



Proposal for

Asia Pacific Greens Federation (APGF)

Position Paper on Climate Change

(Final Draft, May 6. 2015, by ECOXIA International)

Preamble

In recent years, we, the people who live in the Asia Pacific Region, have far more often and more seriously suffered from severe climate disasters than we did in the last decades. Such severe climate disasters include huge typhoons and cyclones, river and coastal floods, heavy intensive rainfalls, cold and heat waves, forest fires, droughts and desertification ——— In the first decade of the third millennium alone, we saw that several huge typhoons or cyclones were born and developing, attacking the Philippines, Vanuatu and other Southern and Eastern Asian countries, which caused severe damage on the land and to the people.* ¹⁾

Islands countries in the Pacific and Indian Ocean such as Tuvalu, Kiribati and the Maldives are seriously in danger of submergence beneath the sea. Global warming also caused vanishing glaciers and huge river floods in the Himalaya region, and triggered more frequent forest fires in Australia, swallowing unprecedented vast areas. It is clear that more and more people are killed or injured by climate disasters every year.

According to the recent report by Asian Development Bank (ADB), the economic loss of climate disasters could reach maximum 12.7 percent in Pacific region, 9 percent in South Asia ^{*2)} of annual GDP by the year 2100, and it could require maximum 775 million US dollars for Pacific, 170 billion dollars for South Asia per year until 2050.

However, any efforts by our government, regional or interregional sectors are still not sufficient to avoid continuous actual damages and economic losses by climate disasters. Therefore, we Greens in Asia Pacific region immediately need to act by ourselves as well as ask all the sectors to cope with climate crisis ----- request our own government urgently to introduce and implement effective counter-policies against climate change, require industries and transportation sector to make maximum efforts to reduce their own GHG emissions, and promote people as consumers and investors to select carbon-neutral products, enterprises and services.

Binding Targets and Global Framework

The IPCC's 5th Assessment Reports (2013) warned that the concentration of greenhouse gas (GHG) shall be over 450ppm by 2030, maximum 1300ppm by 2100, then the average temperature could possibly gain 3.7 to 4.8 degrees Celsius in comparison with pre-industrial era, if we did not make any more efforts to reduce GHG emissions. To achieve this, we should reduce GHG emissions by 40 to 70 percent from the 2010 level by 2050, in order to limit global temperature rise under 2 degrees Celsius.

So, we Greens take account of this latest scientific research results, and work on our government and citizen to campaign at all levels (local, regional, national, interregional) and make all efforts to support establishment of the most strict and ambitious binding targets for each nation as well as effective global common framework for reducing GHG emissions after 2020 in COP21 (Paris, December 2015). Above all, we demand that every governmental sector should check and calculate annual cumulative carbon budget, which are mostly associated with acceleration of global warming. *3)

In particular, we Greens from the countries with high levels of emissions per capita such as Japan, India, South Korea, Australia or Taiwan should also call on their own citizens to do campaign so as to help promote effective ways to reduce emissions. Citizens of these countries have benefited much from industrialization and economic development, so they should take the greatest responsibility for the climate impacts and should be mostly conscious of the urgent need of changing their lifestyles and sources of livelihood.

Mitigation Policies

We Greens in Asia Pacific region will prioritise the following principles:

1-1. We will demand that all public and private sectors such as industry, energy, transportation, commercial and domestic, should promote radical energy reduction and save efficient energy consumption. We will welcome carbon taxation policy as an efficient way to promote energy saving. We will also articulate the importance of energy saving at a community level. For example, extension and development of energy-saving houses and buildings under strong financial and technical support by public sectors are also an effective way of energy reduction and energy efficiency. Promoting equipment of co-generation system should be made available as an effective way of energy saving for all kinds of office buildings, factories, power plants and individual household.

1-2. Sustainable mobility is absolutely necessary for city planning to avoid increase of carbon emissions. We must reduce or restrict daily or frequent use of mobility from fossil fuels. Therefore, we will strongly recommend and ask city or local government to develop public transportation network rapidly to help expand sustainable and carbon-free city policies based on TDM (Transportation Demand Management), such as road pricing tax (congestion charge), park and ride system, rapid extension of cycling roads, charging stations for electric and hydro-power vehicles.

1-3. We will also demand that governments, industries and financing institutions should make active commitments to the renewable energy by supporting the projects with reduction mechanism and compensating for each project's climate impact. We will promote a specific campaign to convert the entire region to renewable energy, adopt and introduce a best-efficient energy-mixing policy among solar and wind power, geothermal, biomass, and micro-hydropower, tidal or wave power, OTEC, or hydro-technology based on renewable energy resources. In spreading renewable energy power, we Greens will recommend and prioritise smaller, de-centralised power supply system established by local communities than huge power stations invested by large industries.

1-4. We will reject development of waste incineration power as well as nuclear power as the means of GHG emissions reduction. We will not expect nor depend on natural energy resources from fossil fuels, including such as shale gas or oil, which caused fracking pollution all over the world, or methane-hydrate. We Greens do not prioritise nor depend largely on new innovations such as CCS (Carbon Capture and Storage) or IGCC (Integrated coal Gasification Combined Cycle) because these ways of technology cannot lead a radical solution to the widespread of our sustainable energy use and consumption. We will not adopt bio-ethanol or bio-diesel fuel (BDF) as a means of “clean energy” which might lead to destruction of rainforests.

