

The Working Group Meeting in 2021 Session 1 (WG2021-1)  
Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia  
20-22 April 2021, Virtual Meeting

## **REPORT OF THE SESSION (Revision)**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Working Group Meeting in 2021 Session 1 (WG2021-1) of the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) was organized virtually during 20-22 April 2021.
2. Representatives of the Participating Countries, namely Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russia, Thailand, and Viet Nam, participated in the meeting. Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the Secretariat and Asia Center for Air Pollution Research (ACAP), the Network Center (NC) for the EANET; Regional Resource Center for Asia and the Pacific, Asian Institute of Technology (RRC.AP/AIT) attended the meeting as well. The List of Participants is attached to this Report as Annex.

### **II. OPENING OF THE SESSION (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

3. Mr. Tomi Haryadi, Coordinator of the Secretariat for the EANET, welcomed all virtual meeting participants and facilitated the opening of the session as well as the election of officers. Subsequently, he invited Dr. Isabelle Louis, Deputy Regional Director, United Nations Environment Programme for Asia & the Pacific, to deliver the Welcome Remarks, and Dr. Shiro Hatakeyama, Director-General, Asia Center for Air Pollution Research, to deliver the Opening Remarks.
4. In her remarks, Dr. Louis welcomed all EANET Participating Countries and noted their leadership in the important decisions at the IG22, which included the expansion of the scope of the EANET Instrument, the approval of the Medium Term Plan for the EANET (2021-2025), and of the Work Programme and Budget for the EANET in 2021. She looked forward to the continued collective leadership of the Participating Countries to address both acid deposition and air pollution issues status in the region. She wished for successful discussions in the Working Group sessions.
5. In delivering the Opening Remarks, Dr. Shiro Hatakeyama highlighted that the WG2021-1 focuses on discussing the expansion of the scope of the EANET Instrument and finalizing future EANET activities as well as the arrangement for the Project Fund & Guidelines. He emphasized the importance of the meeting to determine the role and future activities of EANET. Furthermore, findings from the Questionnaire: Review of Efforts for Acid Deposition/Air Pollution in the

Participating Countries of EANET were shared and discussed at the meeting to help participants make informed considerations concerning EANET expansion of the scope. He ended his remarks by wishing all participants a fruitful and productive meeting.

### **III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

6. The Session elected Ms. Siwaporn Rungsiyanon, Director of Transboundary Air Pollution Subdivision Air Quality and Noise Management Division, Pollution Control Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand, as the Chairperson, Ms. Vizminda A. Osorio, Assistant Director, Environmental Management Bureau, Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, the Philippines, as Vice-Chairperson, and Dr. Batbayar Jadamba, Director Environmental Monitoring Division, National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring, Mongolia, as Rapporteur of the WG2021-1.

### **IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

7. The Session adopted the Provisional Agenda (EANET/WG2021-1/3/1), Annotated Provisional Agenda (EANET/WG2021-1/3/2), and Program Agenda (EANET/WG2021-1/3/3) of the Session proposed by the Secretariat and the NC.

### **V. CONSIDERATION OF THE WORKPLAN FOR EXPANSION OF SCOPE OF EANET AND EANET PROJECT FUND AND PROJECT GUIDELINE (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

8. The Secretariat presented the Workplan for Expansion of Scope of EANET and EANET Project Fund and Project Guideline (EANET/WG2021-1/4).
9. The key points of the presentation included:
  - The Workplan of the development of the Supplementary Document to the EANET Instrument and the EANET Project Fund documents is developed as a reference of activities and outputs timeline from the IG22 to IG23. It includes the schedule to prepare the documents to be submitted to WG2021-1, WG2021-2, the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Scientific Advisory Committee Meeting (SAC21) of EANET, and the IG23.
10. The Session was invited to review, discuss, make comments, and provide guidance and make recommendations to the Twenty-third Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting (IG23) on the EANET.
11. The major discussion included:

- i. It was suggested that the workplan should be drafted in accordance with the negotiation process and adhere to the principle of reaching a consensus, and adequate time to review the Draft Supplementary Document for the Participating Countries should be allocated.

