

Joint Communiqué
The 17th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting
Among China, Japan and Korea
29-30 April 2015, Shanghai, China

Preamble

1. At the invitation of Minister CHEN Jining of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China, Minister MOCHIZUKI Yoshio of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan and Minister YOON Seongkyu of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, visited Shanghai, where the three Ministers met for the Seventeenth Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM17) on 29-30 April 2015.

Latest Development of Environmental Policies in Three Countries

2. The Ministers shared the recent progress in each country regarding environmental policies after TEMM16. They delivered speeches that are “Sharing Ecological Civilization Concept, Deepening Environmental Protection Cooperation” by the People's Republic of China, “Introduction of Latest Environmental Policy Development” by Japan and “High Quality Environmental Welfare Policies including Addressing of Life Surrounding Environmental Issues” by Republic of Korea. The Ministers welcomed and shared their recognition that these environmental policies contribute to the sustainability of environment, economy and society in Northeast Asia, and lay a solid foundation for solving environmental problems in the region as well as on the globe.

Major Policies to Address Regional and Global Environmental Issues

3. The Ministers exchanged the major policies of each country to address global and regional environmental issues such as climate change and low carbon society, environment-friendly society and biodiversity conservation, ecosystem protection and green transformation. They recognized the pressing need of cooperation among the three countries in overcoming the challenges of air pollution.

Review of Progress on Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation (2010-2014)

4. The Ministers reviewed with satisfaction on the progress of tripartite cooperation under Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation (2010-2014), endorsed by the Trilateral Summit Meeting, with ten priority areas, which provided a solid basis for tripartite environmental cooperation for the next Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation (2015-2019).

Adoption of the Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation (2015-2019)

5. The Ministers adopted and committed to steadily implement the Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation (2015-2019), to be submitted to the Trilateral Summit Meeting and which states the goals and joint actions among the three countries and in the following nine priority areas adopted at TEMM16.
 - (1) Air Quality Improvement
 - (2) Biodiversity
 - (3) Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response
 - (4) Circulative Management of Resources/3R/Transboundary Movement of E-Waste
 - (5) Climate Change Response
 - (6) Conservation of Water and Marine Environment
 - (7) Environmental Education, Public Awareness and Corporate Social Responsibility
 - (8) Rural Environmental Management
 - (9) Transition to Green Economy

Environmental Cooperation in Each Priority Area

6. The Ministers recognized that TEMM played an important role in promoting regional environmental cooperation in the region. They reiterated support for regional and global efforts to strengthen environmental cooperation activities.

I. Air Quality Improvement

7. The Ministers shared the concerns of the risks posed by air pollution on human health and the environment, re-emphasized the necessity to further improve air quality in the region, and underscored the compelling need of tackling air pollution caused by fine particulate matters (PM_{2.5}), ozone (O₃), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other air pollutants in a prompt and effective manner. They shared the idea on further strengthening of joint efforts in prevention and control of air pollution in this region and encouraged the technology cooperation on air monitoring and the research cooperation.

The Ministers welcomed the progress of collaboration under the Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Air Pollution (TPDAP), especially the Second TPDAP held on 12-13 March 2015 in Seoul and reporting of the dialogues' summary to Directors General Meeting (DGM) for TEMM17 on 31 March 2015 in Shanghai. They endorsed the establishment of working groups (WG) (WGI: Scientific Research on Prevention and Control, and WGII: Technology/Policy on Air Quality Monitoring and Prediction) under the dialogue and the first WG meetings to be held in 2015 in China and Korea, respectively to draft TOR and detailed action plan. They noted that the Third TPDAP will be held in February 2016 in Japan.

The Ministers acknowledged the progress achieved in ongoing cooperative activities in this field, such as Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) and Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollutants in Northeast Asia (LTP) and recognized the need to further expand and intensify the collaborative activities of these mechanisms.

They envisioned that TEMM would play a more active role in promoting regional air pollution control cooperation so as to achieve sustainable development in Northeast Asia. They agreed to share the good practice and efforts on improving regional air quality through the discussion at TPDAP.

Understanding the significance of the Dust and Sandstorms (DSS) issue as a major environmental challenge in the region, the Ministers urged to strengthen collaboration in the field of DSS.

They appreciated the progress made at the Working Group I (WGI) Meeting held in November 2014 in Xi'an, China, at the Working Group II (WGII) Meeting held in October 2014 in Utsunomiya, Japan and at the joint investigation conducted by WGII in July 2014 in Hulunbeier, China.

