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Discussion on Climate, Energy, and Environmental Cooperation at Multilateral Forums such as the G20 and ASEAN+3

- Promoting the new government’s climate, energy, and environmental policies on the international stage through participation in the G20, ASEAN+3, and EAS EMM

The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE, Minister Kim Sungwhan) announced that from October 10 to 17, it will discuss ways to cooperate on global issues such as climate crisis response, energy transition, and energy security at the G20, ASEAN+3 Ministers on Energy Meeting (ASEAN+3), and East Asia Summit Ministers Meeting (EAS EMM) held consecutively in South Africa and Malaysia.

First, the MCEE plans to deepen cooperation with other countries through the G20 Energy Transition Ministerial Meeting (ETMM) held in Durban, South Africa, on October 10; the G20 Environment and Climate Ministerial Meeting held in Cape Town for two days starting October 16; and the ASEAN+3 and EAS EMM held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on October 17.

In the case of the G20 ministerial meetings, they are hosted by South Africa and attended by senior officials from member and invited countries^{*} as well as major international organizations^{**}, proceeding under the common theme of “Equality, Solidarity, and Sustainability” across sectors such as environment, climate, and energy.

^{*} (Member countries) Brazil (presidency), South Korea, the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, Italy, Russia, India, China, South Africa,

Mexico, Indonesia, Türkiye, Australia, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, the European Union (EU), and the African Union (AU)

(Invited countries) United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Nigeria, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain, Norway, Portugal, the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, and Switzerland

** United Nations (UN), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), World Bank (WB), and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), etc.

At the previously held G20 ETMM, participants emphasized the importance of energy security, ensuring energy affordability, improving energy access for vulnerable groups, a just and inclusive energy transition, sustainable industrialization based on clean technologies, and regional power integration. In addition, they established action plans, voluntary principles, and policy guidance tools to support these goals.

In particular, discussions focused on promoting stable, affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy systems to address energy inequality and related challenges in Africa and other developing regions.

As the chair of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), which will be held in Gyeongju from October 27 to November 1 this year, South Korea introduced its policy plans for a major shift centered on renewable energy and its “Energy Expressway” initiative, while expressing its commitment to a decarbonized green transformation through the development of carbon-neutral industries.

The upcoming G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Ministerial Meeting will focus on six priority areas: biodiversity; land degradation; climate change; chemicals and waste management; air quality; and the ocean, to discuss global environmental issues and ways to enhance international cooperation.

Based on the international standing demonstrated at the 5th Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) on the UN Plastic Treaty held

in Busan last November and the commitment to “beat plastic pollution” emphasized during this year’s World Environment Day celebrations in June, South Korea plans to call for support of the resolution at the seventh UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-7), which urges international cooperation to address waste-related issues.

In addition, the newly established MCEE, launched this October, plans to announce its intention to actively participate in the global response to the climate crisis by promoting integrated policies that encompass climate change, energy, and the environment.

Meanwhile, at the ASEAN+3* and EAS** EMM to be held on October 17, discussions will emphasize energy connectivity and energy resilience within the ASEAN and East Asian regions for sustainable prosperity, while also advancing cooperation on energy resilience, energy security, renewable energy transition and energy efficiency, and clean energy initiatives.

* Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Brunei (10 ASEAN countries), along with South Korea, China, and Japan

** (18 countries) 10 ASEAN member states, South Korea, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, India, the United States, and Russia

Member countries reached a consensus on simultaneously promoting energy security, decarbonization, and an inclusive transition, and plan to enhance energy resilience and sustainability within the ASEAN region by expanding technological and policy cooperation among South Korea, China, and Japan. In particular, they will discuss the need to develop power grid infrastructure utilizing submarine cables and interconnected power networks.

Through the four consecutive international conferences, the MCEE expressed its expectation that it will share the new government’s integrated policy direction in the fields of climate, energy, and environment with the international community, thereby strengthening global cooperation for responding to the climate crisis and promoting sustainable energy and environmental policies.

Jung Eun-hae, Director General for International Cooperation Bureau at the MCEE, stated, “We will continue to actively participate in major multilateral forums such as the G20 and ASEAN+3 to ensure that South Korea leads the global transition toward a decarbonized green civilization as an implementing nation for a sustainable future and a responsible member of the international community.”