12. The Chairperson thanked participants for their comments, guidance, recommendations, and closed Agenda item 4.

## **VI. CONSIDERATION OF EXPANSION OF SCOPE OF EANET (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

13. The Secretariat and the NC presented the following documents under this Agenda item:

- (1) Findings from the Questionnaire: Review of Efforts of EANET Participating Countries in Tackling Acid Deposition/Air Pollution Problems (EANET/WG2021-1/5/1), presented by the NC

The key points of the presentation included:

- The Findings from the Questionnaire contain information from the Participating Countries regarding national legal and operational arrangements of atmospheric environment matter. It also provides updates on countermeasures against air pollution in each country and the importance of cooperation within the EANET.

- (2) Consideration of Activities in Line with Expansion of Scope of EANET (EANET/WG2021-1/5/2), jointly presented by the Secretariat and the NC

The key points of the presentation included:

- Group activities and target substances were presented to show the current activities and possible future activities in the expanded scope concerning all substances of air pollution and Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCPs) related to climate change. The detailed categories of activities were explained to indicate the potential activities to be discussed based on the Questionnaire's results and table of grouped activities and target substances.

- (3) Consideration of Elements for Supplementary Document to the EANET Instrument: Addressing Air Pollution within EANET Framework (EANET/WG2021-1/5/3), presented by the Secretariat

The key points of the presentation included:

- The Elements for Supplementary Document was developed by following recommendations and Decisions of IG22, noting that some countries prefer the supplementary type option.
  - Following the request received from some National Focal Points (NFPs) through their submission of comments to the Secretariat, the Draft Text of Supplementary Document to EANET Instrument was prepared before the WG2021-1 by the Secretariat according to the proposed elements for Supplementary Document and by incorporating comments received from the NFPs, and presented at the meeting, along with comments received from the Participating Countries.
14. Japan and Russia shared their views in the meeting related to the Elements for Supplementary Document to EANET Instrument.

The key points of Japan's presentation included:

- Different categories of target substances (currently monitored or of interest to Participating Countries to monitor in the future, after the expansion of scope) were presented to initiate the discussion with other Participating Countries.
- It was suggested to simplify the Draft Text of Supplementary Document to EANET Instrument to include only the current items related to the Objective and Scope and the Final Provisions.
- It was proposed to add the list of target substances to the Supplementary Document to EANET Instrument. This list could, in the future, be modified with IG's approval.

The key points of Russia's presentation included:

- Concerns were raised on the format of the Draft Supplementary Document to EANET Instrument since it was looking too similar to the current Instrument and could be taken to replace the current Instrument, which is misleading.
- It was suggested to simplify the document and prepare a more practical document specifying the target substances and pollutants. The document could be based on scientific facts with carefully selected pollutants considering their impacts on the environment and cross-boundary fluxes. It could also include the possibility for Network Center branches to be developed at a national level (if fully financially supported by the Participating Countries) and explain clearly the additional voluntary budget allocation to the new activities.

15. The Participating Countries have expressed their opinion on the Draft Supplementary Document to EANET Instrument. The major discussion included:

