

APFED Expert Meeting on the 3Rs in Asia

March 5, 2006

Tokyo, Japan

Draft Co-chairs' Summary

APFED Expert Meeting on the 3Rs in Asia was held in Tokyo, Japan on March 5, 2006 with a view to promoting multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on the 3Rs and providing useful inputs for the Senior Officials' Meeting on the 3Rs to be held in Tokyo from March 6 – 8, 2006.

Aside from the selected APFED (Asia Pacific Forum for Environment and Development) members, the meeting was attended by 40 experts and representatives including those from national governments, research institutes, private sector, NGOs and international organizations.

Four co-chairs were elected for the meeting, namely, Prof. Dr. Kim Myung-ja, former Environment Minister of the Republic of Korea, Dr. Tongroj Onchan, President of the Mekong Environment and Resources Institute, Dr. Cielito Habito, Professor and Director of the Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development of the Philippines, and Professor Itaru Yasui, Vice Rector of the United Nations University. They facilitated the discussions based on the presentations made by the participants as outlined in the Meeting program (Annex 1).

This Co-chairs' Summary is intended to reflect the thrust of discussions highlighting key issues, finding and recommendations that emerged at the Meeting.

1. 3R Initiative Implementation in Asia and the Pacific

A number of driving forces compel countries to reduce waste and promote the 3Rs, including the increasing cost of waste disposal, limited space for landfills, a need to reduce dioxin emissions and greenhouse gases, and enhanced public awareness. The policies for promoting the 3Rs or the circular economy will become increasingly important as countries expand their economies.

While waste generation is still on the rise in many countries, some of them have succeeded in reversing the increase in waste generation and raising the recycling ratio by identifying the convergence of economic and environmental benefits. Wastes range widely from country to country and span the entire spectrum from containers and packages, electronic appliances, construction materials, food wastes, end-of-life vehicles, clinical wastes, and agricultural wastes. National strategies, policy instruments, and pilot programmes have in some countries shown positive effects.

Policy measures

- (1) Basic laws, action plans, and master plans for promoting the 3Rs,
- (2) Sector-specific regulatory measures (laws for recycling various categories of products, hazardous substance control, dumping prohibitions and landfill controls),
- (3) Laws on green purchasing,
- (4) Decentralization of waste management and 3R promotion,
- (5) Initiatives by local authorities, including community-based initiatives,
- (6) Promotion of EPR (Extended producer responsibility),
- (7) City planning for a circular society (e.g., eco-towns, eco-industrial parks, craft villages),

Institutional arrangements

- (8) Institutional capacity development of governmental agencies and non-governmental/civil society organizations,

- (9) Inter-agency collaboration (horizontally or vertically, especially between the Ministry of the Environment and other ministries),

Market-based measures

- (10) Waste disposal charges and collection fees, whether paid at time of purchase or at time of disposal,
- (11) Deposit and refund schemes,
- (12) Privatization of the waste management and recycling sectors,
- (13) Programs for promoting sound waste management and disposal,

Voluntary actions

- (14) Voluntary agreements and initiatives of producers and users for promoting the 3Rs (Design for Environment/Recycling, product certificates, and other collaboration),
- (15) Rating/labelling corporations based on level of compliance with waste management, environmental standards, and support for recycling,
- (16) Centralized composting systems,
- (17) Promotion of green supply chains and compliance with regulations governing export markets, such as those of the European Union,

Partnership building and stakeholder involvement

- (18) Public-private partnership on 3Rs,
- (19) Sharing information on good practices,
- (20) Award programs for good practices,
- (21) Awareness raising and education programs (national recycling day and school/public education), and
- (22) Dialogue and networking forums for multi-stakeholders.

In promoting 3R implementation and sound waste/material management, there are various challenges that exist in many countries, including:

- (1) Mainstreaming the 3Rs in development policy,
- (2) Policy coherence (incineration vs. atmospheric pollutant emission controls),
- (3) Phasing out unsustainable schemes,
- (4) Enhancing institutional and community capacities for segregating waste and recyclables
- (5) Cost/burden sharing by producers and consumers (EPR vs. treatment and disposal charges to be paid by consumers),
- (6) Monitoring capacity and data availability,
- (7) Accessing information on 3R issues,
- (8) Securing human resources such as those in public administration and recycling/e-waste management sectors,
- (9) Financing mechanisms and financial resources,
- (10) Reducing public reluctance to purchase recycled or reused goods, and
- (11) Enhancing understanding on the internalization of environmental costs.

