

North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation

NEASPEC



ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission
for Asia and the Pacific



North-East Asian
Subregional Programme for
Environmental Cooperation

About NEASPEC

The North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) is a comprehensive intergovernmental cooperation framework designed to address environmental challenges in North-East Asia. Established in 1993 in the follow-up to the Rio Earth Summit, NEASPEC was founded by six member States: China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation.

As the first intergovernmental mechanism established by all six countries in North-East Asia, NEASPEC has evolved into a comprehensive programme supported by a core fund and a well-established institutional framework.

Serving as the region's most comprehensive multilateral mechanism connecting global goals, subregional priorities and national needs in the areas of environment and sustainable development, NEASPEC takes a step-by-step approach to strengthen regional environmental cooperation through projects, policy dialogue, and capacity-building activities.

Senior Officials Meeting (SOM)

The **Senior Officials Meeting (SOM)** is the governing body of NEASPEC. It provides policy guidance, oversees project implementation, and makes decisions on all substantive and financial matters. The SOM meets annually, hosted by member States on a rotating basis.

Secretariat

The **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)** has served as the NEASPEC secretariat since 1993. Since 2010, the ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia (ESCAP-ENEA) has carried out the secretariat functions for NEASPEC.

Five Programmatic Areas



Air
Pollution



Low Carbon
Cities



Desertification and
Land Degradation



Biodiversity and
Nature Conservation



Marine Protected
Areas

NEASPEC

MILESTONES

1993

Establishment of NEASPEC

1996

Adoption of the Framework of NEASPEC

1997

Adoption of a resolution on NEASPEC
at the 53rd ESCAP Commission Session

2000

Establishment of the Core Fund & Adoption
of the Vision Statement

2007

Adoption of the Nature Conservation Strategy

2010

Relocation of NEASPEC secretariat to ESCAP-ENEA
(Incheon, Republic of Korea)



2013

Launch of the North-East Asian Marine Protected Areas Network (NEAMPAN)

2014

Launch of the North-East Asia Low Carbon City Platform (NEA-LCCP)

2016

Adoption of NEASPEC Strategic Plan 2016-2020 & Development of the North-East Asia Multistakeholder Plan (NEAMSP) on Combating Desertification and Land Degradation

2018

Launch of the North-East Asia Clean Air Partnership (NEACAP)

2020

Adoption of NEASPEC Strategic Plan 2021-2025

2023

30th anniversary of NEASPEC and adoption of the Commemorative Statement on Promoting Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia

2025

Adoption of NEASPEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030



Air Pollution



Air Pollution has been one of NEASPEC's core areas of cooperation since the mid-1990s, beginning with technical cooperation to mitigate air pollution from coal-fired power plants in North-East Asia. Recognizing the need to strengthen the science-policy interface, NEASPEC launched the North-East Asia Clean Air Partnership (NEACAP) in 2018 as a voluntary platform for science-based, policy-oriented regional cooperation.