- i. Several Participating Countries expressed the need to simplify and shorten the Draft Supplementary Document to EANET Instrument to include only a few key items to be agreed upon, such as the Background, Objectives, and Scope, and Target Substances, and the Final Provisions.
- ii. It was suggested that capacity-building activities should be prioritized in the expanded scope of EANET following Participating Countries' needs.
- iii. On the Findings of the Questionnaire, most countries agreed that there is still a need to find consensus on the target substances and depends on each countries' socio- and economic situation and needs.
- iv. It was also noted that some countries had not shared their opinions of the Questionnaire. Therefore, it was suggested to Secretariat and NC to coordinate with Participating Countries, who did not provide their responses, for their opinion on the Questionnaire.
- v. Myanmar shared the ambition to develop national air quality standards, which could only be developed with expanded support from EANET Participating Countries in improved monitoring infrastructures.
- vi. Russia supported a practical style of reducing items to meet the goal as suggested by some countries. The real purpose is to expand EANET activities so that additional funds can be introduced from outside rather than increasing the core budget.
- vii. It was suggested that the Supplementary Document should not require the signature from high-level national authorities, and it should be able to be adopted solely by IG decisions.
- viii. Responding to the Chairperson's request, Mr. Stadler Trengove, Principal Legal Officer, UNEP as the legal resource person of the meeting, clarified that the Elements and the first draft text of the Supplementary Document were prepared by referring to the Instrument structure. However, the countries could also work on simplified draft texts that fit with their ambition. Some key elements could be included in the simplified text of the Supplementary Document, such as the financial and technical aspects of the new activities.
- ix. It was suggested that the design of follow-up cooperation activities should still adhere to the principle of reaching a consensus although the findings of the questionnaire will play a role of great reference for the work of the EANET.
- x. Some participating countries suggested that the discussion of Expansion of Scope of EANET should be conducted step by step and members should firstly agree on expanded target substances and then design new activities accordingly.
- xi. It was suggested that considering the efficiency of negotiation process of Expansion of Scope of EANET, we could select some specific activities related to the expansion scope, e.g. some research activities, information exchange, easy to make a consensus, then add more activities gradually.
- xii. Some countries expressed that different countries may have different internal approval procedures, thus it is very difficult for these countries to adopt the supplementary document solely by IG decisions but without signature.

16. At the meeting, Japan presented their proposed simplified draft text of the Supplementary Document for the Participating Countries' review.

17. The major discussion included:

- i. It was also explained that the key for this document would be twofold: first, to define the substances to be included, and second for the Countries to agree on the format of this Supplement. In addition, it was informed that the Participating Countries' scope and ambition would be defined in the Supplementary Document through the use of the terminology, such as a Protocol or an Annex, that will determine the scope of the desired expansion.
- ii. It was suggested to further discuss the document's format, whether it could take the form of a Protocol, an Annex, a Technical Annex, etc.
- iii. Several countries have expressed the need to have more time to thoroughly analyze the table shared by Japan, showing the proposed target substances to be included as part of the Draft Supplementary Document.
- iv. The importance of reaching a consensus on each new substance was highlighted and to be added in line with the expanded scope of the EANET Instrument.
- v. It was also emphasized to follow a step-by-step process to clarify the Countries' intention and the focus of this document.
- vi. It was proposed that the Participating Countries send their written comments on Japan's proposal as soon as possible for the Secretariat to start working on the second draft and incorporate the Countries' comments and views.
- vii. A Participating Country expressed concerns about Article 7, as shown in the Draft prepared by Japan. According to the Instrument, all decisions should be made by reaching consensus and not through two-thirds of the Participating Countries.
- viii. It was suggested that the Supplementary Document should follow the rules established by the Instrument.

18. The Chairperson thanked participants for their comments and informed them that Agenda item 5 would be discussed again during the last day of the meeting.

## **VII. CONSIDERATION OF EANET PROJECT FUND AND PROJECT GUIDELINE (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

19. The Secretariat and the NC jointly presented the Consideration of EANET Project Fund and Project Guideline (EANET/WG2021-1/6)

20. The key points of the presentation included:

- EANET Project Fund and Project Guideline provides detailed information on the definition of Project Fund, project governance, establishment and management of Project Fund, project fundraising, roles in managing project activities, project cycle management of EANET project activities, and template of application forms.

21. The Session was invited to review, discuss, make comments, provide guidance, and make recommendations to the IG23 on the EANET.

