

U.S.-Korea Environmental Cooperation Commission 2013 – 2015 Work Program

On February 14, 2013, the Governments of the United States and the Republic of Korea adopted this Work Program pursuant to the United States-Korea Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (ECA) signed on January 23, 2012. This Work Program covers the period 2013 through 2015. The U.S. and Korean Governments (“the Governments”) intend to review progress toward achieving the goals contained in this Work Program in future consultations relating to the status of cooperation under the ECA. The Governments may update and amend the goals and related activities set forth in this Work Program in future consultations between the Governments on environmental cooperation. Implementation of areas of cooperation described in this Work Program is subject to the availability of funds.

I. Background

The ECA identifies environmental issues of mutual interest to the Governments, and establishes a mechanism through which the Governments can pursue cooperative efforts in those areas. In it, the Governments also established their intent to engage in bilateral activities and, where appropriate, in regional activities to promote cooperation on environmental protection, sustainable management of natural resources, conservation and protection of biodiversity, and strengthening of environmental law enforcement (ECA Article 2).

The ECA establishes the following types of activities as possible areas of cooperation between the Governments:

- a. Exchange of professionals, technicians, and specialists, including study visits and internships;
- b. Organization of joint conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings, training sessions and outreach, and education programs;
- c. Support for collaboration projects and demonstrations, including joint research projects, studies, and reports;
- d. Facilitation of linkages among representatives from academia, industry, government, and non-governmental organizations to promote the exchange of experience and information, including on best management practices and environmental technologies and data likely to be of mutual interest;
- e. Sharing of information on national environmental programs, including those related to natural resources, subject to the respective Party’s laws and regulations; and
- f. Such other forms of environmental cooperation as the Parties may deem appropriate (ECA Article 4).

II. Mutually-Identified Goals and Related Activities

In accordance with the ECA, the Governments have identified the following goals and areas of cooperation that they intend to pursue during the period 2013 through 2015, noting that bilateral and regional efforts may complement each other in many cases. Below each goal are examples of related cooperative activities that may be pursued, including activities that are currently underway, in the planning stages, or proposed:

1. **Strengthen Environmental Protection.** Development, implementation, and enforcement of, and compliance with, laws and regulations to protect human health and the environment and manage natural resources in a sustainable manner, and the routine exchange of information on compliance and enforcement efforts and challenges, both in their respective territories and, as appropriate and mutually acceptable, in collaboration with other interested countries.

- Explore avenues of legal cooperation through the APEC Transportation Working Group in the investigation and prosecution of environment-related crime, including the prevention of pollution from ships in accordance with MARPOL 73/78.
- Encourage utilization of effective air and water technologies.
- Participate in international initiatives relating to water resources.

2. **Implement MEAs and Other Multilateral Environmental Cooperation Initiatives.** Implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to which the United States and Korea are both party and other international environmental cooperation initiatives in which both Governments share interests.

- Jointly promote region-wide involvement in regional environmental compliance and enforcement networks and environmental cooperation initiatives, with a view, among other things, to strengthening implementation of the CITES and Ramsar Conventions.

3. **Promote Public Awareness.** Promotion of greater awareness by the public and decision makers of environmental issues, including through education, increased provision of and access to environmental information, and increased and more timely opportunities for public participation in the development and implementation of environmental policies and programs as well as projects with environmental impacts, including through review and comment on documents such as environmental impact assessments.

- Exchange information on best practices related to public participation, including the EPA tool kit for public participation and public outreach in environmental decision making.

- Continue to improve collaboration to reduce consumer demand for illegal wildlife and related products through the creation of public awareness campaigns.

4. **Protect Wildlife and Sustainably Manage Ecosystems and Natural Resources.**

Protection, conservation, and sustainable and integrated management of terrestrial, inland water, wetland, forest, coastal, and marine ecosystems, including protected areas, and addressing ocean acidification, fisheries, and wildlife issues, including through the protection of endangered species and the control of invasive alien species.

- Participate in regional initiatives and strategies on preventing the spread of potential invasive alien species, including exchanging information related to eradicating, controlling, and preventing the transmission of invasive alien species, practical decision-making tools for invasive species management, evaluating the trade impacts of invasive alien species, and preventing damage from ballast water.
- Jointly work to effectively reduce the impacts of marine debris and implement the actions of the Honolulu Strategy to address marine debris at the local, national and international levels.
- Engage in technical exchange on all facets of national park management, including cooperation on Healthy Parks/Healthy People, management effectiveness, visitor safety and management, search and rescue, and interpretation/environmental education.
- Continue or expand existing technical exchanges within RFMO's and elsewhere to facilitate a holistic fisheries management approach, involving, inter alia, measures to promote sustainable fisheries; minimize bycatch; address illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing; improve support for science-based fisheries management; strengthen monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) systems; and develop robust data-collection and traceability systems for fish and fishery products.
- Improve collaboration and communication among judicial, law enforcement, customs, and border security personnel in seizing illegal shipments of wildlife products, investigating wildlife crime, prosecuting wildlife traffickers, and dismantling transnational organized criminal networks.
- Enhance collaboration on cooperative activities to combat illegal logging and associated trade in regional and multilateral fora, as appropriate, including, in particular, the APEC Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade.
- Engage in information exchange and dialogue with the goal of fulfilling wildlife management responsibilities, with an emphasis on the preservation of waterbirds and their habitats, and the restoration of habitat. This includes birds that migrate between the United States and the Republic of Korea, and threatened and endangered species of birds.