2. International Cooperation for Promoting the 3Rs in Asia

Various international agencies and bodies have been supporting programs and activities conducive to promoting the 3Rs.

Secretariat of the Basel Convention

The Basel Convention contributes to the promotion of the 3Rs through application of environmentally-sound management of hazardous and other wastes. International cooperation for promoting the 3Rs in Asia under the Basel Convention is implemented by partnership programs focusing on integrated management and the life-cycle approach. A number of initiatives now undertaken to promote environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes in Asia include (1) 2005-2006 Global Partnership Programme on e-Waste, (2) Partnership Programme on Environmentally Sound Management of Electronic and Electrical Wastes in Asia and the Pacific, and (3) Mobile Phone Partnership Initiative.

UNEP

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in close collaboration with other partners, promotes various initiatives relevant to the 3Rs including, for instance, the organization of sub-regional policy dialogues, the development of sub-regional/national strategies and information management and sharing systems.

UNCRD

The United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) plans to enhance its 3R-related portfolio by assisting selected countries in the region to develop national strategies, and to implement pilot projects in collaboration with national and international partners.

ESCAP

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) promotes Green Growth aiming at, *inter alia*, the improvement of *in* order to improve eco-efficiency of economic development patterns. ESCAP conducts and promotes (1) analytical work on consumption patterns, and (2) regional policy dialogue, (3) the Seoul Initiative for Green Growth, and (4) the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment.

ADB

Among other initiatives, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) supports dialogues, a knowledge hub, pilot project on the 3Rs, and environment investment for projects such as, urban solid waste management including sanitary landfills, cleaner production, efficient water management, energy efficiency and CDM enabling the generation of carbon credits.

3. Promoting the 3Rs in Asia

A number of recommendations have been made to promote 3R implementation in Asia, including:

Policy measures

- (1) Mainstreaming 3R policies and integrated and life-cycle approaches through relevant policy development, adoption, information sharing, and fiscal support,
- (2) Establishing concrete numerical targets, for instance, on the improvement of recycling ratios,
- (3) Developing 3R policies capitalizing on comparative advantages among countries/communities (e.g., technological capacity, labor availability, access to markets),
- (4) Addressing both downstream waste management and upstream cleaner production, taking into account comprehensive material flows,
- (5) Linking the 3Rs to poverty reduction/alternative livelihood development,

Institutional arrangements

- (6) Strengthening institutional capacities for 3R implementation including those for

- monitoring, data collection and assessment,
- (7) Promoting decentralization,
- (8) Coordinating policies both horizontally (e.g., between the ministries in charge of environmental and industrial policies) and vertically,

Market-based measures

- (9) Cultivating the perception of 3R-related business practices as business opportunities,
- (10) Promoting economic instruments (fees, surcharges, carbon credits, etc.) more widely and more effectively,
- (11) Optimizing the level of charges to be levied on consumers for waste disposal/recyclables
- (12) Developing mechanisms suitable to the socio-economic conditions particular to countries and communities (e.g., prior payment of cost of treatment and disposal vs. end-of-life payment),
- (13) Integrating the informal sector into recycling systems,
- (14) Creating policy frameworks which enable emerging recycling/eco-business,
- (15) Making currently unmarketable wastes into marketable ones through the remediation of market deficiencies and treatment capacity insufficiencies

Research and technology development

- (16) Bolstering research and development on policies, field implementation and technological application for promoting the 3Rs,

Partnership building and stakeholder involvement

- (17) Promoting holistic viewpoints and integrated approaches among stakeholders with interest in particular aspects of 3R-related issues (e.g., waste reduction, reuse of materials, environmental education, community development) by identifying mutual benefits (benefits for local communities, the global environment, and the private sector),
- (18) Facilitating access to information on the 3Rs,
- (19) Bolstering human resource development,
- (20) Linking community development with the support of local communities and stakeholders,

International collaboration

- (21) Developing a guideline for the Asia region that promotes the harmonization of waste and recyclables categorization and procedures for trading/treatment,
- (22) Establishing a regional market for recyclables, including hazardous wastes, with transparency and traceability,
- (23) Promoting public-private, civil society, and other partnerships internationally,
- (24) Fostering 3R-related collaboration between exporting and importing countries, including in free trade agreements (FTAs),
- (25) Facilitating the exchange of information and experiences among stakeholders at the regional and international levels, with knowledge hubs supporting dissemination of information including the outcome of research, and
- (26) Promoting MEA implementation to facilitate policy processes on environmentally-sound waste/material management, information disclosure, policy harmonization, and capacity development.