The Ministers noted the importance of exchanging relevant data, proper assessment of the prevention and control effect of the restoration measures against DSS, publication of the significant outcomes produced throughout the cooperation process and the collaboration between the two WGs. They welcomed that the first joint workshop between WGI and WGII will be held in 2016 in Japan.

The Ministers endorsed the Mid-term Action Plan of WGI and WGII for Joint Research on Dust and Sandstorms (2015-2019) and expressed their high expectations for progress and success of the Mid-term Action Plans in the future.

II. Biodiversity

8. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to promote work towards fulfilling the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), i.e. the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

The Ministers welcomed the Second Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Biodiversity held in October 2014 in Pyeongchang, Korea and the third Policy Dialogue to be held in China.

The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP12) held in October 2014 in Pyeongchang, Korea including the Pyeongchang Roadmap towards achieving the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development, and agreed to cooperate on the platform of the Bio-Bridge Initiative which supports the implementation of the roadmap. They also decided to cooperate based on the outcomes and towards the success of CBD COP13 scheduled to be held in 2016 in Mexico.

The Ministers confirmed to formulate and promote trilateral joint actions such as cooperative research on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity through collaborative initiatives in international and regional platforms such as the Satoyama Initiative, Asia-Pacific Biodiversity Observation Network (AP-BON), and East and Southeast Asia Biodiversity Information Initiative (ESABII) to deepen cooperation in the area of biodiversity conservation.

The Ministers confirmed to share experience and information on other issues that need to be addressed at regional level, including methods assessing progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Target, IPBES, Business and Biodiversity Initiative, the researches on valuation of ecosystem services, adaptation to climate change, invasive alien species control, and urban biodiversity conservation.

They noted the importance of information sharing to prepare for implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, and decided to strengthen cooperation on access and benefit sharing (ABS).

III. Chemical Management and Environmental Emergency Response

9. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 8th Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Chemicals Management held in November 2014 in Jeju Island, Korea, and encouraged continuous efforts for further cooperation in the field of chemical management such as conducting joint research on ecotoxicity and sharing information on chemical risk assessment and mercury management.

The Ministers agreed to share experience and technology including out of the research undertaken jointly in the framework of Tripartite Presidents Meeting among CRAES, NIES and NIER (TPM) on risk assessment of environment accidents.

The Ministers also noted the possible benefit of cooperation among the three countries in responding to environmental emergencies in each country.

IV. Circulative Management of Resources/3R/Transboundary Movement of E-Waste

10. The Ministers noted that the Sound Material Cycle Society/Circular Economy/3R Seminar has been productive in tripartite cooperation in this area, and decided to continue activities by organizing joint seminar with the transboundary movement of e-waste cooperation activities as Tripartite 3R and Transboundary Movement of E-waste Seminar with the objectives to exchange waste management policies of the three countries and jointly respond to the request of the international community concerning the implementation of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

The Ministers reiterated the significant issue of illegal transboundary movement of e-waste and decided to cooperate on the control of transboundary movement of e-waste through information exchange. They also encouraged to ensure smooth operation of the tripartite hotline to combat illegal transboundary movement of waste, and continuously work on the control of transboundary movement of e-waste.

V. Climate Change Response

11. The three countries recognized that urgent action to combat climate change are required. The three Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to cooperation to this end.

The three countries recognized the importance of climate change adaptation to minimize damage associated with climate change and agreed to strengthen cooperation in adaptation efforts through exchange of information, knowledge and best practices in regards to their policies and experiences.

Recognizing the importance of international cooperation to minimize the adverse effect caused by climate change, the three countries will work together to enhance the full effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol. The three countries also welcomed the outcome of COP20/CMP10 and agreed to work constructively towards the adoption of a protocol, another legal instrument, or an agreed outcome with legal force under the UNFCCC applicable to all Parties at COP21/CMP11 to be held in November-December 2015 in Paris.

The Ministers noted the importance of pursuing greenhouse gas mitigation through market mechanisms. They noted the three countries' ongoing efforts in this respect, including the Emissions Trading Schemes being operated in Korea and being pursued in China and the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) initiated by Japan.

