

Suggestions of the State Council on Strengthening Major Activities of Environmental Protection

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The people's government of each province, autonomous region and municipality under the State Council, each ministry and commission of as well as institutions directly under the State Council:

Actively carrying out sustainable development strategy, our country puts environmental protection at important strategic position and continuously makes more efforts in addressing environmental problems over the past years with remarkable achievements. However, environmental protection situation is still very grave due to factors such as inappropriate industrial structure and distribution, low level of prevention and control of pollution and incomplete environmental supervision system. In order to carry out the outlook on scientific development, accelerate the transformation of economic globalization mode and uplift ecological civilization, the State Council puts forward the following suggestions on strengthening major activities of environmental protection:

I. Improve environmental protection supervision and management in an all round way

1. Strictly carry out EIA system. Key river basins, regional development and sector development plans as well as construction projects that shall carry out EIA according to law must strictly comply with EIA procedures and take the indicator of control the discharge of major pollutants as the prerequisite for the approval of environment impact statement of new or expansion projects. The process of environmental impact assessment should be open and transparent and fully solicit seek public opinion. Environmental protection authority should set up and improve joint mechanism for EIA of plans and EIA of construction projects. In case that any one commits environmental infringements such as beginning construction without the approval of its EIA statement, making major changes during construction without permission or putting into operation without environmental protection check and acceptance, they shall investigate according to law the responsibility of administrative department, relevant enterprise and individuals.

2. Continuously strengthen total reduction of discharge of major pollutants. Relevant authority should improve the statistics, monitoring and examination system for emission reduction and encourage all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities to carry out total amount control of typical pollutants. Relevant authority should carry out total amount control of discharge of COD and ammonia nitrogen of paper making, printing & dyeing and chemical industries. Relevant authorities should structure the construction of sewage treatment facilities, sludge treatment & disposal facilities, sewage recycling and reuse facilities and landfill leachate treatment facilities. They should upgrade and reform existing

sewage treatment plants; improve urban sewage collection network and facilitate the diversion of runoff and sewage flow. They should intensify supervision on the operation of urban sewage and garbage treatment facilities. They should carry out total amount control of SO₂ and NO_x emissions of power industry; continuously strengthen sulphur removal of coal-fueled power plants and remove nitrogen in coal-fueled power plants in an all round way. Newly built coal-fueled power generating units should establish desulphurization and denitrification facilities at the same time. They should carry out total amount control of SO₂ emission in iron and steel industry. They should enhance pollution control of SO₂ and NO_x of industries such as cement, petrochemical and coal chemical industries. Trial work on the total control of coal consumption will be conducted in key regions of joint prevention and control of air pollution. They should conduct the control of NO_x emissions from vehicles and ships. They should make strict requirements for environmental access and emission standard of major industries. They should facilitate emission reduction of agriculture and countryside and do well prevention and control of pollution from scaled livestock and fowl farms.

3. Intensify supervision on environmental enforcement. Environmental protection authorities should facilitate the development and amendment of relevant laws and regulations and provide complete and effective legal guarantee for environmental protection. It will improve law enforcement procedures, standardize law enforcement action and establish law enforcement responsibility system. They should strengthen routine supervision and law enforcement inspection on environmental protection. They should continuously carry out special environmental protection campaigns on cracking down enterprises that illegally discharge pollutants and ensure public health. They should carry out post-supervision on the implementation of environmental laws and regulations and corrections of environmental issues. They should set up whole-process environment supervision system for construction projects and rural and eco environment monitoring system. They should improve trans-administrative-region environment law enforcement cooperation mechanism and inter-department law enforcement mechanism. They should handle environmental pollution and ecological damage accidents according to law, and carry out supervision systems such as reject the approval of EIS of new construction projects at river basin, region and industry level due to overload of pollutants. Environmental protection authority should talk with the local government leaders failing to meet environmental protection target or with responsibility for key sudden environmental pollution accidents and order they to carry out correction measures. Environmental protection authorities should carry out producer extended responsibility system; deepen corporate environment supervisor system and carry out qualification management. They should set up and improve environmental protection reporting system, widely disclosure of relevant information and strengthen social supervision on environmental protection.

4. Effectively prevent environmental risk and properly handle sudden environmental accidents. Environmental protection authorities should improve environment risk management system dominated by prevention first, classify environment emergency response work, carry out dynamic and whole-process management, properly handle sudden environmental pollution accidents according to law and in a scientific way. Environmental protection authorities should establish environmental risk management and emergency response system with high efficiency and improve the capacity in environment emergency response monitoring. They should work out feasible program for environment emergency response; provide necessary emergency response relief substances and equipment; and strengthen the development of work forces for environment emergency response, technical support and disposal & disaster relief teams with the organization of regular training and exercises. They should conduct investigation and studies on the environment and health of key river basins and regions. They should exert all their strength for successful environment emergency response to pollution accidents, release accurate information in time to minimize life and property loss of the public and eco environment damages. Environmental protection authorities should improve the responsibility accountability system, urge enterprises to strictly implement its main responsibility for environmental security and enhance the responsibility of local governments for supervision on environmental security.

