

Joint Communiqué
The 15th Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting
among Japan, Korea and China
May 5-6, 2013, Kitakyushu, Japan

Preamble

1. At the invitation of Minister Nobuteru ISHIHARA of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, Minister YOON Seongkyu of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and Vice Minister LI Ganjie of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China visited Kitakyushu, where the three Ministers met for the Fifteenth Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM15) on 5-6 May 2013.
2. The Ministers introduced and welcomed the environmental visions and strategies for the new era that are outlined by “Integrated approach that pursues low-carbon and sound material-cycle society that is in harmony with nature” by Japan, “High Quality Environmental Welfare to realize the happiness of all people” by Korea and “Ecological civilization as the sustainable development strategy to be integrated into every aspect of economic, political, cultural and social progress” by China.

Progress of Environmental Policies in Japan, Korea and China

3. The Ministers shared the progress in each country regarding environmental policies after TEMM14. They welcomed the statement which introduced “updates on enhanced management of air pollution including PM2.5 as well as on climate change policies” by Japan, “New Environmental Policy for safer living environment, higher quality of environmental services and sustainability of the society” by Korea and “Enhance institutional and policy innovation as well as enforcement to promote practical implementation of ecological civilization and strengthen environmental management transformation for improving the environmental quality” by China. They welcomed and shared their recognition that these measures meet the important direction of clear intention to make the environment, economy and society sustainable, and become a driving force for solving environmental problems in Northeast Asia as well as on the globe.

Major Policies for Addressing Global and Regional Environmental Issues

4. The Ministers exchanged their views on global and regional environmental issues such as transboundary air pollution including PM2.5, dust and sandstorms (DSS), climate change and biodiversity. They agreed that tripartite cooperation is essential in addressing these global and regional environmental challenges and also recognized that TEMM played an important role in promoting regional environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia.

Review of Progress of Tripartite Cooperative Projects Under Ten Priority Areas

5. The Ministers reviewed the progress of the Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation 2010-2014 adopted during TEMM12 in May 2010 in Hokkaido, Japan. They confirmed the progress of tripartite cooperative projects under the ten priority areas contained in the Joint Action Plan, and agreed to continue the cooperative efforts among the three countries.

Future Priority Areas for Cooperation after 2014

6. They particularly encouraged reinforced policy dialogue, joint research, and technical cooperation in priority areas that have key implications to sustainable development, including, inter alia, green development/green economy/green growth, biodiversity, air pollution, DSS, and environmental emergency response and management.

Environmental Cooperation for Regional Challenges

Pollution Control

7. The Ministers stressed the need to further promote appropriate measures to prevent air pollution and to protect the water and marine environment in the region. Relevant joint scientific research projects were encouraged with regard to early warning, pollution prevention and control, on PM2.5, photochemical oxidants, and water and marine environment.
8. *Air Pollution:* The Ministers expressed their concern over the health risks caused by air pollutants such as fine particulate matters and photochemical oxidants, and emphasized the importance to tackle the air pollution, recognizing the importance of amplifying scientific knowledge, promoting emission control of these pollutants and strengthening regional cooperation.

They welcomed the progress made in ongoing cooperative activities in this field, such as Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET), tripartite scientific research on photochemical oxidant and Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollutants in Northeast Asia (LTP) project. They also expected EANET to contribute to better air quality management by enhanced monitoring of acidifying species and related chemical substances including particulate matter and agreed to advance cooperation in this regard.

They also agreed to newly establish the Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Air Pollution for exchanging information on related policies, technologies for monitoring, prevention and control technologies, research, capacity building and international cooperation, and for consideration of future cooperation. In addition, considering the importance of air pollution in the region to the sustainable development of Asia, they agreed to cooperate on further utilization of the existing regional programs for air quality management, in order

to enhance scientific cooperation, share good practices and control technologies and build capacities.

9. *Water Pollution*: The Ministers recognized the importance of cooperation among the three countries in conserving water environment in the region. They appreciated the activities of the second phase of the Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA), including the holding of the WEPA international workshop and annual meeting in Cambodia in February 2013 and the publication of “WEPA Outlook on Water Environment Management in Asia 2012”, and recognized the importance to continue the activities of the third phase of WEPA from 2014 in anticipation of formulating Sustainable Development Goals for water from 2015. The Ministers expressed their appreciation for Korea’s effort in successfully hosting the International Water Association (IWA) 2012 World Water Congress and Exhibition held in Busan, Korea in September 2012.