Institutionalized Regional Cooperation

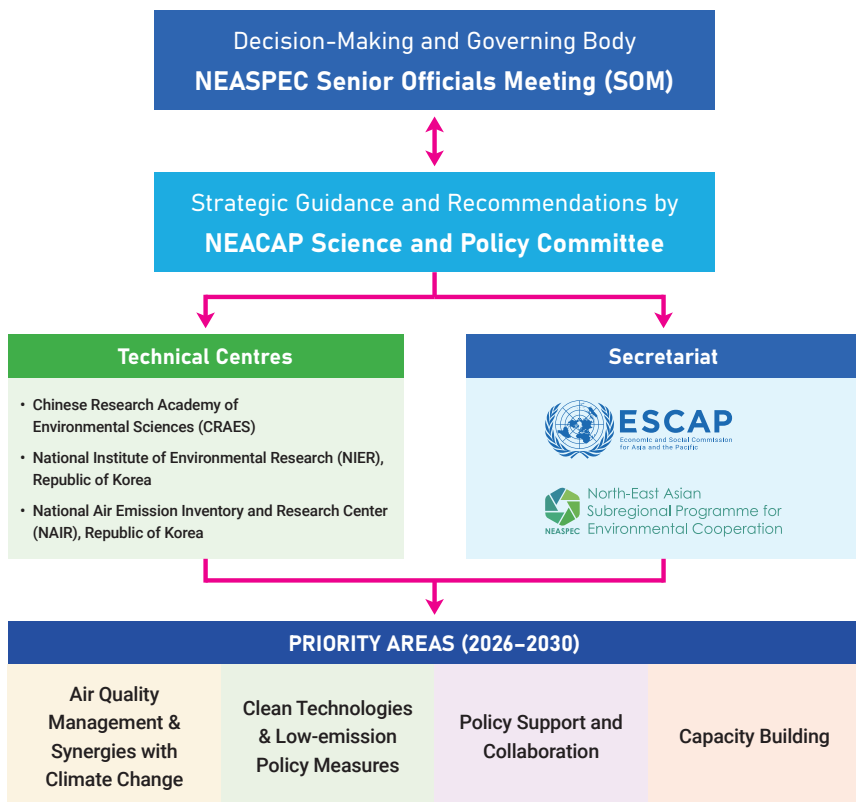
NEACAP operates through the Science and Policy Committee (SPC), which provides strategic guidance, recommends the direction of NEACAP activities, and reports to the NEASPEC Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) for consideration and decision. The designated Technical Centres (TCs) support the technical implementation of NEACAP activities, while the Secretariat provides overall programme coordination and implements NEACAP activities.



Priority Areas (2026–2030)

Building on the NEASPEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 and the NEACAP Work Plan 2026-2030, NEACAP will focus on:

- Strengthening air quality management and its synergies with climate change;
- Promoting clean technologies and low-emission policy measures;
- Strengthening policy support and collaboration through the development and dissemination of knowledge products; and
- Enhancing technical and institutional capacities for effective air quality management.



Low Carbon Cities



Low Carbon Cities has been a key area of NEASPEC's cooperation since 2014, when the North-East Asia Low Carbon City Platform (NEA-LCCP) was established to foster regional collaboration on urban decarbonization. Recognizing the critical role of cities in achieving national and local climate mitigation targets, NEASPEC drives the transition toward low-carbon and resilient urban development across North-East Asia. To this end, NEASPEC serves as a collaborative mechanism to facilitate knowledge exchange,

strengthen local government capacity for climate action, and promote strategic partnerships, city networks, and innovative urban climate solutions through policy dialogue and joint initiatives.

Key Activities

- **International Forum on Low Carbon Cities (IFLCC):** Convening city-to-city exchange sessions and policy dialogues;
- **Training Programmes:** Hosting technical workshops and municipal capacity-building sessions;
- **Platform Consultations (NEA-LCCP):** Strengthening network coordination, linkage building and strategic partnerships; and
- **Knowledge Products:** Publishing case studies, best practice reports, policy briefs and technical guidance.



Achievements

Promote Knowledge Sharing and Peer-Learning

- Established the Regional Platform for Low-Carbon City Cooperation, the only subregional platform dedicated to low-carbon city cooperation in North-East Asia.
- Connected cities, local governments, and knowledge partners across the subregion and beyond.
- Maintained shared online knowledge repository and LCCP calendar for partners to exchange publications, presentations, case studies and other knowledge resources.

Advancing Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Building:

- Organized STI-based forums and peer-learning workshops.
- Hosted municipal capacity-building workshops for local government officials.
- Convened the annual International Forum on Low Carbon Cities (IFLCC), jointly established with Incheon Metropolitan City in 2021.

Generating Knowledge and Fostering Partnerships:

- Produced comparative studies and best practice publications.
- Convened regular consultations to identify common priorities and collaborative opportunities.
- Facilitated initiatives among cities, city networks, research institutions, and international organizations.