II. Make more efforts in addressing pre-eminent environmental issues affecting scientific development and threatening public health

5. Practically strengthen prevention and control of heavy metals pollution. Environmental protection authority should conduct collective control and management of the regions, industries and enterprises under key prevention and control program for heavy metal pollution. It should appropriately adjust the distribution of industrial enterprises involving heavy metals, ensure the safe protection distance and firmly ban any new, reform and expansion project that increase total discharge of heavy metal pollutants in key areas under prevention and control program for heavy metals pollution. Environmental protection authority should strengthen environment supervision on the enterprises relevant to heavy metals to ensure that pollution discharge of these enterprises meets national standard. Environmental protection authority should make more efforts in punishing the enterprises causing heavy metal pollution. They should adopt the measures to make corrections within a given period of time. In case of failure to meet the requirement, they will be shut down and banned according to law. Environmental protection authority should standardize recycling and treatment of waste electric and electronic products and develop waste recycling system and industrial parks for collective processing and treatment of wastes. It should actively and properly handle heavy metal pollution problems left in the past.

6. Carry out strict environmental management on chemicals. Environmental protection authority should sort out and assess the distribution of chemical projects and promote scientific planning and rational layout of construction projects of petroleum and chemical industries. It should investigate environmental risks of the enterprises that manufacture or do business of chemicals and carry out comprehensive environmental control of chemical enterprises at the bank of seas, rivers and lakes and enhance safety measures. The authority should take the assessment of environmental risks as important component for assessment of hazardous chemical projects, improve environment access conditions and standards for production of chemicals, identify and implement environmental safety protection distance of chemical construction projects in a scientific way. Environmental protection authority should phase out according to law chemicals with high toxicity and environmental hazards or hard to degrade and constrain the production and use of chemicals with high environmental risk. It should promote eco design of industrial products. It should improve whole-process environmental management of chemicals. In addition, it should strengthen supervision and management of key industries that discharge POPs. It should establish the life-long liability and accountability system and whole-process of administrative accountability system for chemical pollution accidents.

7. Ensure nuclear and radiation safety. With in-service nuclear facilities as focus of supervision, environmental protection authority should strengthen safety review and assessment of new nuclear facilities and nuclear facilities under expansion, and facilitate decommission of old nuclear facilities and environmental control of radioactive waste. Environmental protection authority should strengthen safety management and radiation protection of the production, transport and storage link of nuclear materials and radioactive articles, facilitate the environmental protection of uranium mine and associated radioactive mine. Environmental protection authority should enhance radiation environment management of radioactive sources, radioactive ray devices, high voltage transmission and power transfer and mobile telecommunications projects and so on. It should improve nuclear and radiation safety review method and improve radiation environment monitoring and supervision system; facilitate the development of national bases for research and development of the technologies for supervision on nuclear and radiation safety and develop the technical supporting platform for supervision.

8. Deepen comprehensive prevention and control of pollution in key areas. Environmental protection authorities should carry out strict zoning and administration of drinking water source protected areas; regularly analyze all items of water quality; and conduct environmental control, restoration and development projects in drinking water source areas in order to raise the meet-the-standard rate for water quality. Environmental protection authorities should investigate the pollution situation of groundwater, conduct risk

assessment and demonstration work on contamination remedy. Environmental protection authority should continuously facilitate the prevention and control of water pollution of key river basins and improve the examination mechanism. They should enhance control of water pollution of lakes such as Poyang Lake, Dongting Lake and Hongze Lake. They should make more efforts in protection of the lakes with good water quality or fragile ecology. They should ban any reclamation activities that may cause severe imbalance of ecology; strengthen pollution control of all rivers flowing into the seas and supervision on pollutant outlets along these rivers; focusing on the improvement of marine environment quality of the Bohai Sea and the estuaries of the Yangtze River, Yellow River and Pearl River. Environmental protection authority should amend Ambient Air Quality Standard, add more indicators for air pollutants and improve assessment method for environmental quality. Environmental protection authority should improve joint prevention and control mechanism for air pollution in major regions and conduct synergy control of several kinds of pollutants, strictly control the emissions of volatile organic compounds. Environmental protection authority should strengthen the control of odor, noise and smoke pollution from catering industry and make more efforts in environment-friendly treatment of urban garbage. Environmental protection authority should strengthen prevention and control of pollution by industrial solid waste, and intensify management of hazardous waste and medical waste. In case of redevelopment and utilization of contaminated sites, environmental assessment and environment-friendly treatment should be conducted. Environmental protection authority should carry out compulsory clean production examination in major enterprises. It should facilitate assessment of the environmental performance of polluting enterprises and conduct strict environmental protection check on listed companies. Environmental protection authority should carry out comprehensive control of urban environment and development of Model Cities on Environmental Protection.