10. *Marine Litter*: The Ministers appreciated the joint efforts made by the three countries within the framework of Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) including the progress of Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) containing the coastal clean-up activities, and agreed to cooperate closely while making efforts for fiscal stability, involving the remaining country, to enhance RAP MALI activities, inter alia, to strengthen joint-workshops and activities to raise awareness and promote research cooperation for sharing the scientific knowledge, including that which would improve the understanding of all countries in the region regarding the marine litter generation mechanism, with a view to managing the generation of marine litter. They also noted that an appropriate management of wastes and relevant materials in land and coastal areas in each country plays a crucial role in addressing the problems of marine litter. They recognized the need to enhance such joint efforts with a view to enhancing concrete measures in each country to prevent outflow of marine litter including appropriate management of wastes and relevant materials.

Dust and Sandstorms

11. The Ministers shared their understanding that DSS has been recognized as one of the common challenges in this region and welcomed the progress made at Tripartite Director Generals' Meeting on Dust and Sandstorms held in March 2013 in Kitakyushu, Japan and the two working groups. They recognized the importance of source control, welcomed a meeting of working group on source control and a field survey for joint research, both to be held this year in China, and confirmed to make necessary joint efforts towards them. Furthermore, the Ministers confirmed the importance of provision and sharing of relevant data, participation of experts in the field of meteorological and forecasting model to further enhance these collaborative efforts, and appreciated the strengthening cooperation by implementation of joint research in Hulunbuir, Inner Mongolia, China. They agreed to explore further development of DSS management in North-East Asian region, inter alia from the aspect of securing sustainable financial resources, and to coordinate with other

stakeholders such as the World Bank, the Global Environment Facility and Mongolia to effectively respond to the DSS in the region recognizing the importance of DSS source area's management.

Transboundary Movement of E-Waste

12. The Ministers agreed to continue their cooperation on the control of transboundary movement of e-waste through information exchange and capacity building, etc., considering the environmental pollution and health risks caused by the unsound treatment of e-waste at the destination of transboundary movement. They also agreed 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. In view of efforts to enforce the Basel Convention, the three countries need to make good use of Basel Convention Regional Center for Asia and Pacific to provide necessary support.

Management of Chemicals

13. The Ministers recognized the Policy Dialogue on Chemicals Management among the three countries as the effective platform towards harmonization of chemicals management, acknowledged the outcome of the sixth Policy Dialogue on Chemicals Management in October 2012 in Hangzhou, China, and encouraged continuous efforts for further cooperation on chemicals management and policy information exchange.

Environmental Industry and Green Technology

14. The Ministers confirmed the importance of further enhancing tripartite cooperation on environmental industry and expanding environmental market not only in the three countries but also worldwide in order to protect environment while ensuring economic growth. They also welcomed the outcome of the 12th Tripartite Roundtable Meeting on Environmental Industry held in Yixing, China in November 2012. They confirmed the importance of further boosting cooperation on environmental industry among the three countries. They also confirmed to integrate some of the existing tripartite cooperative mechanisms on environmental industry in a proper way. It was agreed to discuss on establishing trilateral policy dialogue and technical cooperation platform on green economy to effectively boost information sharing and green technology cooperation among the three countries, and accelerate the progress towards sustainable development.

Environmental Education, Environmental Awareness and Public Participation

15. The Ministers appreciated the promotion of environmental education, awareness raising and public participation. They welcomed the outcomes of the Tripartite Environmental Education Network (TEEN) workshop held in October 2012 in Sendai, Japan and joint environmental training programs held in November 2012 in Beijing, China. The three Ministers agreed to further strengthen the tripartite communication and cooperation on environmental education and public participation.

Environmental Cooperation for Global Challenges

Climate Change

16. 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 its Kyoto Protocol. The three countries also welcomed the outcome of COP18/CMP8 and agreed to work constructively for the success of COP19/CMP9 to be held in Poland in November 2013.
17. The Ministers welcomed the endorsement of the hosting of the secretariat of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in Songdo, Korea by UNFCCC COP18 in Doha, Qatar, and viewed GCF as one of the important mechanisms to tackle climate change and move forward to a climate-resilient society. To this end, the three countries will cooperate toward the early operationalization of GCF.
18. Recognizing the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC, the three countries will enhance the efforts to achieve green growth and low carbon development, including promotion of market mechanisms. Market mechanisms pursued by the three countries include domestic emissions trading schemes which Korea decided to introduce from 2015 and which China started on the provincial and municipal levels, and the Joint Crediting Mechanism/Bilateral Offset Credit Mechanism (JCM/BOCM), which Japan has been promoting internationally.
19. The three countries recognized that reduction of air pollutants such as particulate matter and photochemical oxidant has the so-called “co-benefit effects” on short-term climate change mitigation and will enhance efforts intended to both climate change and air pollution.
20. The Ministers shared the recognition of the importance of climate change adaptation measures to minimize damage associated with climate change along with greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and welcomed the progress on the efforts to develop domestic adaptation plans in the three countries. In addition, in order to strengthen cooperation in climate change mitigation and adaptation, they will promote exchange of information, knowledge and best practices and transfer of technologies in regard to the three countries’ policies and experiences and facilitate joint research among experts. To this end, the three countries welcome the second East Asia Low Carbon Growth Partnership Dialogue to be held in Japan on 18 May 2013. The Ministers recognized the successful outcome of the ministerial meeting in preparation for COP18 in October 2012 in Seoul and noted the upcoming high-level climate conference in 2013 in Korea. They expressed their expectation that the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) contribute to promoting low carbon growth.

