

---

# **SOUTH KOREAN PUBLIC, GREEN POLITICS, AND THE RELUCTANCE TO COOPERATE ON THE NORTHEAST ASIAN “YELLOW DUST” ISSUE**

---

*Jeremy Corbett*

*Yonsei University*

*Despite an increase in environmental disasters, regionalism in Northeast Asia is too weak to provide an appropriate response to environmental pollution. This paper uses the “yellow dust” issue to look at the underlying causes of a lack of action by the South Korean government to improve regionalism in Northeast Asia. It argues that although the government does rely on global institutions, it is reluctant to cooperate on the regional air pollution issue. Particularly, it focuses on the South Korean public as a central reason behind the South Korean government’s reluctance to take leadership in creating regional institutions necessary to mitigate climate problems. Due to the disinterest in environmentalism by the South Korean public and the lack of responsibility taken for climate issues, as seen with the “yellow dust” problem, there has not yet been a push for an increase in green politics. Although we do see Green Politics becoming part of the political discourse in South Korea, environmental responsibility needs to occur before Green Politics becomes embedded into the South Korean society. With a lack of true Green Politics, the region’s institutions combatting climate change will remain weak, and the reluctance will remain.*

Countries in the Northeast Asian region, despite considering climate change as a major threat, have failed to create regional institutions to meet the challenge. Unlike in Southeast Asia, where environmental policy is advanced through ASEAN, Northeast Asia lacks such an institution. As a result, there are few major contributions mitigating climatic effects in the region. The Asia Pacific region has a large population living along the coasts and six of the ten countries with the most at-risk populations are found there.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the threat to Northeast Asia can be considered especially acute. The majority

---

<sup>1</sup> Lorraine Elliott, “Environmental Regionalism: Moving in from the Policy Margins,” *The Pacific Review* 30, no. 6 (2017): 952-965.

of the progress in the Northeast Asian region has been through bilateral agreements, global institutions such as the United Nations, or unilaterally from the individual countries themselves. Governments have taken a more “step-by-step and practical approach” as well as the need of consensus before they take any action on climate change.<sup>2</sup> This can easily be seen when approaching the issue of yellow dust or sand in China, Mongolia, South Korea,<sup>3</sup> and Japan. While this issue has been on the radar for years, the actions taken have generally been weak and failed to yield major results. Between China, South Korea, and Japan, there is a major dilemma. Despite yellow sand originating from China, the Chinese government does not want to be solely responsible for the clean-up process. If Korea and Japan want this environmental problem resolved, they will need to commit to assuming part of the responsibility.

Japan experiences the least severe effects of the sand among the three countries involved, but it has been asked to provide the majority of the mitigation funds. Yet to the Japanese, it is not considered a national security threat.<sup>4</sup> Korea is stuck in a precarious position. It has less money available for aid compared to Japan, but also experiences the yellow sand in greater quantities. In Korea, the sand has a clear negative impact on the quality of life of the Korean population. Therefore, Korea needs stronger environmental leadership.

The Korean government is seemingly reluctant when it comes to tackling the transnational environmental issue of yellow sand—the main reason is due to asymmetric information between the state and the people. In economics, informational asymmetries are a major cause for market failure. This same concept can be applied to a population’s knowledge of the leading causes behind environmental problems and government’s failure to respond to them. Informational asymmetries help prevent protests and grassroots efforts for change. Democratic governments respond to the will of the people as people are the agents of change.

### Research Framework

Environmental institutionalism is weak or lacking entirely from the Asia Pacific region and when institutionalism exists, it is mainly under the guidance of international institutions rather than regional ones. However, the environment has become a more prominent issue in East Asian politics and discourse, demanding increased international cooperation. International environmental

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The term “South Korea” and “Korea” are hereinafter used interchangeably.

<sup>4</sup> Whasun Jho and Hyunjoon Lee, “The Structure and Political Dynamics of Regulating ‘Yellow Sand’ in Northeast Asia,” *Asian Perspective* 33, no. 2 (2009): 41-72.

cooperation could lead to added economic benefits—for example, by cooperating on environmental standards for automobiles and other technology, it could facilitate inter-regional trade.<sup>5</sup> Matching environmental regulations could remove a significant trade barrier.