22. The major discussion included:

- i. It was clarified that the EANET Project Fund and Project Guideline are internal documents. For fundraising purposes and communicating with external partners, a summarized document could be specifically prepared.
- ii. It was clarified that the EANET Project Fund and Project Guideline is a proposal document that will only be applicable once validated by IG. As for now, the Project Fund has not yet been approved, so non-core activities will be implemented following the current scope of the EANET, as long as the expansion was not approved. The activities to be included as the non-core activities will be discussed again during the next Working Group Meeting WG2021-2.
- iii. It was suggested to include a minimum number of countries that would be the beneficiaries of a project financed through the Project Fund.
- iv. It was suggested that Participating Countries, the Secretariat, and the NC should also serve as Project Lead and use the Project Fund.
- v. The Participating Countries are invited to share their comments in writing, and this agenda item will be further discussed at WG2021-2.

23. The Chairperson thanked participants for their comments and closed Agenda item 6.

#### **VIII. CONSIDERATION OF REVISION OF THE MEDIUM TERM PLAN (MTP) FOR THE EANET (2021-2025) (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

24. The Secretariat presented the Consideration of Revision of the Medium Term Plan (MTP) for the EANET (2021-2025) (EANET/WG2021-1/7)

25. The key points of the presentation included:

- The revision of MTP for the EANET (2021-2025) focuses on two aspects: 1) Follow-up discussion at IG22 regarding activities under objective 3, including some capacity-building activities to the MTP under objective 3. Promotion of Capacity Building; and 2) A proposed revision to the text of MTP (2021-2025) to be in line with the Decisions of IG22, expansion of the scope of EANET, and Project Fund and Project Guideline.

26. The Session was invited to review, discuss, make comments, provide guidance, and make recommendations to the IG23 on the EANET

27. The major discussion included:

- i. Some countries expressed their concern to modify the core budget of the MTP (2021-2025) by including the capacity-building activities in the core activities. Therefore, it was suggested to keep the capacity-building activities as part of the non-core activities.
- ii. Japan informed their consideration to provide an additional budget to the capacity building activities as part of the non-core budget and encouraged other Participating Countries to do the same.
- iii. It is suggested that the MTP for the EANET (2021-2025) should not be revised until participating countries reach a final agreement on expanded target substances and new activities.

28. The Chairperson thanked participants for their comments and closed Agenda item 7.

#### **IX. OTHERS: CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT SUMMARY OF 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF EANET (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

29. The NC presented the Consideration of the Draft Summary of the 20th Anniversary of EANET (EANET/WG2021-1/8).

30. The key points of the presentation included:

- The document summarizes the common understanding of the state of acid deposition problem gained through the EANET 20-years operations for further discussions and scientific inputs from SAC, to be finalized by IG23, with the view that such document would be useful to attract potential partners of EANET.

31. The Session was invited to review and make comments, provide guidance, and make recommendations to the IG23 on the EANET.

32. The major discussion included:

- i. Since the document targets policymakers, it was suggested that the content should be simple and clear, supported by scientific evidence. Additionally, it could provide positive expectations for policymakers for the future. The document aims to be an important outreach document, and it should be simple and attractive. All Participating Countries are encouraged to provide their perspective by submitting the written comments before the SAC21 meeting.



- ii. A Participating Country expressed some concerns regarding using the reports as sources and references in the document as the data from the report may not be reliable enough.
  - iii. It was suggested to focus mainly on the accomplishments of the EANET over the past twenty years and shorten the part on the future goals to be in line with the aim of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of EANET.
  - iv. It was suggested to launch the Summary of 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of EANET during the last day of the IG23.
33. The Chairperson thanked participants for their comments and closed Agenda item 8.

