

# **THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE U.S.-CHINA JOINT COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION**

## **JOINT STATEMENT**

The Fifth Meeting of the U.S.-China Joint Committee on Environmental Cooperation was held by the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States and the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China, referred to as the "parties" hereafter, in the District of Columbia, on November 19, 2015.

EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy and MEP Minister Chen Jining co-chaired the meeting in accordance with the "Memorandum of Understanding Between the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States of America and the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China on Environmental Cooperation." The Ministers reviewed accomplishments in environmental protection, discussed emerging issues and opportunities and approved priorities and work plans for the next two years. Cooperation encompasses prevention and management of air, water and soil pollution; management of hazardous waste and solid waste, persistent organic pollutants and other toxic substances; environmental science, technology and standards; emergency response; environmental threats to human health and to ecosystems; ecosystems restoration and recovery; environmental policy and management; environmental education and public awareness; environmental-law development, implementation, compliance and enforcement.

From 2013-15 the parties initiated a model regional air-quality-management plan; tested technologies to reduce mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants; collaborated on the implementation of a compliance and enforcement capacity for heavy-duty-vehicle regulations in China; and established a multi-ministry green ports-and-vessels initiative. China's *Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Water Pollution* was issued in April 2015, a pilot on groundwater monitoring and remediation was established, and the third joint *Environmental Industries Forum* facilitated trade in water pollution control technologies. The parties exchanged governance experience on development of policies and standards as well as financing mechanisms for water quality protection. The parties exchanged information on risk management of perfluorinated chemicals and brominated flame retardants and

expertise on implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, including control of industrial atmospheric-mercury emissions; management, recycling and disposal of mercury-added products use; and phaseout of mercury from mercury-containing products. The parties exchanged relevant U.S. regulatory and technical reference materials on site remediation, specifically Superfund and revitalization of brownfields, which were translated into Chinese for broader public understanding. China revised its *Environmental Protection Law* and *Air Pollution Prevention and Control Law*, strengthening the management of environmental-quality objectives, strengthening mechanisms for accountability of government officials for achieving pollution-emission-reduction targets, enhancing coordination on environmental problems across provincial boundaries, controlling emissions from vessels, enhancing penalties for violations of environmental laws, promoting information disclosure and public participation and authorizing social organizations to bring environmental public-interest lawsuits against polluters.

Priorities for 2016-17 include prevention and control of air emissions from electricity generation, industrial sources, vehicles, off-road machinery, ports and vessels and sharing lessons learned in regional air-quality management with more regions in China; collaboration on water quality through guidelines for water-pollution prevention and control, economic policies, proposing revisions to the water-pollution prevention and control law and enhancing public participation; collaboration on chemical-risk management; collaboration on soil-pollution prevention and management and cleanup of contaminated sites; management of solid, hazardous and electronic waste; environmental-emergency response; collaboration on development, implementation and next-generation compliance of environmental laws, with emphasis on strengthening permitting systems as a tool for controlling pollution, enhancing transparency, reporting and monitoring, and ensuring compliance and effective enforcement; access and disclosure of environmental information; institution of environmental-information-statistics management and disclosure; strengthening penalty provisions; and enterprise compliance programs to complement enforcement.

The parties agreed to strengthen the collaboration on prevention and management of soil pollution, environmental-emergency response, green ports and vessels and environmental-data analytics/big data. The parties reaffirmed that successful collaboration on these priorities, enhancing environmental-management capacity and improving the environment will require close coordination among the working groups, coordination on crosscutting issues and communication with other relevant Ministries.

Minister Chen and his delegation expressed their appreciation to the EPA for organizing and hosting the meeting and for the warm hospitality extended to the participants. The parties intend to convene the next meeting in China.

Signed in the District of Columbia on November 19, 2015.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink on a white background. On the left is the signature of Gina McCarthy, which is a stylized cursive script. On the right is the signature of Chen Jining, which is written in Chinese characters (陈吉宁) in a cursive style. Both signatures are positioned above a horizontal line.

Gina McCarthy  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
of the United States of America

Chen Jining  
Minister  
Ministry of Environmental Protection  
of the People's Republic of China