

Tripartite Joint Action Plan on Environmental Cooperation

Chapter 1: Strategies of Environmental Cooperation among Korea, China, and Japan

1. Introduction

1. The Republic of Korea, the People's Republic of China, and Japan are situated in Northeast Asia and share the atmospheric, marine and natural environment. Recent years have seen rapid economic development in Northeast Asia, with continued growth expected. At the same time, various environmental issues have emerged, and how to achieve sustainable development, through initiatives such as green growth / green economy, has now become a crucial issue. Though the three countries have greatly varying economic and social conditions, they share the common task of having to address national, regional and global environmental issues taking into account their national circumstances.
2. Thus, the inaugural Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting among Korea, China, and Japan (TEMM) was held in 1999, to launch the three countries' cooperative efforts for the environment. To date, the three countries have promoted and implemented cooperation, including information exchange, joint research, and joint projects, etc., regarding various domestic, regional and global environment issues. These efforts have played a major role in the region's environmental management and made contributions to improving the global environment.
3. At the TEMM 11 which was held in Beijing, China in June 2009, the Environment Ministers from the three countries reached an agreement on the ten priority cooperation areas for future tripartite environment cooperation as referred to hereinafter. The leaders of the three countries met at the Second China-Japan-ROK Summit Meeting held in Beijing in October 2009, and released the Joint Statement on Sustainable Development among the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, in which the leaders endorsed the ten priority cooperation areas and encouraged the Environment Ministers of the three countries to develop a joint action plan in the stated ten priority areas for adoption at the TEMM 12 in 2010. Following this instruction, the Environment Ministers of the three countries met at the TEMM 12 in Hokkaido, Japan on 23 May 2010 and adopted this Action Plan, and will report it to the Third Tripartite Leaders Summit to seek its endorsement.

2. Vision and Scope

4. The Environment Ministers of the three countries shall:
 - Honor the commitment made by the leaders of the three countries as manifested in the Joint Statement for Tripartite Partnership and Action Plan for Promoting Trilateral Cooperation among the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea adopted at the first Trilateral Summit Meeting December 2008, and the Joint Statement on

Sustainable Development among the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea adopted at the second Trilateral Summit Meeting in October 2009;

- Share the understanding that Northeast Asia is one Environmental Community;
 - Make efforts to ensure that environmental protection is mainstreamed into measures for economic development of the three countries, with the recognition that these efforts are common global, regional, and national tasks and opportunities;
 - Emphasize the necessity for stronger tripartite cooperation among the three countries for environmental conservation, under the principle of openness, transparency, mutual trust, common benefit and respect for cultural diversity;
 - Share the common concept that cooperation by the three countries for environmental conservation is a key to addressing environmental issues in Northeast Asia, and complements wider regional cooperation frameworks such as ASEAN Plus Three and the East Asian Summit (EAS), as well as enhances the synergies among these frameworks and promotes further progress; and
 - Stipulate this Action Plan in the following ten priority areas of environmental cooperation among Korea, China, and Japan for the period 2010 – 2014:
 - (1) Environmental Education, Environmental Awareness and Public Participation;
 - (2) Climate Change;
 - (3) Biodiversity Conservation;
 - (4) Dust and Sandstorms (DSS);
 - (5) Pollution Control;
 - (6) Environment-Friendly Society/3R/Sound Resource Recycle Society;
 - (7) Transboundary movement of E-Waste;
 - (8) Sound Management of Chemicals;
 - (9) Environmental Governance in Northeast Asia; and
 - (10) Environmental Industries and Technologies
5. The aim of this Action Plan is to present specific plans for cooperative activities in the aforementioned ten areas, which are described in Chapter 2.

3. Strategic Approaches

6. The three countries will advance their cooperation for the environment in the ten priority areas, taking into account the character and historical background of the issues in each area, based on one, two or all of the following approaches: i) information collection/sharing; ii) research-oriented approaches and iii) action-oriented approaches.
7. In the areas in which the existing cooperation framework has sufficiently matured, the action oriented approach will be the focus. In the areas where cooperation is newly started, the initial focus will be on information collecting and sharing and/or research-oriented approach(es), followed by an action-oriented approach built upon their achievements.