- Facilitate cooperative efforts between the two Governments and with industry regarding the advancement of scientific knowledge and technologies related to environmentally sound aquaculture, including data exchange, information on regulatory systems, and enhanced disease detection and response measures.
- Collaborate in research and data-gathering related to the impact of ocean acidification.

5. **Promote environmentally sustainable cities.** Reduction of air and water pollution and the generation of wastes in urban environments, including long-range transboundary air pollution.

- Collaborate on research and data-gathering related to the impacts of urban air pollution on regional air quality, including with regard to megacities; exchange information and best practices with regard to urban air quality management, and seek opportunities to jointly conduct and support technical outreach and consultations within the Asia Pacific region.
- Participate in initiatives on environmentally sustainable cities, including possible exchanges between U.S., Korean and other regional cities.

6. **Promote Cleaner Energy Sources and Protect Global Climate.** Share best practices on the development and application of cleaner sources of energy, the use of new and renewable energy sources, and the use of climate friendly environmental technology.

- Exchange information regarding Korea's Green Growth strategy and U.S. efforts directed at addressing climate change.
- Further cooperate in advancing sustainable energy goals and addressing climate change by participating in energy efficiency and green growth initiatives, as appropriate, under the OECD, and through APEC, the G20, and other green growth-related efforts.
- Coordinate with respect to climate and security initiatives.
- Collaborate in research and data-gathering, as appropriate, related to climate modeling and adaptation frameworks.
- Conduct workshops on climate risk assessment and climate adaptation planning.
- Continue bilateral clean energy research and development collaboration under the DOE-MKE Implementing Arrangement for Cooperation in the Area of Clean Energy Research and Technology.
- Further cooperate on smart grids through the International Smart Grid Action Network (ISGAN) and the APEC Smart Grid Initiative.

- Jointly work to promote energy efficiency in buildings and industry through the Clean Energy Ministerial's Global Superior Energy Performance (GSEP) Partnership and the APEC Energy-Smart Communities Initiative (ESCI).
- Continue cooperation on the development and adoption of energy-efficient equipment and appliances through the Clean Energy Ministerial's Super-Efficient Equipment and Appliance Deployment (SEAD) initiative.

7. Sustainably Manage Ports and Maritime Vessels. Implementation of measures to promote the compatibility of ocean-going and other maritime vessels and related port activities with environmental protection and the sustainable management of natural resources.

- Support and engage in collaborative efforts to encourage the exchange of environmental best practices, and the use of innovative environmental technology and pollution management techniques in ports management, and to promote regional adoption of sustainable practices in marine ports, vessels, and goods movement.

8. Establish Cooperation Mechanisms. Promote further cooperation by establishing regular mechanisms for information sharing and exchange.

- Explore opportunities for exchanges between officials of relevant agencies.

The Governments are developing a more detailed list of projects and exchanges implementing the goals and activities outlined above and other environmental cooperation activities of mutual interest that they are pursuing or may pursue. The Governments intend to identify and exchange lead points of contact for each priority area within three months of approval of this Work Program.

The Governments intend to explore the development of partnerships with private sector and civil society organizations in carrying out their cooperative work wherever possible. The Governments note ongoing bilateral cooperative work in other fora, including multilateral organizations, and intend to seek through this Work Program to build upon and complement this work. In addition, the Governments intend to explore opportunities for mutual collaboration in these priority areas with other countries in the Asia Pacific region.

III. Benchmarks and Evaluation

As the Governments more narrowly define cooperative programs, projects, and activities under the Work Program, the Governments intend to identify performance indicators and benchmarks to measure appropriately the progress made in accomplishing or otherwise furthering the goals and objectives of such programs, projects and activities and intend further to facilitate public reporting of that progress. To the degree that the Governments use independent sources of monitoring data and evaluation to assess progress, they intend to collaborate with those other sources in identifying suitable performance indicators and benchmarks.

The Governments intend to seek and consider input from relevant local, regional, and international organizations regarding relevant environmental conditions and indicators and views on the utility of cooperation under this Work Program. The Governments also intend to encourage public participation in identifying opportunities and implementing environmental collaboration, and to make information on activities carried out under the ECA available to the public on a regular basis, and at their regular consultations under the ECA, to evaluate progress made toward meeting the goals established under this Work Program.

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Approved by the U.S.-Korea Environmental Cooperation Commission
as reflected in the Joint Communiqué
February 14, 2013

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