VI. Conservation of Water and Marine Environment

12. The Ministers recognized the importance of cooperation among the three countries in conserving water environment and marine environment. They appreciated the progress of cooperation on marine litter including Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) activities under Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) and recognized the importance of further joint efforts made by the three countries. They decided to cooperate to hold joint workshops and promote activities to understand the situation and subjects of marine litter on surrounding sea area in each country.

The Ministers welcome the outcomes of the 7th World Water Forum held in April 2015 in Daegu and Gyeongbuk. They noted the importance of cooperation on water pollution prevention and control among the three countries.

VII. Environmental Education, Public Awareness and Corporate Social Responsibility

13. The Ministers acknowledged that enhancing environmental education, awareness raising and public participation is essential to promote environmental protection. They welcomed the outcomes of the Tripartite Environmental Education Network (TEEN) workshop held in October 2014 in Jeju Island, Korea. They also welcomed that the 14th Tripartite Environmental Training held in November 2014 in Incheon, Korea had provided a good opportunity for information exchange on environmental policies of the three countries and they also acknowledged the success of UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) which was held in November 2014 in Japan.

The Ministers congratulated the fifteenth anniversary of the tripartite cooperation on communication and cooperation on environmental education, and expressed their expectations for the achievements and success of future cooperation. The Ministers appreciated and welcomed the Environmental Education Book for Children in China, Japan and Korea and agreed to promote and sustainably utilize it.

The Ministers noted the importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on the environment and agreed to initiate cooperation on environmental CSR.

VIII. Rural Environmental Management

14. The Ministers recognized the importance of rural environment quality improvement, and decided to initiate a tripartite policy dialogue on rural environment management to share information on rural environment management

policies in each country and promote cooperation among the three countries.

IX. Transition to Green Economy

15. The Ministers reaffirmed the crucial role played by cooperation in the field of environmental industry and technologies for the transition to green economy. The Ministers appreciated that the three countries had intensive discussions on waste management cooperation and shared useful information on environmental enterprises and advanced technologies at the 14th Tripartite Roundtable Meeting on Environmental Industry held in November 2014 in Takamatsu, Japan. They also welcomed that the Tripartite Roundtable Meeting on Environmental Industry and the Business Forum were combined into the Tripartite Roundtable on Environmental Business and the first meeting was held in April 2015 in Shanghai, China. The Ministers expressed their high expectations for the future role of the Tripartite Roundtable on Environmental Business as a leading forum for cooperation, information sharing and discussion on green economy and green and environmental industry and technologies among the three countries.

The Ministers decided on further strengthening information sharing and cooperation on environmental and green industry and green supply chain.

The Ministers also confirmed their intention to cooperate on green supply chain as a response to the APEC Cooperation Network on Green Supply Chain agreed to be established by APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in 2014. They welcomed High-level Roundtable on Green Development in May 2014 in Tianjin, China.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

16. Noting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets submitted to the UN General Assembly by the Open Working Group, the Ministers expressed their expectations that the post-2015 development agenda scheduled to be adopted in September 2015 will play a pivotal role in global development cooperation for the next 15 years.

Youth Forum and the Tripartite Roundtable Meeting on Environmental Business

17. The Ministers recognized that the discussions among youth and business representatives from the three countries were very meaningful. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the Youth Forum themed “Building Connections with Nature” and the Tripartite Roundtable on Environmental Business themed “Strengthen the Exchanges and Cooperation in Environmental Technology and Industry, Promote the Development and Transformation of Regional Green Economy”. They encouraged more communications and exchanges among the youth and the business sector in the future.

TEMM Environmental Awards

18. The Ministers congratulated and praised the awardees of the TEMM Environment Awards ceremony. Ms. JIAO Zhiyan, Center for Environmental Education and Communications of Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China, Prof. ABE Osamu, Rikkyo University of Japan, and Dr. CHU Jang Min, Korea Environment Institute of Republic of Korea, were awarded for their contribution to the environmental cooperation among the three countries.

TEMM 18

19. The Ministers decided that the TEMM 18 will be held in 2016 in Japan. The date and venue will be suggested by the host country and subsequently confirmed by the People's Republic of China and Republic of Korea.

Closing

20. The Ministers expressed satisfaction with the fruitful outcome of the TEMM17. Minister MOCHIZUKI Yoshio and Minister YOON Seongkyu extended their deep appreciation to Minister Chen Jining and the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China for hosting the meeting and the great hospitality accorded to all participants.

30 April 2015, Shanghai, China

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