

Options and Considerations for Strengthening International Cooperation on Air Pollution in Asia

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Why Greater International Cooperation is Desirable


Key problems to solve:

- Overall air pollution is increasing in East Asia
- Transboundary movement is becoming more important
- Need to address multiple issues simultaneously
 - Local air pollution
 - Transboundary aspects
 - Linkage with climate change
- Need to reduce costs of control measures (e.g. through cobenefits)
- Need to strengthen capacity building
- Need more research on air pollution problems
- Strengthen the links between science and policy
- Greater emphasis on reduction/mitigation measures
- Desirable to engage less developed countries like Myanmar before serious pollution

ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:

1. Facilitate a common understanding resulting in policy actions
2. Actions should be coordinated to enhance effectiveness and efficiency

Existing Selected Cooperation Frameworks

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	FRAMEWORKS
Global/hemispheric	UNFCCC, GAPF, ABC, CCAC 
More than one subregion	EANET, Joint Forum
Subregional	ASEAN Haze Agreement, Male Declaration, TEMM, LTP, NEASPEC

PROBLEMS WITH EXISTING FRAMEWORKS

- Duplication & overlap, extra cost
- Insufficient funding
- Limited effectiveness
- Insufficient scope: need more emphasis on mitigation, linkage between air pollution & climate change
- Should strengthen linkage to policy & implementation

Past Efforts to Strengthen International Cooperation in Northeast and Southeast Asia

- Focused on strengthening each framework individually
 - ▣ Different countries had different priorities or reservations
 - ▣ Results limited: small changes, no significant expansion of scope, no focus on reduction measures
 - EANET: New Instrument
 - NEASPEC: New review study
 - LTP: Currently discussing new stage
- Possibility to merge some frameworks
 - ▣ Differences in geographic scope and focus
 - ▣ Administrative differences and complexity



- Emerging common view among countries on the importance of strengthening international cooperation
- But: different views on the best mode of cooperation

Desirable Functions of an International Framework



FUNCTIONS	CURRENT SITUATION	PROSPECTS
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered in EANET, LTP • Room to expand scope, number of stations, quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries generally interested • More capacity building needed ➤ Int'l cooperation helpful
Modeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MICS, LTP • Needs to be expanded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N.E. Asia interested • SE. Asia needs more capacity ➤ Cooperation framework is an issue.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EANET will do; ABC has done • More is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Japan & Korea strongly favor ➤ Difficult to object?
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EANET & LTP limited; some under TEMM • More is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most willing, depends on funds ➤ Some differences on participants and which research in which framework
Emissions reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not covered by EANET, LTP • More action is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most difficult aspect • China already making strong efforts ➤ Key issue for international framework
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing CB is important, but limited in scope • Wide range of CB needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This may be a good key focus

Desirable Scope of Pollutants: Options

Multipollutants-Multieffect Approach is Desirable

- Comprehensive, integrated approach
- Based on scientific modeling to maximize cost effectiveness

Key Point: EXPANDABILITY (easily add new pollutants in the future)

SHOULD THESE BE INCLUDED?

Climate/SLCF
(Air P. Cobenefit Appr.)

- Linkage would facilitate a cobenefit approach
- But already existing frameworks for climate (UNFCCC, CCAC)

DSS/Haze/
Yellow Sand

- Natural & man-made air pollution usually considered separately
- Existing frameworks in N.E. & S.E. Asia
- Any benefits to combining?

Note

- PM seems to be of interest to all/most countries
- Ozone of increasing interest; China will be in the future

Global/Hemispheric Level Options



RATIONALE

- Many pollutants are now global or hemispheric: GHG, Ozone, Aerosols
- Desirability of linking & coordinating regional frameworks
- Global scope addresses trade competitiveness concerns of mitigation measures more comprehensively

OPTIONS	COMMENTS
1. Global Convention on Atmosphere (Vancouver Declaration 2010, IUAPPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would be comprehensive• Difficult to agree, long time to negotiate• Linkage/ division of responsibility w/ climate• Structure, focus? Modeled after LRTAP? Binding/Voluntary? Principles/Action?
2. Global standards to link to regional/subregional conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easier to agree• Could be weaker than a global convention• Would build on existing mechanisms and promote cooperation among them

Regional/ Subregional Level Options



RATIONALE

- Regional linkage of air pollution is clearer, especially to local aspects
- Easier to reach agreement due to fewer countries

OPTIONS	ADVANTAGES/CHALLENGES/COMMENTS
1. More coordination among existing frameworks (e.g. strengthen Joint Forum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good in theory, difficult in practice • Does not solve overlap & duplication • Information sharing could be main benefit
2. Stronger efforts to strengthen existing frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seems easiest, but limited past effectiveness • Does not solve overlap & duplication • Hard to increase efficiency & cost effectiveness
3. Merge existing frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better chance to reduce overlap & duplication • Challenges: differences in functions, geographic scope, administrative procedures
4. Create new framework (Asian LRTAP?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More optimal scope (more ambitious) • How to relate to existing frameworks • Cost sharing? Secretariat?

