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2013-2014 Plan of Action for Environmental Cooperation under the U.S.-Singapore Memorandum of Intent on Environmental Cooperation

On April 23, 2013, the Governments of the United States and the Republic of Singapore adopted this Plan of Action (POA) during a biennial meeting to review the status of cooperation under the United States-Singapore Memorandum of Intent (MOI) on Environmental Cooperation. This POA revises and updates a previous POA that covered the period 2011 through 2012. The U.S. and Singapore Governments (“the Governments”) intend to review progress toward achieving the goals contained in this Plan in all of their future consultations, in order to review the status of cooperation under the MOI. The Governments may update and amend the goals and activities set forth in this Plan in future consultations between the Governments on environmental cooperation. Implementation of project ideas described in this POA is subject to the availability of funds.

I. Background

The MOI identifies environmental issues of mutual interest to the Governments, and establishes a mechanism through which the Governments can pursue cooperative efforts in those areas. In it, the Governments also established their intent to engage in cooperative bilateral activities and, where appropriate, in regional activities to promote sustainable environmental policies and practices, as well as effective measures in support of sustainable development (MOI Section 2.1)

The MOI establishes the following types of activities as possible areas of cooperation between the Governments:

- a) Strengthening cooperative relationships so as to build institutional capacity to promote environmental management, including through compliance, enforcement, and performance;
- b) Exchanging information on environmental best practices of industry, including the application of cleaner processes and technologies and sustainable production practices;
- c) Exploring possible avenues for technological cooperation, including research and development and facilitating the transfer of new technologies on mutually agreed terms;
- d) Promoting improved environmental protection, including natural resources, through such mechanisms as: incentives for conserving, restoring, or enhancing the environment; energy efficiency and renewable energy; public/private partnerships; endangered species conservation; improved natural resource management; and environmental education.

II. Mutually Identified Goals

In accordance with the MOI, the Governments have identified the following goals to be pursued during the period 2013 through 2014, noting that bilateral and regional efforts may complement each other in many cases:

- 1) Encouraging the exchange of environmental best practices, use of innovative and climate friendly environmental technology and pollution management techniques, and development of climate modeling and adaptation frameworks.
- 2) Participating in regional initiatives on environmentally sustainable cities and sustainable management and trade in sustainably managed resources.
- 3) Further improving capacity to implement and enforce environmental laws, including further enhancing efforts of countries in the region to combat illegal trade in environmentally sensitive goods through bilateral and regional cooperative activities.

Below are some examples of activities related to each goal, taken from activities that are currently underway, in the planning stages, or proposed:

1) ***Encouraging the exchange of environmental best practices, use of innovative and climate friendly environmental technology and pollution management techniques, and development of climate modeling and adaptation frameworks.***

- Continue to conduct technical exchanges on studies and monitoring of air pollution.
- Continue to conduct technical exchanges, studies and initiatives on energy efficiency.
- Continue to conduct technical exchanges, information exchange, and capacity-building training on radiation protection and nuclear safety, focusing on, but not limited to, legislation, regulatory control, safety assessment, emergency planning/response, and waste management.
- Encourage use of innovative environmental technology in solid waste management by highlighting the effective use of such technology in Singapore and the United States and supporting efforts to draw potential investors in such technologies into the United States and Singapore.
- Explore technical exchanges on climate monitoring and modelling, climate risk assessment, and climate adaptation through the organisation of workshops.
- Conduct technical exchanges, continual studies and training workshops on pollution control management, including, for example, on response to marine oil spills.
- Develop a training framework for environmental compliance inspections.
- Undertake cooperative activities and open exchanges on water issues to be specified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on sustainable urban water management between Singapore's national water agency (PUB) and USEPA.
- Continue to develop the relationship between PUB, Singapore's national water agency, and the American Waterworks Association and Sandia National Laboratories.

2) ***Participating in regional initiatives on environmentally sustainable cities and sustainable management and trade in sustainably managed resources.***

- Continue to promote region-wide involvement in regional environmental compliance and enforcement networks, including to improve compliance with CITES and the Montreal Protocol.
- Continue to participate in regional initiatives on sustainable management and trade in sustainably managed resources.
- Continue to participate in regional initiatives and strategies on preventing the spread of potential alien invasive species.
- Continue to participate in ASEAN initiatives on environmentally sustainable cities.

3) ***Further improving capacity to implement and enforce environmental laws, including further enhancing efforts of countries in the region to combat illegal trade in environmentally sensitive goods through bilateral and regional cooperative activities:***

- Continue to participate in annual ASEAN-WEN meetings and other relevant ASEAN-WEN related workshops/seminars/meetings or activities such as joint operations to curb illegal trade in wildlife.
- Continue to improve collaboration to reduce consumer demand for illegally trafficked wildlife and related products through the creation of public awareness campaigns.
- Continue participation by Singapore in the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN).

Participate as appropriate in the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE)-Seaport Environmental Security Network (SESN).

- Conduct technical exchanges to facilitate a holistic approach involving, among other things, port state measures to combat, deter and eliminate illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing, and in particular to assist in implementing trade traceability systems for fish and fishery products.
- Hold bilateral or multilateral meeting(s) of officials from relevant government agencies to discuss, among other topics:
 - (i) The Governments' existing laws, policies and procedures relevant to trade (including transit and transshipment) of environmentally sensitive goods; and
 - (ii) Mechanisms for governmental cooperation and measures the Governments should take to improve the control of this trade.
- Explore avenues for legal cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of environmental-related crimes, including the prevention of pollution from ships in accordance with MARPOL 73/78;
- Encourage cooperation in criminal and civil enforcement of laws related to trade in environmentally sensitive goods, including cooperation in investigating violations, provided that such cooperative activities are in accordance with and subject to the respective domestic laws of each country. Explore technical exchanges on approaches to effective implementation and enforcement of environmental laws.
- Conduct a wildlife crime investigation course in Singapore.

III. BENCHMARKS

As the Governments more narrowly define cooperative programs, projects, and activities under the Plan, the Governments intend to identify performance indicators and benchmarks to measure appropriately the progress made in accomplishing or otherwise furthering the goals and objectives of such programs, projects and activities. The Governments also intend to facilitate public reporting of that progress. To the degree that the Governments use independent sources of monitoring data and evaluation to assess progress, they should collaborate with those other sources in identifying suitable performance indicators and benchmarks.

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Governments intend to seek and consider input from relevant local, regional, and international organizations, including, but not limited to, ASEAN and APEC, regarding relevant environmental conditions and indicators and views on the utility of cooperation under this Plan of Action. The Governments also intend to encourage public participation in identifying opportunities and implementing environmental collaboration, and to make information on activities carried out under the MOI available to the public on a regular basis. At their regular consultations under the MOI, the Governments plan to review benchmarks and indicators in order to evaluate progress made toward meeting the goals established under the Plan of Action.

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