4. Implementation Arrangement

8. The Environment Ministers of the three countries shall oversee the general progress and achievements of the Action Plan, taking opportunities such as TEMM, and provide guidance.
9. The respective director generals of the three Ministries shall periodically review the state of progress and achievements of the activities at occasions such as the TEMM Director Generals Meeting and report the results of the review to the TEMM.
10. A TEMM Working-Level Meeting shall be established under the TEMM Director Generals Meeting, with members from the division and/or office responsible for TEMM administration in the respective Environment Ministries of the three countries, which shall oversee routine communications and other business concerning cooperation among the implementing agencies in the three countries.
11. This Action Plan shall be reviewed and updated as required according to the state of progress of future cooperation.
12. The Action Plan will be implemented jointly by the implementing agencies in collaboration with the TEMM focal points.
13. Resources necessary for the implementation will be jointly contributed by the three countries taking into account their national circumstances.
14. The TEMM website will continue to be operated as an information dissemination tool for TEMM activities.

Chapter 2: Action Plan in the Cooperation Priority Areas in 2010 – 2014

1. Environmental Education, Environmental Awareness and Public Participation

(Objectives)

15. As the foundation of regional and domestic actions regarding environmental issues, the three countries will advance their cooperation in environmental education, raising environmental awareness and promoting public participation. At the same time, the three countries will nurture awareness of a common environmental community since Korea, China, and Japan share a common physical and biological environment, and must tackle environmental issues collaboratively.

(Activities)

16. The three countries agreed to collaborate on the creation of the Environmental Education Readers from 2010. The three countries value the achievements of the 2009 Youth Meeting held in Japan in preparation for building a network of the environmental youth groups in the three countries. This Youth Meeting will be hosted annually by each of the three countries in turn. The three countries will continue promoting cooperation including the Tripartite Environmental Education Network (TEEN) and the environmental training for the officials of the three countries.

2. Climate Change

(Objectives)

17. The three countries reaffirm their commitment to the objectives and principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and will work together to promote the full and effective and sustained implementation of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.

(Activities)

18. The three countries welcome the outcome of the COP15/CMP5, and agree to work constructively together towards a positive outcome at the COP16/CMP6 in Cancun at the end of 2010.
19. Recognizing the scientific view that the increase in the global temperature should be below 2 degrees Celsius, on the basis of equity and sustainable development, the three countries should take cooperative action to promote the exchange of information on policies and actions among them on mitigation and adaption to climate change, share knowledge and best practices, promote the joint development and the transfer of climate-friendly technologies, facilitate cost-effective, project-based, and mutually-beneficial cooperative activities that contribute to greenhouse gas emission reductions, and evaluate the effects of the cooperative projects on emission reductions in an appropriate manner.

20. The three countries will exchange information, starting from 2010, on each nation's policy and experience on a co-benefits approach, which aims to address both climate change and environmental problems, utilizing existing international networks whenever appropriate.
21. The three countries will make efforts towards the realization of Green Growth and a Low-Carbon Society and will promote green and low-carbon development based on each country's national circumstances, such as (i) a "Green Economic Policy" seminar in 2010 hosted by China and (ii) commencing joint research on Green Growth and a Low-Carbon Society.

3. Biodiversity Conservation

(Objectives)

22. The three countries recognize the serious impact on the ecosystems in Northeast Asia resulting from the pressure of urbanization commonly seen in the region; population growth and decline, as well as aging; and will strengthen efforts to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

(Activities)

23. The three countries will cooperate for the success of; the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/COP10), scheduled to be held in Nagoya City, Aichi, Japan in October 2010; will support the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress, which will be held at Jeju Island, Korea in 2012; and will lead global endeavors towards the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
24. The three countries will formulate and promote trilateral joint actions such as joint 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), etc.; and will utilize such platforms to deepen cooperation in the area of biodiversity conservation.

4. Dust and Sandstorms (DSS)

(Objectives)

25. The three countries, with the aim of promoting regional cooperation on Dust and Sandstorms (DSS) policies in Northeast Asia, will cooperate in the establishment of DSS monitoring and early warning networks, and DSS prevention and control.

