



Seoul, February 2020

Fine dust is a growing concern in the Republic of Korea; it is a major environmental risk to health, the quality of life, and the overall economy. Numerous domestic and international studies are quantifying these costs. In 2019, the Government passed emergency measures to tackle air pollution after record levels of fine dust blanketed the country. In the same year, the Government advocated for the United Nations to designate an “International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies” as a day to raise awareness about air pollution around the world, and to strengthen international cooperation and efforts to reduce pollution. The 74th Session of the United Nations adopted this Korea-led resolution by consensus of all the UN member states a resolution of designating the “International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies” as September 7.

Blue skies in the longer-term is inextricably linked to ambitious and bold climate action - net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, as a requirement to stay within an 1.5-degree Celsius increase in world temperatures. Maintaining average world temperatures is necessary to limit the likelihood of extreme climate patterns that will impact Korea’s society and economy. Long-term modelling shows that many of the decisions and actions needed to get us on track must be taken imminently – with next ten years coined the “decade of action”. It is not only technically possible with advances in technology; a net-zero future is critical for a prosperous economy, a resilient society, and a higher level of societal wellbeing. This will require transitions in energy, land, urban, infrastructure, and industrial systems – requiring both public and private action. However, Governments play a key role in removing direct and indirect fossil fuel subsidies, stopping support for fossil-fuel based energy projects, and removing regulatory and fiscal barriers that encourage business as usual.

In 2020, the Government of Korea will submit its revised, more ambitious, Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to support implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. A core component of the Paris Agreement is the *ratchet mechanism*. Also referred to as the *ambition mechanism*, this component of the Paris Agreement mandates that governments resubmit a new set of NDCs every five years, which are required to be more ambitious than the country’s previous set. Korea’s 2015 NDC proposed an economy-wide target to reduce GHG emissions by 37% below business-as-usual (BAU) emissions of 842 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e/year in 2030. However, Korea is one of the countries with the fastest growing emissions in the OECD.

States and companies around the world are setting net-zero targets through deep decarbonization and offsetting emissions that may be too difficult to eliminate. Countries that have already announced a net-zero target include Costa Rica, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. In December 2019, the European Union leaders agreed to cut the bloc’s emissions to net-zero by 2050. Many countries are also developing long-term climate strategies and enhanced climate commitments under the Paris Agreement this year. The push for net-zero emissions is poised to gain momentum in 2020 and could accelerate investment in carbon removal.

The Government’s third Energy Master Plan up to 2040 adopted in June 2019, together with the 2017 power sector plan for the period up to 2030, aims to increase the renewable electricity share to 20% by 2030 and 30–35% by 2040 - up from 3% in 2017. The Government has yet to commit to a complete phase-out of its coal-fired power plants. The Republic of Korea runs some 60 coal-fired power plants, contributing to the country’s worsening air quality. Moreover, government-owned financial institutions (K-Sure, KEXIM, KDB) are funding the construction of coal-fired power plants

<https://blueskiesandnetzero2050.org/>  
[http://gggi.org/site/assets/uploads/2020/02/Blue-Skies-NetZero-2050-Campaign-Brochure\\_KOR.pdf](http://gggi.org/site/assets/uploads/2020/02/Blue-Skies-NetZero-2050-Campaign-Brochure_KOR.pdf)



in less-developed countries, which puts the Republic of Korea among the largest public investors of overseas coal-fired power plants.

As a stepping-stone to COP26, Korea will host the Partnering for Global Goals and Green Growth (P4G) Summit on 29-30 June in Seoul. The Government will invite Heads of State, Heads of Government, and Ministers from developed and developing countries to accelerate, scale and implement innovative public private partnership to support the transition to a low carbon or green growth pathway. The eyes of the world will be on the Republic of Korea not only as a host of the Summit but to see whether it will step up its own climate ambition – one that will result in blue skies, achieve Net Zero, and stimulate the Korean economy and create a just transition.

We are inviting you to join our campaign – the Campaign for Blue Skies and Net Zero 2050 in the Republic of Korea – to demonstrate your support for the Government to announce a net zero emissions target by 2050. The Campaign aims to bring together business, labor, and civil society to speak around a common vision for Korean society and economy. This is necessary to influence government to announce an ambitious, enabling policy that business and industry society needs to deliver bold climate action. The Campaign will culminate with a Business and Civil Society Summit on June 28, the day preceding the P4G Summit, and will ask President Moon Jae-in to announce long-term strategy for Korea to become a net zero carbon emission country by 2050; a more ambitious five-year Nationally Determined Conditions target for the Paris Agreement in the lead up to COP26; and an end to Korean support for construction of coal-fired power plants internationally.

Our ask is for you to show your support

- Allowing us to list your organization / logo in Campaign communications;
- Organize one or more event under the overall banner of the campaign - using the Campaign branding; and
- Join the Business and Civil Society Summit on June 28, 2020, at COEX.

Organizations that are interested in joining the Campaign are invited to contact us at <mailto:blueskies@climatechangecenter.kr> sharing their organization's logo, and nominating a focal point for communication activities.

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