9. Vigorously develop environmental industry. Environmental protection authority should give more policy supports to environmental industry with increase of its market demand. It should give incentives to establish development funds for environmental industry through multiple channels and expand the funding channels. It should carry out demonstration projects on research, development and application of applicable and advanced environmental technologies and on the industrialization of key environmental technologies, equipment and products. It should focus on the development of environmental service industry, including social running of environmental facilities, environmental consultancy, environmental supervision, design of engineering technologies and environmental certification and appraisal. Incentives should be given to use eco-labeled and eco-certificated products and products using green printing techniques. Key technologies for pollution reduction should be conquered, and major science and

technology projects should be carried out, such as National Water Pollution Control S&T Major Project. There should be statistics standards available for the environmental industry. The research on environmental criteria should be stepped up, and the national key laboratories for environmental protection and engineering technology centers should be established. More efforts should be made to open environmental disciplines and majors in higher educational institutions.

10. Accelerate environmental protection in the countryside. Environmental protection authority should introduce the target responsibility scheme for integrated rural environment treatment. The policy of “offering financial rewards as an incentive to control pollution in rural areas” and the policy of “rewards for subsidies” should be further implemented, more areas should be included in the integrated environmental treatment, and resources should be mobilized to treat villages and towns with prominent environmental problems, with the emphasis on treating contaminated soils and pollution to drinking water sources. The survey on soil environment should be continued, and the pilot projects on treatment and restoration of contaminated soil should be conducted. The environmental infrastructure and services should be extended to the countryside, and the construction of domestic garbage and wastewater treatment facilities there should be stepped up. The eco-agriculture and organic agriculture should be developed, and fertilizers, pesticides, and agricultural films should be applied in a science-based approach in order to substantially cut down non-point pollution. The incineration of stalks should be strictly banned, and more efforts should be made to turn agricultural waste into resources. The environmentally-sound treatment of human and livestock wastes and pesticide packages should be enhanced. More efforts should also be made to prevent and control pollution by industrial and mining companies in rural areas, and prevent the pollution from extending to countryside. The environmental statistics for agriculture and rural areas should be introduced.

11. Make more efforts in ecological conservation. The Environmental protection authority should define the environmental function zones, draw red lines for ecological conservation in regions with key ecological functions, and terrestrial and marine eco-sensitive and-fragile regions, and develop corresponding environmental standards and policies for the main function zones. Efforts should be made to step up the ecological conservation in the ecological barriers in Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, ecological barriers in Loess Plateau and Sichuan-Yunnan region, forest belts in Northeast China, sand shelters in North China, hilly and mountainous regions in South China, and major waters through the nation. The ecological restoration should be advanced, and the major ecosystems including key rivers and lakes should be rehabilitated. The biodiversity conservation should also be strengthened, and the biodiversity monitoring, evaluation and pre-warning

schemes, as well as the access and benefit sharing schemes for genetic resources should be set up, in order to effectively prevent the loss of species resources. The integrated management of nature reserves should be stepped up, and evaluation of the ecosystem conditions should be organized. More efforts should be made in the ecological conservation during the development of minerals, hydropower, and tourism resources, and in the construction of transportation infrastructures. The pilot projects on developing conservation culture should be facilitated, and eco-conservation model projects should be furthered.

III. Carrying out reforms and making innovative schemes and mechanisms for environmental protection

12. Keep on facilitating the historical transformations for environmental protection. It is imperative to keep protecting the environment during the development course and seeking development by protecting the environment. A mix of tools such as legal, economic, technical and administrative instruments if necessary should be employed and constantly improved for the purpose of protecting the environment. Reforms and innovation should be the driving force to explore a new path for environmental protection which has small costs, sound benefits, and low emissions and is sustainable. And the following schemes suited to Chinese national conditions should be established, including the macro strategies for environmental protection, comprehensive and effective pollution prevention and control schemes, sound environmental quality evaluation scheme, sound environmental protection regulations, policies, science and technology and standards, sound environmental management, enforcement and supervision schemes, and the social action scheme participated by all.

