

Expert Group Meeting on Green Economy for Sustainable Development

Goals: National Implementation of Low Carbon Development

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Good morning everyone.

It is my pleasure to welcome you all at this beautiful Island Jeju.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to governor Won Hee-ryong first. With his flagship project known as ‘Carbon Free Island 2030’, which is also known as Jeju Green Big Bang. Jeju is now becoming the heart of the sustainable future of Korea.

Governor Won has announced that Jeju is going to replace all the vehicles with electric vehicles and make all the electricity with renewables by 2030. During the past three years, there have been meaningful progresses; from hundred EVs to more than 10,000 EVs, from around 6% renewable penetration rate up to 14% now. That is why I believe Jeju will be the future of the sustainable future of Korea by encompassing energy, mobility, and other industries.

Moreover, Jeju has also been known as the place of peace. In this context I welcome governor’s proposal to host a historic meeting between President Trump of the U.S. and Kim Jung Eun, the North Korean leader. If it works, I believe Jeju would be the fittest venue for the summit.

And then, my special thanks go to Mr. Yoon Jong-Soo, a head of UNOSD. When he was a vice-minister of the ministry of Environment, I had very fond memories working with him. With him, we worked for the legislation of carbon emission trading scheme and for hosting the secretariat of Green Climate Fund together. I really appreciate his contributions to the Korean public.

I am also grateful for Mr. Kim Suk-Woo, a chairman of Seoul International Law Academy and Professor Chung Suh-Yong, director of CSDLAP.

And I also would like to express my thanks to Jung Eun-Hae of UNOSD, Kweon Sung-Yeon of Coalition of Our Common Future along with all the staffs for organizing this meeting. Last but not least I thank and welcome all the experts from all around the world making this meeting possible.

Well, I really love the idea of Sustainable Development.

I believe Sustainable Development has many faces. As Jeffery Sachs says, Sustainable Development can be understood as a theory or an analytical framework. For that, you need to integrate the knowledge about global economy, society and the physical environment.

Sustainable Development is also about normative prescription. It is about the movement. It is about the objective. That is why we have 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Another face of Sustainable Development is the process itself. That's why so many stakeholders and countries had been involved to produce this important consensus on Sustainable Development Goals. But the problem is, that Sustainable Development Goals are too good to be realized. Because it is too broad.

The natures of Sustainable Development Goals are cross cutting, cross borders, and interdisciplinary. So, we need to focus on something that can trigger to realize these 17 goals in more synergic and effective ways, which would bring about strategic consequences.

In this context, I believe Green Economy, or Korean version Green Growth, is a strategic pathway to realize Sustainable Development Goals. Green Economy has a lot of things to do with Sustainable Development Goals. It has something to do with energy, water and food. It has something to do with health and life. It has something to do with sustainable infrastructure and innovation.

With great degree of linkage, it touches almost every aspect of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. So, if we do well with Green Economy, if we do well with Green Growth, we will be able to contribute a lot in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals. And that's why today's expert group meeting on Green Economy is so important. I really hope this important meeting evolves into a solid epistemic community for our sustainable future.

It is my great wish, through these ongoing efforts, we could contribute to better and strong governance structure to overcome short-termism, one of the biggest obstacles to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. We, as epistemic community, should encourage long term thinking and practices. We should encourage cross border cooperation as Sustainable Development Goals will be best met at global levels.

Again, I thank all of you for arranging this wonderful meeting. Let me conclude my remark by quoting the title of an article I recently read. It's about the interconnection between CO₂ and Sustainable Development Goals and the title is "United they Stand, Divided they Fall". So, let us make good coalition between Green Economy and Sustainable Development Goals for our common future.

Thank you.