Discussion of Geographic Scope



- Regional / subregional focus more realistic in short/medium term.
- Advantages & disadvantages of regional/subregional focus

Northeast Asia (subregional)

- Quicker focus on reduction measures is possible
- Which countries to include - 3, 4, 5?

N.E. Asia + Southeast Asia (2 subregions)

- May need to emphasize capacity building
- Trans-subregional aspects (haze, ABC, ozone)

Northeast + Southeast + South Asia (3 subregions)

- Trans-subregional aspects (haze, ABC, ozone)
- May need to emphasize capacity building
- More differences in priority pollutants, emissions sources

Fewer members:

- Easier to reach agreement, quicker actions
- Advantage for subregional but not regional scale

More members:

- More difficult to reach agreement, slower
- Better for larger scale problems
- Fewer frameworks may be more efficient

- Asian participation in global air pollution frameworks should be strengthened (e.g. GAPF, HTAP, etc.)

Asian or East Asian LRTAP Option - Main Elements

Key Components	Sub-options	Suggestions
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal format (Framework/protocol?) Legally binding or not? Voluntary (with reporting)) • Secretariat (UNEP, UNESCAP, RRC.AP?) • Funding (Voluntary? Mandatory? UN Scale of Contributions?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary at start • Stepwise approach?
Geographic scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which subregions? NEA+SEA? S. Asia? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 subregions
Pollutant scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multipollutant & flexible • Consider: climate, DSS, metals? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need network center
Science panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope, organization, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to network center?
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope, coordination? • EMEP structure? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest EMEP structure?
Modeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint model? Network center? • Review existing ones (science panel)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building needed for some
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope? • Organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important for some countries
Reduction strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile existing measures • First voluntary, with mandatory reporting • Later, legally binding if agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary at start • Report & compile existing ones

Northeast Asia LRTAP Option

Additional considerations regarding geographic scope

- ❑ Rationale: fewer countries to negotiate; transboundary problems more severe
- ❑ NEASPEC sub-option
 - Maybe better for including Russia
 - Mongolia emerging as major emitter
 - DSS (Yellow Sand) is a key issue, could be integrated.
 - Use environment as vanguard of détente (same as LRTAP/cold war)
 - North Korean air pollution could get quickly and significantly worse if détente occurs unexpectedly and the economy develops rapidly. Easier for NK to join before more economic development occurs.
- ❑ TEMM sub-option
 - Institutionalization is relatively advanced, easy to use (convenient for environment ministries)
 - May be difficult to include other countries as necessary



Option to Merge Existing Frameworks: EANET & LTP

□ Main benefits

- Reduce burden of maintaining and participating in 2 separate networks
- Already proposed by Korea (politically feasible?)

□ Merging Procedure

- Needs decision by all members of EANET & LTP (not just Japan & Korea)
- Korea & Japan could make joint proposal

□ Political analysis

- Key issue is geographic scope. Without LTP, there is no major Northeast Asia framework with a broad focus on air pollution.
- Key issue is not the substance/details. Countries can simply decide to combine/reorganize monitoring, modeling. Existing overlap & duplication
- Name change is required. Both LTP and EANET parts must be visible.
- Key point is Japan recognizes Korea as a partner (e.g. name change, joint proposal to other networks)
- Ok to encourage Korea to refine its proposal, but Korea already took the first step.

Recent Trends in International Discussions

Existing Frameworks

NEASPEC

- Completed review of existing frameworks (Russian study)

LTP

- Discussing new phase

EANET

- Will conduct assessment
- Will expand monitoring scope

Selected Countries' Perspectives

RUSSIA

- Initiated NEASPEC study
- Russian proposal suggests exploring NE Asia LRTAP-style

KOREA

- Official focus on new LTP phase
- LTP has funding and management issues
- Discouraged by limited results of international cooperation
- Position on international cooperation is in internal discussion

CHINA

- Not making new proposals, but not objecting either
- CRAES supports more research, publishing
- Published research is easier than official reports which need government approval
- Strengthening cooperation w/Southeast Asia & ASEAN

Way Forward: Decision Process

1. What are the priority air pollution problems?
 - To what extent do countries agree?
2. Is international cooperation necessary or desirable to solve these problems?
 - Are they transboundary? Collective action problem?
3. If so, what kind of cooperation is best?
 - Bilateral?
 - Informal/bottom up/ NGOs?
 - Multilateral intergovernmental framework/organization?
4. If an international framework is desirable, then:
 - Geographic scope?
 - Functions?
 - Legal status?
 - Secretariat?
 - Organizational structure
 - Financing?