Since the Lee Myung-bak administration (2008-2013), green politics first made its way into the national agenda.<sup>6</sup> As such, it is understood in Korea that the environment and drive toward mitigating the negative externalities of pollution are important. However, without environmentalism being a core aspect of the Korean lifestyle, it won't have the motive force necessary to really move the Korean government and lead to improved regionalism in Northeast Asia.<sup>7</sup> The power of the Korean people to move the government was especially prominent during the 2016-2017 President Park Geun-hye scandal and candlelight movement. What was observed was a population with democratic ideals stand together to push for the impeachment of a president embattled in corruption scandals. South Korea's democracy was able to embed itself culturally and emotionally, surpassing its institutional basis on relying directly on people power.<sup>8</sup> If environmentalism was able to consolidate itself into the South Korean culture as the democratic ideals that resonated during President Park's ouster, not only would consumption habits decrease, but the population would push the government for more action-based results. Hence, this research looks at variables preventing social action.

### ***Existing Research on East Asian Environmental Cooperation***

This section explores existing research and where cooperation in Northeast Asia is at today. It will also discuss underlying variables as to why the Korean government is reluctant toward cooperation with Northeast Asian nations on the issue.

When nation's leaders first decide to cooperate with others, it is most likely after having calculated a cost-benefit analysis of the cooperation.<sup>9</sup> The paradigm of coordinating multilateral cooperation must take into account the two level game played by domestic political leaders and the advancing

---

5 The World Bank, *Environment Strategy for the World Bank in the East Asia and Pacific Region* (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2005).

6 Duchel Shin, "Political Opportunity Structure and the Institutionalization of Green Movements in Korea: The Case of the Green Party," *Environmental Policy in South Korea: Problems and Perspectives* (Seoul: KAS Journal on Contemporary Korean Affairs, 2015), 7- 44.

7 Matthew A. Shapiro, "Regionalism's Challenge to the Pollution Haven Hypothesis: A Study of Northeast Asia and China," *The Pacific Review*, 27, no. 1 (2013): 27-47.

8 Sang-young Rhyu, "Catastrophe 2016 in South Korea: A Tale of Dynamic History and Resilient Democracy," 63rd EAF Policy Debate, (East Asia Foundation, 2016)

9 Michael Barnett and Raymond Duval, *Power in Global Governance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

complexity of increasing the number of participants.<sup>10</sup> Coordination most often occurs through bilateral or multilateral institutions or organizations. Furthermore, when it comes to environmental cooperation on transnational issues, the severity of the problem determines the level of cooperation.

China, Japan, and Korea all participate in “the big three”: the Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM), the North-east Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC), and the Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific (ECO-ASIA). They also are involved in multi-stakeholder, environmental cooperation NGOs: Atmosphere Action Network East Asia (AANE), the Northeast Asian Forest Forum (NEAFF), and ENVIROASIA. Korea is heavily involved with several climate change organizations and other environmental concerns. Environmental organizations have been multiplying in the region, yet much of their work is limited to the exchange of information. There are several reforestation NGOs and deals between countries working toward improving the yellow sand issue but with limited success.

The nature of environmental problems and the beliefs as to their causes make regional environmental cooperation in Northeast Asia difficult. First, in Southeast Asia cooperation through ASEAN and in Europe cooperation through the EU, regional cooperation is predicated upon a sense of common values associated with participation in the groups. The sense of common values is lacking in the Northeast Asian region. Second, one needs to take responsibility for a problem before taking action to mitigate it. With disasters like the Japanese Fukushima nuclear incident, it was evident that responsibility lay with Japan. With air pollution—a transnational concern—assigning responsibility is often more difficult. While the yellow sand does originate from China, that fact is not enough to mitigate the responsibility by the Korean government for air pollution in Korea. Therefore, the nature of environmental issues like yellow dust creates an added difficulty for cooperating on its mitigation. Without first establishing responsibility, the desire to provide financial assistance toward solving the problems is diminished.