#### **X. WRAP-UP AND NEXT STEPS (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

34. The Chairperson invited the Session to discuss further the Draft Supplementary Document shared prepared by Japan as an extension of Agenda item 5.
35. The key points of the discussion included:
- i. A Participating Country informed that they would prefer to consult internally before providing any comments during a discussion on the Draft Supplementary document presented by Japan. Therefore, the Session agreed to provide written comments via email to the Secretariat on the simplified draft texts of the Supplementary Document by 22 May 2021.
  - ii. It was informed that the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of the Supplementary Document would be developed by accommodating inputs from Participating Countries and shared one month before the WG2021-2 in August 2021.
  - iii. It was mentioned that the proposed areas for expansion of the EANET are too broad as they include issues related to climate change which is not the focus of the EANET.
  - iv. A Participating Country shared concerns regarding the possible overlap of mandates concerning the target substances already monitored by other multilateral environmental agreements, such as the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and its Paris Agreement, etc. and mentioned that a careful selection of substances in the expanded scope of the EANET might be made to avoid duplication of mandates.
  - v. Requested by the Chairperson, the legal resource person clarified that although EANET is a regional initiative and not a multilateral environmental agreement, any possible technical overlap with other Conventions shall be considered while working on the Draft of the Supplementary Document to expand the scope of the EANET Instrument.

- vi. Participating Countries agreed to start working on the draft text shared by Japan, noting that the draft is still at the stage of a working document, and the content will be further reviewed.
  - vii. The Secretariat informed an explanatory memorandum attached to the Draft Annex Document to explain the history of the process, the state of play, and the summary of the countries' comments will be prepared along with the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft text of Supplementary Document.
36. The Chairperson thanked participants for their comments and informed them that Agenda item 5 discussed under this agenda item was closed.
37. The NC provided some responses to the questions addressed by the Participating Countries under agenda item 8. Key points included:
- i. The NC accepted all comments made from Participating Countries during the presentation of Agenda item 8.
  - ii. In addition to the previous questions, a Participating Country shared concerns that climate change is not included in the EANET's current scope and suggested removing it from the Draft Summary of 20th Anniversary of EANET working document's questions.
  - iii. All countries were invited to share their comments on the draft per writing.
  - iv. It was reminded regarding the question related to the possible change of name of EANET that this matter should be discussed further in another agenda item.
38. The Secretariat presented the Next Steps After WG2021-1 (EANET/WG2021-1/9). The Chairperson, with support from the Secretariat, facilitated the discussion. The Session was invited to review, discuss, make comments, provide guidance, and make recommendations to the IG23 on the EANET.
39. The major discussion points included:
- i. The Session agreed with the timeline of finalizing the Report of the Session as follows: 1) Circulation of the Draft Report of the Session: 28 April 2021; 2) Comments from Participating Countries: 12 May 2021; and 3) Final version Report of the Session: 16 May 2021.
  - ii. It was clarified that the third Draft Supplementary Document, as shown in the chart of Work Plan of the Next Steps after WG2021-1, would be shared with the NFPs before the SAC21 meeting for review and comments.
  - iii. The draft simplified text of Supplementary Document to EANET Instrument presented by Japan will be shared in MS Word format soon after the WG2021-1, allowing countries to review the document in track-changes mode.
  - iv. It was suggested to start working on the Work Programme and Budget for 2022 and be included as part of the discussion item of WG2021-2. The discussion

would highlight proposed non-core activities in 2022 to be submitted to the SAC21 and IG23.

40. The Chairperson thanked participants for their comments and closed Agenda item 9.

#### **XI. CLOSING OF THE SESSION (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

41. Dr. Isabelle Louis congratulated the participants for the successful meeting. She appreciated great contribution of participants to all agenda items. Dr. Louis believed the meeting's recommendations would be further discussed at the Working Group Meeting Session 2 in August 2021. And finally, the recommendations from the Working Group meetings will be submitted to the SAC21 and IG23.

42. The Session expressed its gratitude to the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, the Rapporteur, the participants, the representatives from international organizations, and resource persons for their efforts, cooperation, and contribution to the Session.

43. The Chairperson, appreciating the participants, the Secretariat, and the NC for their contributions, declared the Working Group Meeting in 2021 Session 1 (WG2021-1) of the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia officially closed.

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