1-5. We will welcome a substantial way of reducing GHG emissions and do not prioritise numerical management of emissions reduction such as carbon offset, emission trading system or CDM (Clean Development Mechanism). This is because the latter ones have not produced enough effective achievements to reduce “actual” emissions reduction in many countries after their introduction.

1-6. We will ask all producers or makers to strictly observe the Polluter-Pays Principle (PPP) or extended producer responsibility (EPR) that manufacturers are liable for all the emissions throughout the process (life-cycle) of their production. In such cases, we should always respect “common but differentiate responsibility”, precisely we should differentiate the burden between large and small emission-producing countries as well as industries.

1-7. We will work on every kind of industry to implement CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) into their daily production activities. At the same time, all financial business and investors should consider SRI (Social Responsibility Investment) such as eco-funds, sustainability-funds in their activities. In our consumption of food, water, paper or other daily necessities, or in establishing our infrastructure, we should always consider the amount of ecological footprints, so ask people to make efforts to reduce food-mirage or campaign for reducing as much waste as possible, according to the “3R principles” (reduce, reuse, recycle).

1-8. We will also actively campaign to change our modern lifestyle that largely depends on huge production, transportation and consumption on a daily basis. The concept of materialism and consumerism has been one of the major sources of high carbon emission. This has also contributed to inequality and injustice in the

society between the rich and the poor.

1–9. We will work for sustainable management of forest and agriculture that contribute largely to reducing GHG emissions. We will endorse and respect principles of sustainable forest management adopted in Earth Summit 1992. We will work on maintaining multifunctionality of agriculture, strive for conservation of ecosystem and biodiversity in the forest and agricultural land in order to secure sources of absorption. We will also seek concrete solutions to reduce methane from livestock, such as reuse it for power and energy in the farm.

1–10. We should encourage to create “universal standard classification” among different industries, based on their level of emissions. Each class should pay graduated extra climate tax in the proportional value with its graduated class. The sum value should be managed and reallocated for all kinds of projects against climate change under the supervision of United Nation’s counterpart.

Adaptation Policies

We Greens in Asia Pacific region will prioritise the following principles:

2–1. We will assist poor and Island countries develop counter measures to deal with sea level rise, potential expansion of pandemics, or destruction of biodiversity and ecosystems in the forest and the sea, and inundation of settlements that result in environmental refugees caused by climate change. We will be sincerely conscious of negative impacts of desertification such as in China and Mongolia. We Greens advocate the international community drafting a convention on assistance of climate refugees.

2–2. We will strongly uphold Private Sector Initiative (PSI) to climate change adaptation and related technology. Especially we will recommend production and cultivation of new kind of crops (not from GMO origin) which are drought and flood tolerant and bearable to varied temperature. To save fresh water resources, reuse of gray water is also recommended.

2-3. We will continue to strongly oppose the logging of natural growth or primary forests and the expansion of monoculture plantations, including exploitation of rainforests especially in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, as well as old forests in Tasmania. Instead we will encourage replanting broadleaf trees that help avoid global warming by absorbing large amounts of CO₂.

2-4. Acceleration of melting and vanishing of mountain glaciers in Himalaya region is serious problem because it does mean increase of generating high risks of huge flood from collapse of glacial lakes as well as constant shortage of water resources in the lower areas, where one billion of people are living. So, we will give high priority to ask national and regional governments around the related region for urgent establishment of its counter-measures.

2-5. We will prioritise protection from extreme high risks by huge flood or other water disasters in South and Southeast Asia (Bangladesh, Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam etc.) Adaptation policies such as tree planting on coasts, building solid banks, breakwaters are strongly recommended in such areas. On the other hand, to avoid expanding desertification and droughts, it could be effective to implement tree planting, regulations of water use and development nearby desert area (Mongolia, China).

2-6. It is also important to introduce counter-measures to control temperature rise (heat island effect) in urban areas such as roof greening and spreading green zones. We will demand that local and city governments should urgently implement a greener and cool urban planning in parallel to traffic reduction. In the case, the concept of “sustainable spatial planning” should be recommended.

2-7. We ensure that it would be very significant to reinforce public awareness and education campaign for climate change and its risks around Asia Pacific region, particularly in local areas, where residents have little information nor education against climate change and its negative impacts.

2-8. We will also strongly campaign to make any future infrastructure more environmental-friendly, promoting low carbon and climate resilient development. To shift our environment, society and economy to a more sustainable one is the only means to achieve sustainable development and healthier ecosystem.

Notes

- * This guideline is based on “APGN Resolution on Climate Change”, adopted at the 1st APGN (Asia Pacific Greens Network) conference (Kyoto, 2005) and its revision “Taipei Accord: APGN Resolution on Climate Change and Renewable Energy”, adopted at the 2nd APGN conference (Taipei, 2010).
- 1) Particularly, enormous damage over the Philippines by huge typhoon Haiyan (November, 2013) and by cyclone Pam over Vanuatu (March, 2015) are still fresh in our memory.
- 2) South Asia --- includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka
- 3) The IPCC’s 5th Assessment Reports mentioned that it was paramount to consider the cumulative emissions budget (the total amount of tons of CO₂ emitted to the atmosphere). Precisely, in order to limit the temperature increase below 2°C requires global cumulative emissions between 2011 and 2100 to stay below 1010 G-tons of CO₂, while current annual emissions are approximately 36 G-tons CO₂.

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