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**G20 Environment Ministers Agree on Green Recovery from Covid-19**

◇ Environmentally sustainable and inclusive recovery is presented as a way forward to overcome the Covid-19 and climate crises in the G20 Environment Ministers Communiqué.

◇ Minister Cho, Myun-rae introduced Korea’s efforts to conserve terrestrial and marine ecosystem and reaffirmed its commitment on global green recovery with Korean Green New Deal

Minister of Environment Cho, Myung-rae attended the G20 Environment Ministers Meeting held virtually at 8 p.m. (local time) on September 16 as the head of Korean delegation.

The meeting was the first gathering of environment ministers solely dedicated to environmental discussions following the first joint energy and environment ministers meeting held last year. This year’s G20 Presidency, Saudi Arabia, led discussions on the agendas of its interest, focusing on land degradation and habitat loss prevention, coral reefs conservation, and marine litter reduction.

*\* G20 countries: Korea, U.S., Canada, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, Argentina, EU, Germany, U.K., France, Italy, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Russia, China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Australia*

In his national statement, Minister Cho explained Korea’s policies for ecosystem conservation to overcome the current climate, ecological, and human crises and introduced the Korean Green New Deal along with its vision of a carbon-neutral society. Minister also reaffirmed Korea’s commitment to international cooperation for green recovery.

Specifically, as part of Korea’s efforts to restore degraded ecosystems due to rapid industrialization and urbanization in the past, Minister Cho explained that Korea has designated land and marine protected areas, restored threatened and endangered species, and are restoring ecosystems in cities, forests and seas. He added that Korea has put in place policies for resource circulation and marine litter reduction.

He also shared some of the Korea’s contributions to the international: Korea has led the launch of the Peace Forest Initiative under the UNCCD as one of the means to promote peace and environmental conservation in cross-border areas; and Korea plans to host the 4th Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia-Pacific and the 7th International Marine Debris Conference in cooperation with UNEP.

Lastly, he highlighted that the Korean Green New Deal underpinned by green energy transition, climate-resilient infrastructure and green industry innovation under the vision of a carbon-neutral society will help usher in a sustainable post-pandemic future. He further reiterated Korea’s strong willingness and dedication to contribute to making green recovery work for all.

In closing session, the G20 ministers adopted the G20 Environment Ministers Communiqué, sharing their collective commitments to: environmentally sustainable and inclusive recovery to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic; addressing climate change; and reducing land degradation and conserving coral reefs.

The ministers also endorsed two new initiatives proposed by the Saudi Presidency, namely, Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Habitat Loss and the Global Coral Reef R&D Accelerator Platform, laying foundation for an enhanced conservation effort for terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

During the drafting sessions on the Communiqué, Korea helped build consensus among member countries on environmentally sustainable recovery by emphasizing the need for green recovery in overcoming the pandemic and climate crisis.

Korea also emphasized the importance of trust- and peace-building through cooperation between neighboring countries on ecosystem conservation and restoration and was incorporated in the Communiqué.

The G20 Environment Ministers Communiqué and the Initiatives adopted at this meeting will be incorporated in the Leaders’ Statement of the G20 Summit to be held on 21-22 November.

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