Desertification & Land Degradation



NEASPEC focuses on combating desertification and land degradation including its impact on sand and dust storms (SDS) across North-East Asia. Guided by the NEASPEC Approach for DLD endorsed at SOM-26 among others, NEASPEC has driven regional cooperation, policy dialogue, and capacity building to advance land degradation neutrality (LDN) and ecosystem restoration. To this end, NEASPEC serves as a collaborative mechanism to facilitate knowledge exchange and regional dialogue on

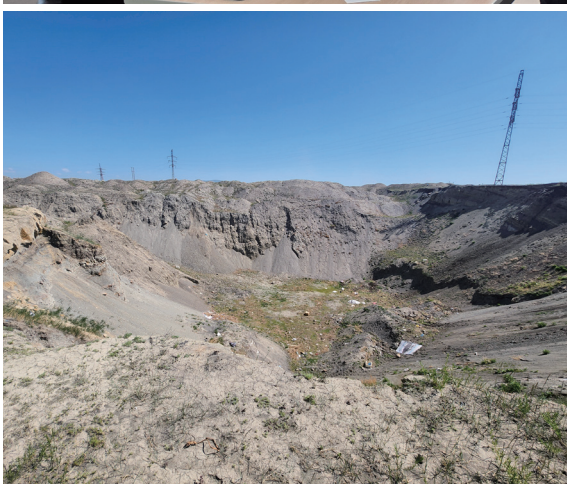
DLD and SDS mitigation, strengthen local and national capacities for sustainable land management and monitoring, and promote multi-stakeholder partnerships and innovative solutions.

Key Activities

- **Regional Forums and Consultations:** Hosting subregional forums, regional conferences, and multi-stakeholder consultations;
- **Joint Research and Policy Studies:** Conducting joint research projects, expert meetings, and analytical studies;
- **Capacity-Building Workshops:** Organizing technical workshops, and knowledge-sharing sessions; and
- **Outreach and Global Engagement:** Convening international events, seminars, and campaigns in alignment with UNCCD COP17 and the UN Decade on Combating SDS.

Achievements

- **Promoting Knowledge Sharing and Regional Dialogue**
- Conducted capacity-building and knowledge-exchange activities through regional events, engaging experts across six member States.
- **Advancing Practical and Evidence-Based Solutions**
- Implemented multiple field demonstration projects to showcase practical solutions for desertification and land degradation.
- Worked on policy-oriented studies and regional frameworks to support evidence-based decision-making and achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).



Biodiversity and Nature Conservation



Biodiversity and Nature Conservation has been a core priority of NEASPEC's subregional environmental agenda, promoting the conservation of flagship species and their transboundary habitats in North-East Asia. Guided by the NEASPEC Nature Conservation Strategy adopted at SOM-12 in 2007, NEASPEC promotes transboundary and intergovernmental cooperation through a two-track approach focusing on both habitat conservation and six flagship species – the Amur tiger, Amur leopard, Snow leopard, Black-faced

Spoonbill, White-naped Crane, and Hooded Crane. To this end, NEASPEC serves as a collaborative mechanism to strengthen transboundary ecological connectivity, enhance knowledge sharing and monitoring systems through technical research and the development of a knowledge-sharing platform, support flagship species and ecosystem conservation through joint monitoring and field collaboration, and leverage multi-stakeholder partnerships for capacity building and policy alignment.

Key Activities

- **Joint Monitoring and Technical Cooperation:** Implementing joint species monitoring projects, technical field surveys, habitat assessments, and collaborative research to strengthen transboundary conservation;
- **Policy Dialogue and Regional Cooperation:** Convening regional forums, cross-border dialogues, and stakeholder consultations to promote transboundary conservation and strengthen science-policy linkages;

- **Capacity Building and Partnerships:** Organizing training programmes for young researchers and conservation practitioners, regional workshops, and expert seminars to strengthen subregional technical capacities and multi-stakeholder partnerships; and
- **North-East Asia Big Cat Network:** Advancing the establishment of the North-East Asia Big Cat Network to facilitate regional collaboration, expert dialogues, and joint initiatives for big cat conservation.