Mercury

21. The Ministers welcomed the agreement of the “Minamata Convention on Mercury” to protect the human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds at “the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Prepare a Global Legally Binding Instrument on Mercury” (INC5) held in January 2013, in Geneva, Switzerland. They also agreed to cooperate for the success of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries for the adoption of the convention to be held in October this year in Kumamoto and Minamata, Japan. With the objective of early entry into force of the treaty, they confirmed that they would proceed with the domestic preparations to fulfill the obligations under the treaty and make efforts to sign, and ratify, accept, or approve the treaty promptly insofar as possible.

Biodiversity

22. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to promote conservation of biodiversity and work towards fulfilling the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). They agreed to take appropriate actions based on the outcomes of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD/COP11) held in October, 2012 in India and to cooperate towards the success of CBD/COP12 scheduled to be held in 2014 in Korea. They also confirmed to strengthen the cooperation towards the full-scale operation of Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

23. 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. They also confirmed the importance of Asia Parks Congress to be held in November, 2013 in Sendai, Japan as well as the necessity to establish a cooperation system on the protected areas in Asia.

24. The Ministers welcomed the achievement of the first Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Biodiversity held in March 2013 in Incheon, Korea, and recognized the need to continue and further strengthen the Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Biodiversity as a platform for information sharing and partnership. They agreed to strengthen cooperation on restoring endangered species, access and benefit sharing (ABS) and other biodiversity issues. They also agreed to reinforce network of research institutions such as AP-BON and/or biodiversity center network and facilitate the cooperation and/or information sharing in the common areas discussed in the Dialogue. The Ministers welcomed the fruitful results produced from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Jeju, Korea, in September 2012.

Follow Up Roads from Rio+20

25. The Ministers recognized the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD; Rio+20) held in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They agreed to contribute to the international discussion especially on the important outcomes as development of a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the efforts in regard to Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP).
26. The Rio+20 Summit plays a crucial role in pushing the world towards sustainable development, and can be regarded as a milestone achieved by the international community on its way to green economy. The Ministers agreed that strengthened concerted efforts should be taken to follow up roads from Rio+20 to explore pathways to achieve regional sustainable development within the mechanism of TEMM. They expressed their determination to further promote national efforts to promote green economy. They noted the Partnership of Action on Green Economy (PAGE) launched on 19 February 2013 by United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and actively participated by Korea, in response to the call from Rio+20.

Business and Youth Forums

27. The Ministers recognized that the discussions among tripartite business and youth representatives were very meaningful. They welcomed the outcomes of the business forum themed “International Cooperation towards Expansion of Green Market and Promotion of Green Economy” and the youth forum themed “Our Environmentally Sustainable Cities (ESC)”. They encouraged more exchanges among the youths and the business sector on environment in the future.

TEMM Environment Awards

28. The Ministers welcomed the award ceremony held to commend individual that contributed to environmental cooperation among the three countries, based on the agreement at TEMM14, and expressed their appreciation to the awardees.

Cooperation for the Countermeasures against Disasters/Environmental Emergencies

29. The Japanese and Korean Ministers conveyed their sincere condolences to China, which had been hit hard by a massive earthquake in Sichuan in April 2013 and expressed their willingness to provide every possible support to China for recovering from the consequences of the disaster. The Ministers welcomed the Seminar on countermeasures against disaster held in January 2013 in Iwaki City, Fukushima, Japan, based on the

agreement of TEMM14. They highlighted the importance of information sharing, capacity building and joint responses to prevent environmental impacts caused by disasters/environmental emergencies. In this respect, they recognized the need to discuss future tripartite cooperation on environmental emergency response and management.

TEMM16

30. The Ministers decided that TEMM16 will be held in Korea. The date and venue will be suggested by the host country and subsequently confirmed by China and Japan.

Appreciation to the Host City

31. The Ministers conveyed their appreciation to Kitakyushu, the host city of TEMM15 for the hospitality, with the recognition of its intercity environmental cooperation.

Closing

32. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the fruitful results of this year's meeting. Minister YOON Seongkyu and Vice Minister LI Ganjie extended their gratitude to Minister Nobuteru ISHIHARA and the Japanese government for the hospitality.

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