

The 13th Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation

Ministry of the Environment
Japan



Recent Policy Development

- Climate Change
- Sound Material-cycle Society
- Environmental Education
- Biodiversity
- Environment and Economy

Climate change

To attain the reduction of
greenhouse gases by 6%



Light Down Campaign



Sound Material-Cycle Societies

- 3R initiative
 - “Reducing” of wastes
 - “Reuse” + “Recycling”
of resources + products
- 3R Ministerial Conference
Tokyo, in April 2005.

Environmental Education

- The Law for
 - Encouragement of Willingness for
Environmental Conservation
 - Promotion of Environmental Education
- United Nations
Decade of Education for
Sustainable Development



Biodiversity

- New National Strategy on Biodiversity
- Invasive Alien Species Act



Environment and Economy

- Law for promoting environmental considerations
 - National Government
 - Government related entity
 - Large scale business



Environmental Reports

International Cooperation

- TEMM and Ministers Meeting on DSS
- Acid Deposition / Dust and Sandstorms
- Marine Pollution Prevention
- Local Governments' Initiatives
- Environmentally Sustainable Transport

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Keynote Speech

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- 2) Sound Material-cycle Society
- 3) Environmental Education
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1. Introduction

First of all, on behalf of Government of Japan, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to The Ministry of Environment of Korea and The Metropolitan Government of Seoul, for inviting our delegation to this meeting.

It is my honor to have this opportunity to present Japanese view on the environment and development policies and issues concerning Northeast Asia. My statement will focus on progress in domestic and international environmental management of Japan since last NEAC which was held in Toyama, Japan, in November last year.

2. Recent Policy Development in Japan

1) Climate change

Japan welcomes Russian ratification which will bring the Kyoto Protocol into force in February 2005.

In assuring the attainment of our commitments under the Protocol which is reduction of greenhouse gases by 6%, the government of Japan is considering strengthening domestic measures to curb the emissions of greenhouses gases from various sources.

Also, to reconsider our lifestyle, we have promoted the “Light Down Campaign” in cooperation with NGOs and private sectors since last year. In this campaign, we encourage people to turn off the lights on the summer solstice night and spend candle night. Next year we will conduct this campaign with Ministry of Environment of Korea. We hope all of the world will join us in the future.

2) Sound Material-Cycle Societies

Conversion to a sustainable production and consumption pattern has been a common subject regardless of a developing country and a developed nation.

“3R” which represents “reducing” of wastes, “reuse” and “recycling” of resources and products, , will be the key to establish a “Sound Material-Cycle Society.” As a first step, we will have the 3R Ministerial Conference in Tokyo in April 2005.

3) Environmental education

The “Law Concerning the Encouragement of Willingness for Environmental Conservation and the Promotion of Environmental Education” was established in July 2003, and we will promote spontaneous efforts by citizens and private organizations.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the launch of “Decade of Education for Sustainable Development” from 2005. The Government of Japan will strongly promote environmental education at a global scale.

4) Biodiversity

Along with the “New National Strategy on Biodiversity” decided at the Cabinet-level Task Force in 2002, a new law ‘Invasive Alien Species Act’ was enacted in June 2004 to cope with alien species. This act is to regulate various actions such as raising, planting, storing, carrying and importing invasive alien species in addition to decrease them that are already existing in Japan.

5) Environment and economy

In order to support a variety of voluntary and proactive environmental considerations by businesses and other actors in the economy, and to create a virtuous cycle of environment and economy, Japan enacted a new law “Law for promoting environmental considerations” in June 2004. Under this law, the national government and government related entities are required to make publicly available annual reports of their environmental considerations. Large scale businesses are also encouraged to publicize environmental reports.

3. International Cooperation

(1) TEMM, Ministers Meeting on DSS

Japan, China and Korea have had Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM) since 1999. In the framework of TEMM, we have several projects such as environmental education and environmental industry. This year, we held TEMM6 in Tokyo this month, and on the occasion of this, the Ministers of the three countries and Mongolia met to talk about Dust and Sandstorm issues.

(2) Acid Deposition / Dust and Sandstorms (DSS)

Japan will continue to support projects such as The Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) and the ADB-GEF project on DSS

in Northeast Asia with relevant countries in this region.

(3) Marine Pollution Prevention

It is very important to implement the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) for the conservation of marine environment in this region. Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) offices were opened in Toyama and Busan last month and they are expected to start activities in near future.

With regard to the regulation of waste dumping, the 1996 Protocol under London Convention is likely to enter into force in a couple of years. Japan amended “the Law Relating to the Prevention of Marine Pollution and Maritime Disaster” to prepare to ratify the Protocol.

(4) Local Governments' Initiatives

It is noted that local governments play an important role in developing international cooperation. The Association of Local Governments in North East Asia Region (NEAR) is a good example. The Association consists of 39 local governments from six countries. NEAR Sub-committee of Environment was held in Toyama, in July of this year, and activities in local communities were reported.

(5) Environmentally Sustainable Transport

International Conference on Environment and Transport in AICHI will be held in Aichi, Japan, in August 2005 as a partnership program of the 2005 World Exposition. It will be the first regional forum to discuss the desirable harmonized form of environment and transport in Asia.

4. Conclusion

Japan has made remarkable progress in developing environmental policies. However, we still have many agenda in front of us to achieve sustainable development. NEAC has given us good opportunities to get cues to tackle with problems we share through exchanging our views.

Finally, I would like to conclude my presentation by wishing a fruitful meeting through active interactions among us.

Thank you.