Achievements

Strengthening Regional Cooperation

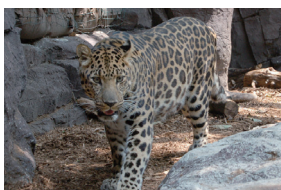
- Strengthened transboundary cooperation among governments, research institutions, and conservation organizations for biodiversity conservation.
- Advanced joint monitoring, technical research, and information exchange on flagship species and their habitats.

Building Regional Capacity and Partnerships

- Enhanced regional capacities through training programmes, technical workshops, and expert exchanges.
- Promoted regional cooperation on big cat conservation through the North-East Asia Big Cat Network and a regional knowledge-sharing platform.



Amur Tiger



Amur Leopard



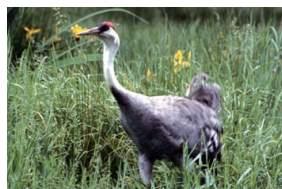
Snow Leopard



Black-faced Spoonbill



White-naped Crane



Hooded Crane

Marine Protected Areas



NEASPEC supports the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity through the North-East Asian Marine Protected Areas Network (NEAMPAN), established in 2013. NEAMPAN connects MPA sites and associated ecosystems across North-East Asia, serving as the only subregional platform on MPAs for information sharing, research, capacity building, and partnerships with regional and global MPA networks and relevant organizations. It also promotes the sustainable use of marine resources

and advances regional action toward global biodiversity and climate targets. To this end, NEASPEC serves as a collaborative mechanism to strengthen MPA management capacity in support of global conservation targets, including the 30x30 Target; promote knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices; enhance cooperation on the conservation of migratory marine species; and integrate nature-based solutions and marine spatial planning into regional conservation efforts.

Key Activities

- **Capacity Building and Peer Learning:** Organizing regional workshops, webinars, and exchanges among MPA managers, government officials, researchers, and conservation practitioners;
- **Regional Dialogue and Partnerships:** Convening NEAMPAN Steering Committee meetings and expert meetings, while strengthening engagement with regional and global MPA networks;

- **Research and Knowledge Development:** Conducting studies and assessments on MPA management and monitoring, climate change impacts, and relevant ocean-based solutions; and
- **Emerging Conservation Priorities:** Facilitating regional exchange and collaboration on marine and coastal OECMs, marine species conservation, ecological connectivity, and other emerging area-based conservation approaches.

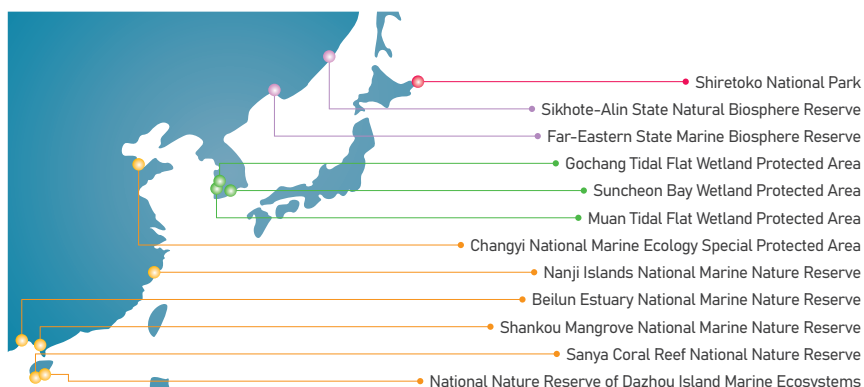
Achievements

Strengthening Subregional Cooperation

- Established and sustained a subregional platform connecting MPA sites across North-East Asia for knowledge exchange and partnership building.
- Strengthened collaboration among MPA managers, government institutions, researchers, civil society organizations, and regional and global conservation networks.

Advancing Knowledge and Capacity

- Expanded the regional knowledge base through comprehensive subregional assessments on MPA management, monitoring, climate risks, and ocean-based climate action.
- Enhanced technical capacities and peer learning among MPA managers and other stakeholders through regional workshops, expert meetings, webinars, and knowledge exchange.



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