

Joint Statement of Cooperation on Sustainable Forest Management, Combating Desertification and Wildlife Conservation

May 13, 2012

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and on the eve of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, we, the leaders of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea and Japan,

Recognizing that the realization of economic, social and environmental benefits of forests is one of the important means to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) given the renewable, diverse and multi-functional nature of forests;

Echoing the appeal of the Ministerial Declaration of the High Level Segment of the Ninth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, promoting synergies between climate change and sustainable forest management activities, and endeavoring to promote the implementation of sustainable forest management and achieving the Global Objectives on Forests, with the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests being regarded as an integrated framework for national action and international cooperation;

Recalling the APEC Leaders' Declaration adopted in Yokohama, Japan in 2010, requesting efforts to be made for achieving the goals set in the Sydney Declaration through enhanced cooperation for the promotion of forest rehabilitation and sustainable management;

Recalling also the Beijing Statement on Forests and Forestry adopted at the First APEC Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry held in Beijing, China in September 2011, and the Changwon Initiative welcomed at the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 10) held in Changwon, the Republic of Korea in October 2011,

Decided to strengthen the cooperation among the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea and Japan, on sustainable forest management, combating desertification and wildlife conservation.

I. Sustainable Forest Management

We recognized that sustainable forest management is the perpetual theme in ecological improvement and the pursuit of sustainable development, and facilitates efforts to tackle climate change, conserve biodiversity and promote green growth among the three countries. It is necessary for the three countries to strengthen and deepen the cooperation on sustainable forest management.

We reaffirmed the need to establish dialogue among the three countries on sustainable forest management, share successful experiences of sustainable forest management, enhance in-depth and all-round cooperation on sustainable forest management policy, administration and technology, facilitate understanding and consensus on and responses to climate change through forests, and explore possibilities of the exchange, pilot programs and demonstration projects of forest bio-energy development and utilization.

II. Combating Desertification

We recognized that desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) constrain sustainable development in the region, put ecological services at stake, and are some of the main causes for regional dust and sand storms (DSS). Sustainable land management and vegetation restoration in drylands are effective means of prevention and mitigation for DLDD as well as DSS. Restoration and rehabilitation of species' habitats in drylands and the promotion of biodiversity conservation provide resources and ecological support for regional green economic development.

We expressed satisfaction on the previous cooperation in this field. We will continue our close cooperation, implement the agreements reached at the UNCCD COP 10, and make full use of and develop the existing cooperative frameworks to further the exchanges and cooperation in desertification control, promote the restoration and regeneration of forest and grass vegetation, sustainable land management and resource utilization, and facilitate DSS prevention and control in the Northeast Asian region.

III. Wildlife Conservation

We recognized the significant role of stronger conservation of wildlife including endangered species in enhancing the biodiversity given that the number of species has been decreasing sharply worldwide due to various reasons such as habitats reduction and climate change in particular. We decided to enhance information sharing in the areas of the rehabilitation and conservation of endangered species and their habitats, and to explore the possibility of related cooperative programs to advance joint efforts. We confirmed that it is desirable to facilitate mutual cooperation and technology exchanges for crested ibis restoration and migratory bird conservation among the three countries which are closely interconnected in terms of climate and geography.

We confirmed that further efforts will be made towards promoting exchanges and communications between working level officers to enhance the mutual understanding of our respective policies and positions on sustainable forest management, combating desertification and wildlife conservation by making use of the existing frameworks.

We reaffirmed our commitment for the enhanced cooperation on sustainable forest management, combating desertification and wildlife conservation among the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea and Japan and decided to explore the possibility of expanding our cooperation to East Asia when appropriate.