(Activities)

26. The three countries will continue to advance the DSS joint research begun in 2008, and will share the data and knowledge more deeply. Specifically, the three countries will promote joint research analyzing success factors for ecosystem restoration of desertified areas, develop DSS forecasting models, conduct joint research to improve their accuracy, and improve cooperation regarding sharing of data on typical dust storm events.

5. Pollution Control

(Objectives)

27. The three countries will prevent atmospheric and other environmental pollution in the region, and will protect the aquatic and marine environments.

(Activities)

28. The three countries will cooperate closely, involving the remaining country, to enhance activities of Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) under the Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region (NOWPAP), 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.
29. The three countries will hold workshops in order to identify and build mutual understanding regarding the mechanisms of ozone pollution, and start discussions on the implementation of concrete research cooperation in 2010.
30. The three countries will undertake collaborative initiatives in the Asian regional forums for pollution control, such as the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET), the Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA), the Regional EST (Environmentally Sustainable Transport) Forum in Asia, and the Workshop on Reduction of Unintentional POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants) in East Asian Countries, as well as share information and utilize such forums to improve and protect the environment in the three countries.

6. Environment-Friendly Society/3R/Smart Resource Recycle Society

(Objectives)

31. The three countries will strengthen cooperation in policy development as well as in technical cooperation, towards building an Environment-Friendly Society/3R/Smart Resource Recycle Society.

(Activities)

32. The three countries will continue advancing policy discussions in the “Sound Material-Cycle Society/Circular Economy/3R” Seminars and the development of China-Japan-Korea 3R Information Sharing System, and sharing best practices and knowledge concerning 3R.

7. Transboundary Movement of E-Waste

(Objectives)

33. The three countries will prevent illegal transboundary movement of e-waste and promote environmentally sound management of e-waste in order to protect human health and the environment.

(Activities)

34. The three countries will cooperatively take the initiative regarding the existing regional organizations such as Basel Convention Coordinating Center for Asia and the Pacific, and existing projects in Asia, including the Asian Network for Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and the Basel Convention Partnership on the Environmentally Sound Management of Electrical and Electronic Wastes for Asia Pacific Region. In addition to keeping the close communication and information sharing among officials, the three countries will promote cooperation on e-waste management through information exchange on management and control of the transboundary movement of e-waste, as well as interexchange of experts.

8. Sound Management of Chemicals

(Objectives)

35. The three countries will promote information exchange on chemical management policies and their regulation, and prevent significant adverse effects on human health and environment caused by chemicals through proper operation of chemical management systems in each country.

(Activities)

36. The three countries will continuously hold the Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Chemicals Management among Korea, China, and Japan to exchange information on the recent trends of chemical management policies and to strengthen cooperation in the field of Good Laboratory Practice (GLP), test methods and risk assessment of chemicals.

9. Environmental Governance in Northeast Asia

(Objectives)

37. The three countries will create a long term vision for cooperation between the governments of the three countries and the concerned stakeholders in order to strengthen environmental governance (capacities and mechanisms of environmental management) in Northeast Asia.

(Activities)

38. The three countries will commence in 2010 joint research on environmental governance in Northeast Asia including establishing an experts group, and joint research on the assessment of environmental impacts that accompany the development of the economic relationships among the three countries.
39. The National Institute of Environmental Research (NIER) in Korea, the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences (CRAES) and the National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) in Japan, utilizing the opportunity of their annual Tripartite President Meeting, are encouraged to collaborate for the purpose of expanding environmental research capacities through discussions and joint workshops.

10. Environmental Industries and Technology

(Objectives)

40. The three countries will promote environmental industries and research and development on environmental technologies in order to develop measures to protect the environment that do not compromise economic growth, and in order to realize Green Growth.

(Activities)

41. The three countries will continue to promote the exchange of experts, researchers and administration officers through the Tripartite Environmental Industry Roundtable; and to advance the sharing of knowledge concerning green purchasing, eco-labelling, environmental management, and environmental technology. The three countries will promote information sharing on verification of environmental technologies.

Hokkaido, 23 May 2010.

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