

Korea and Thailand Hold 3rd Water Management Cooperation Joint Committee Meeting to Tackle Climate Crisis Together

- Discussions on artificial intelligence flood forecasting, smart leak management, and expanding renewable energy cooperation
- Promotion of a five-year joint cooperation plan to tackle the climate crisis between the two countries

The Ministry of Environment (Minister Kim Sungwhan) announced that it will hold the 3rd Korea-Thailand Water Management Cooperation Joint Committee meeting at the Sejong Government Complex on August 5.

The Korea-Thailand Water Management Cooperation Joint Committee (the Joint Committee) is being promoted as a follow-up to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on water management signed in Bangkok in September 2019 in the presence of the leaders of both countries. The 1st Joint Committee was held in October 2019, and the 2nd in August 2021. It has been resumed on the occasion of the 3rd Mekong-Korea International Water Forum held in March this year.

At this 3rd Joint Committee, Kim Hyo-jung, Director General of the Water Use Policy Bureau at the Ministry of Environment, along with domestic water management experts, will attend as the Korean delegation. Representing Thailand, Surasri Kidtimonton, Secretary-General of the Office of the National Water Resources, and 11 others including officials from Nakhon Ratchasima City, will participate.

In 2023, Thailand experienced a 28% decrease in rainfall compared to 2022 due to the impact of El Niño, and last year, the water level of the Chiang Mai River reached an all-time high as typhoons coincided with the rainy season, creating a situation that necessitates the establishment of water management measures in response to the climate crisis.

In addition, Thailand is promoting the digital and artificial intelligence (AI) sectors as new growth engines and is interested in digital water management to enhance climate resilience. Accordingly, there is growing interest in areas where Korean water companies have strengths, such as real-time water management monitoring, data management, and predictive analytics.

The Joint Committee will focus on three main areas for policy and technology exchange between the two countries: enhancing water disaster response capabilities using an AI-based flood forecasting system, smart leak reduction technology, and establishment and management of renewable energy systems in the water sector.

In addition, the two countries will share their water management policies and technological needs and discuss establishing a five-year cooperation plan to address the shared challenge of the climate crisis.

After the Joint Committee meeting, the Thai delegation will visit the Jungnang Sewage Treatment Center, Korea's first modern sewage treatment plant, which increases energy self-sufficiency by utilizing biogas extracted during the treatment process, and the Seongnam Water Purification Plant, which produces green hydrogen using a micro-hydropower-based electrolysis method.

Director General Kim Hyo-jung stated, "This Joint Committee is an opportunity to share Korea's strengths in AI-based flood forecasting, smart

water network management technology, and advanced sewage treatment technologies.” He added, “We plan to identify and promote customized cooperation projects that help solve local water issues in Thailand while facilitating the overseas expansion of Korean water companies.”