

North-East Asia Low Carbon Cities Platform (NEA-LCCP)

Summary of Expert Group Workshop

2 September 2016, Seoul

1. UNESCAP East and North-East Asia Office, (ESCAP-ENEA), serving as the secretariat of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC), held an expert group workshop (EGW) on 2 September 2016 in Seoul to seek the views of experts on the work of the North-East Asia Low Carbon City Platform (NEA-LCCP). The EGW was held back-to-back with the Seoul Mayors Forum on Climate Change 2016 organized by Seoul Metropolitan Government and ICLEI.
2. NEA-LCCP was launched in 2014 as a platform for organizations working on LCC in the subregion to collectively support North-east Asian countries in pursuing low carbon urban development. It has four key areas of activity: (i) information sharing and communications, (ii) technical assistance, (iii) analytical studies, and (iv) capacity building.
3. This NEA-LCCP workshop was held to consult and discuss with experts and key agencies working in low carbon cities on the overall approach as well as the specific methodology of NEA-LCCP's peer review to be carried out in 2016/17.
4. The Workshop also showcased relevant works of participants both within and beyond the subregion, covering (i) low carbon cities/ carbon reduction indicators and assessment systems including the China Low-Carbon City Evaluation Indicator System (LCCC), Post-Carbon Cities of Tomorrow (POCACITO) and APEC Low-Carbon Town Indicators (LCT-I); (ii) emissions accounting and data availability such as the city greenhouse gas inventory and data platform by the World Resources Institute; (iii) city's approaches and cooperation such as Guangzhou's self- evaluation for the national low carbon city pilot program and city-to-city exchanges among Asian cities supported by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) ; (iv) policy mapping, practice analysis and technical guides by Innovative Green Development Program and Energy Foundation of China; (v) support to cities to initiate or advance low carbon development at various stages of their development, for example, Carbon Trust's Low Carbon Cities

Programme and Korean Research Institute for Human Settlement's works on low carbon urban re-development and land-use change simulations.

NEA-LCCP Peer Review Key Discussions

5. During the discussions, a number of points regarding the scope of peer review were raised. These include the **geographic scope** of data and city boundaries: as each city or government defines its jurisdiction differently and subsequently the geographic scope of data which usually follows the same boundary, using each city's own definition of city and data would be most practical.
6. In terms of the scope of indicators, it was suggested that **co-benefits** of low carbon cities could be explored in the peer review which is considered appealing to local governments as they would be interested in knowing or showcasing the beneficial impacts and potentials of LCC development. Other discussions regarding indicators include **universality of indicators**, whether to apply standard set of indicators to all cities or designing specific sets of indicators to be applied to categories of cities defined with different characteristics. Providing **detailed definitions of indicators** was proposed to aid understanding and more accurate data collection. Emphasis on reviewing **implementation mechanisms** of low carbon cities was also suggested to be helpful to host and other cities as it has been a major challenge.
7. Whilst reviewing the overall approach of the peer review, the workshop supported the proposal to offer host cities in exploring **optional in-depth topics**, as carried out in the OECD Environmental Performance Review (EPR). In addition, linkages to the **Sustainable Development Goals** and **New Urban Agenda** could be made in the peer review.

Next Steps

8. NEASPEC Secretariat will revise the methodology and indicators incorporating expert comments from the workshop, and will circulate the revised methodology. Meanwhile, the NEASPEC Secretariat will also discuss with potential national partners, coordinator and potential host cities to formulate review team and a plan for carrying out a pilot peer review.
9. Outcomes of this workshop and latest progress on NEA-LCCP will be reported to the Twenty-first Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-21) to be held in 2017.

List of Participants

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- Qiaoqiao Xu, ICLEI East Asia Secretariat
- Li Yang, Innovative Green Development Program (iGDP)
- Simon Hoiberg Olsen, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
- Kwang Ik Wang and Ji Young Cho, Korean Research Institute for Human Settlement (KRIHS)
- Shinji Yamamura, Nikken Sekeki Research Institute (NSRI)
- Ariuntuya Dorjsuren, Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Mongolia
- Changwoo Lee, Seoul Institute
- Xiaoqian Jiang, World Resources Institute (WRI) China
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