>1994 A revised Action Plan and a Longterm Strategy for the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)</p>

Title	Participating Countries	Profile	Major Events
(6) South Asia			
			 www.thecedora.com/maes
SACEP	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka	An intergovernmental and comprehensive environmental programme	1981 Creation of SACEP (entry into force: 1982) 1992 SACEP's Strategy and Programme 1995 Adoption of South Asian Seas Action Plan (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) 1998 Male Declaration on control and its prevention of air pollution and its likely transboundary effects
(7) Hindu Kush-Himalayas			
			 www.thecedora.com/hhqs
International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan	An International center established by the governments of the region for the purpose of implementing various programmes to attain environmental stability and sustainability in mountain ecosystems and the eradication of poverty	1983 Development of the ICIMOD (center) 1984 Phase 1 work programme 1987 Establishment of core programmes 1990 1 st Quinquennial Review (QQR) 1994 Reorganization of the programmes Regional collaborative programme (1995)

Title	Participating Countries	Profile	Major Events
(8) The South Pacific			
SPREP	Australia, Cook islands, Fiji, France, Kiribati, Marshall islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua new Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, UK, USA, Vanuatu and Western Samoa	A regional organization established by the governments and administrations of the Pacific region for the purpose of managing environmental issues	 <p>Source: http://www.ext.grida.no/ggynet/agree/marenv/c044.htm (Yearbook of International Co-operation on Environment and Development 999/2000)</p> <p>1973 Adoption of Programme for nature conservation 1982 South Pacific Regional Environment Programme 1986 South Pacific Action Plan (marine environment) 1986 Noumea Convention (marine environment: entry into force in 1990) 1992 Agreement establishing the SPREP (1995: entry into force) 1997-2000 Action Plan for Managing the Environment of the South Pacific Region</p>

* This appendix was originally submitted to ECO ASIA long-term perspective Project (LTPP) 7th International Workshop, 22-23, Feb. 2000, Shonan International Village, Kanagawa, Japan. This is the revised version.