



Joint Statement on Environmental Compliance and Enforcement in Asia

Mindful of the serious environmental and health impacts in Asia, as well as other regions of the world, related to climate change, deforestation, loss of biological diversity, depletion and pollution of fresh water resources, land degradation, increasing air pollution, solid wastes, and accumulation of hazardous waste and toxic pollutants, and other existing and emerging challenges;

Recognizing that while most Asian governments have established comprehensive legal and institutional frameworks to address the environmental impacts of rapid urbanization and industrial growth, compliance and enforcement of environmental laws and regulations remain weak due in part to inadequate technical, financial and human resources, among others;

Affirming the urgent need to take concerted actions to ensure effective compliance with and enforcement of environmental laws and regulations, while cognizant that Asian countries are at different stages of economic development;

Determined to engage in regional cooperation and collaboration to ensure an environmentally sustainable Asia;

It was agreed in the Meeting on Advancing Effective Environmental Compliance and Enforcement in Asia held in Singapore on 12 October 2009 and organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN) to:

- (i) Promote improved environmental compliance and enforcement with national legal and regulatory requirements and international commitments;
- (ii) Enhance cooperation on a regional basis between countries and with relevant stakeholders through technical exchange, transfer of technology, specialized training and knowledge-sharing initiatives to share good practices and success stories, information on environmental compliance and enforcement and improved data base management;
- (iii) Engage in focused, collaborative “twinning” partnerships between countries, committing resources as appropriate, to facilitate the transfer of innovative practices and solutions via direct peer-to-peer exchange, leading to enhanced capacity to assure environmental compliance and improve environmental performance in one or both participating countries;
- (iv) Work jointly with bilateral and multilateral development agencies to improve the compliance and enforcement of relevant safeguards policies employed to improve the quality and outcomes of development projects and programs;
- (v) Monitor and share information on an ongoing basis on efforts to improve environmental compliance and enforcement in the region and to identify areas of ongoing challenges with the objective of eliciting cooperative support from other Asian countries and development partners;
- (vi) Engage relevant institutions and networks in environmental education and awareness to enhance understanding on the importance of environmental compliance and enforcement in the context of education and capacity building for sustainable development;
- (vii) Recognize UNEP and AECEN as important platforms for sharing information by various means on environmental compliance and enforcement in Asia with a view to sustaining such platforms with support from participating countries and the donor community; and

Therefore, we renew our collective commitment to strive continuously towards achieving a clean and sustainable environment in Asia in accordance with the rule of law through effective compliance and enforcement for present and future generations.