13. Carry out economic policies conducive to environmental protection. The environmental protection sector should be covered by the annual budgets of governments at all levels with increasing share. The funds for capacity building of environmental protection should be increased at a proper timing at each of the administrative levels. Moreover, more resources should be employed for the prevention and control of water pollution in key river basins, and the measures for the administration of the special funds earmarked for the same purpose should be perfected. The transfer payment scheme of the central budget should be improved, and more financial resources through transfer payment should be given to the environmental protection in the central and western regions, ethnic minority autonomous regions and key eco-function zones. The establishment of eco-compensation mechanism and the national special fund for eco-compensation should be sped up, and the coverage should be extended. The environmental tax-for-fee reform should be advanced and research should be under way on levying environmental protection taxes. Producers of car fuels that are up to next-phase emission standards

should enjoy preferential policies concerning consumption tax. The comprehensive catalogue for environmental protection should be compiled and improved. Work should be under way to adjust tariffs for products with high pollution and environmental risks. Companies that have conditions to issue bonds to finance environmental programs should be given supports to do so. More credit supports should be given to companies and projects in compliance with environmental requirements and credit loan principles. The scheme should be established for credit-based evaluation of environmental behaviors of companies. The environmental pollution liability insurance scheme should be improved, and pilot projects should be under way on the mandatory liability insurance for environmental pollution. The pricing policy regarding the electricity generated by power units which installed flue gas desulphurization facilities in coal-fired power plants should be strictly followed, and the pricing policy concerning the electricity generated by power units that installed denitrification facilities should be worked out. Suppliers of electricity generated by renewable energy, heat residues and garbage incineration should enjoy policy supports such as the priority to put such electricity on the power grid. Different electricity prices should be introduced for energy-intensive and highly polluting industries, and companies that are encouraged to engage in wastewater treatment, environmentally-sound treatment of sludge, desulphurization and denitrification in non-electricity sectors, and garbage treatment should enjoy policy preferences. The standards on collecting fees for the environmentally sound treatment of sludge, garbage and medical wastes should be perfected, and the reform on the collecting methods should be promoted. The pollution permit scheme should be introduced, and pilot projects should be conducted on the paid use and trading of emission rights. The national emission rights trading center should be set up, and the market for the trading should be developed.

14. Continuously improve the capacity in environmental protection. Efforts should be made to promote the standardization of environmental protection capacities in terms of environmental monitoring, supervision, publicity and information sharing. The network should be improved for automatic monitoring of key positions and sites under national monitoring program for urban air quality, key river basins, ground water and farm produce bases. Environmental protection authority should add more monitoring items and establish the national environmental monitoring network. The development and application of environmental satellites should be advanced, and the monitoring capacities using remote sense technology should be improved. More efforts should be made in the establishment, oversight, operation and maintenance of automatic monitoring system for pollution sources. The initiative for whole-nation environmental publicity and education should be launched, and the ranks of environmental volunteers should be fostered and expanded. Guidance and supports should be given to the public and NGOs to organize environmental activities. The capacity concerning environmental information, statistics and application should be

built up. The environmental information resource center should be established, and the research, development, and application of the internet of things in the fields such as automatic monitoring of pollution sources, real-time monitoring of environmental quality, and transportation of hazardous chemicals should be strengthened. The information sharing should be encouraged.

15. Improve environmental management system and work mechanisms. Environmental protection authority should work out the comprehensive decision-making mechanism for environmental protection work. The schemes and mechanisms for environmental monitoring and supervision should be perfected, and the function of the State on environmental oversight should be stepped up. The scheme for dual-management of leading officials in environmental protection departments should be carried on. Regions with conditions to conduct pilot projects on comprehensive reform of the environmental protection schemes should be given incentives to do so. Integrated with institutional reforms of local people's governments and of the townships, efforts should be made to explore the possibility of environmental supervision by regional environmental protection offices in cities that have subordinate districts, so as to improve the community-level environmental management schemes. The functions and ranks for nuclear and radiation safety supervision should be reinforced. And the medium-and long-term plan for the development of human resources for ecological conservation should be implemented.

16. Strengthening the leadership and performance evaluation for environmental protection work. Local people's governments at all levels should highlight the role of environmental protection in the general picture, put it on their top agenda, identify its goals and tasks, and perfect its policies and measures, and organize the implementation of national major environmental projects. The goals and indicators for developing conservation culture should be set out and incorporated into the performance evaluation of local people's governments at all levels. The evaluation results should be part of the comprehensive performance evaluation of the team of administration as well as of the leading officials, and an important basis for promoting and appointing officials, so that one veto for environmental protection should say no to their promotion and appointment. Regions failing to accomplish the environmental protection goals and tasks should be banned from access to new projects except for those intended for improvement of living standards, energy conservation and emissions reduction, and ecological conservation and infrastructure construction, and the leading officials concerned should be responsible.

Local areas and departments shall strengthen coordination and cooperation, be clearly aware of their responsibilities, division of labor, and schedules, and follow these opinions seriously. The Ministry of Environmental Protection shall work with other relevant

departments to step up the supervision and inspection on the implementation of this document and report to the State Council major situations if any.

The State Council

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