There are two aspects of environmental issues that add to the challenges for cooperation with organizations. First, there are cross-boundary externalities such as air and water pollution. To tackle this, it requires several stakeholders to engage in policy dialogue and create mechanisms for collaboration.<sup>11</sup> This is problematic as stakeholders—particularly from different countries—have varying interests and values. The more stakeholders, the more difficult the coordination and as air pollution, particularly yellow dust, is transnational, many stakeholders are in the mix. The second major problem is the nature

---

10 Jho and Lee, “The Structure and Political Dynamics of Regulating ‘Yellow Sand’ in Northeast Asia.”

11 The World Bank, *Environment Strategy for the World Bank in the East Asia and Pacific Region*.

of environmentalism; it requires long-term thinking as opposed to short-term gain. In order for regional environmental cooperation to occur, it must be issue-specific and functional, as well as embedded into the civil society. Short-term concerns may be less likely to take precedent when society is behind the change.<sup>12</sup>

The economic aspects of the 1997 East Asian Financial Crisis have been well covered by academic literature, but coincident environmental issues are oft forgotten.<sup>13</sup> These two events showed the various governments' policy weaknesses, and what was wrong with the institutional framework in the region. However, it did create an opportunity for change with a need to focus on environmental governance and more participation by civil society. Although some cooperation exists within the region, there is an utter lack of institutionalism other than from the global institutions. Much of the focus is centered on issues of national security and interests; this creates too much difficulty for international cooperation as interests do not often align with one another.

Northeast Asian countries rely more on global institutions and lack in regionalism. In short, environmental issues in the region may not get the attention needed to mitigate the problems. A move to increased regionalism is necessary. Lorraine Elliott provides two approaches the region can take. First, is a positive risk model whereby cooperating within the regional sphere, relations and trust can be built.<sup>14</sup> This would require a basic level of trust, which the region lacks due to historical animosities and differences. Therefore, Elliott's negative risk approach model is stronger in the sense that regional security will experience increased threats due to the future negative externalities. Failure to clean the air will create emergencies. Lack of flood protection will lead to catastrophic floods in the future, causing huge damage and the need for major funds for repair. The negative risks involved with a lack of regionalism and action on climate change will push the Northeast Asian governments to act. But can governments afford to wait until negative externalities force them to? Although this is a stronger rationale for cooperation, climate change in the short-term is a high-cost problem. Prevention methods and building protection systems or limiting economic growth through climate change regulations may be costly in the short run. Although, in the long-run, they are supposed to pay off by protecting the population and preventing major damage in the future. The real problem lies in the fact that climate change is unpredictable and the investment cost is high. Despite this, more countries are beginning to take

---

12 Elliott, "Environmental Regionalism: Moving in from the Policy Margins."

13 The World Bank, Environment Strategy for the World Bank in the East Asia and Pacific Region.

14 Elliott, "Environmental Regionalism: Moving in from the Policy Margins."

the issue seriously, as signs of change have become more common and the effects are being felt.

Increased pressure from the public is causing governments to change. In Europe, often seen as the leaders in combating climate change, the demand for increased regulation came from the bottom-up. However, the argument that European countries have more money than Korea may be valid, and it plays a role in Europe's focus on environmentalism. One could also argue that Japan may be focusing more on environmentalism due to having experienced major environmental disasters as of late. While money and major disasters may add increased gravitas to environmental concerns, the public needs to be the main effector of change. For example, the United States has a large amount of money, and experienced major natural disasters on a yearly basis, yet push for environmentalism from the federal government has not been consistent. If the American public was more uniform in their opinion on environmentalism, the federal government would follow suit. Hence, the question remains, is the Korean civil society actively involved in promoting environmental change within the country, particularly when it comes to its air pollution? While specific state interests make cooperation more difficult, Korea has not necessarily taken a strong stance for improving air quality, and this could very well be due to less pressure at home.

### ***Korean Economic Data and Current Energy Information and Policy Goals***

In recent years, there has been growing concern amongst the Korean public over air pollution on the peninsula. This can be seen through the rise in protective measures such as a 380 percent increase in sales of nasal sanitizers and a 213 percent rise in nose masks from year to year.<sup>15</sup> In fact, with the closing of the 10 oldest coal-fired power plants and a decrease in nuclear energy (eleven of twenty-four nuclear reactors were shut down), Korea's demand for energy will need to be met through other methods.<sup>16</sup> While the government does currently have the 3020 plan – by the year 2030, twenty percent of their energy source is supposed to be from renewable energies – the current amount of energy produced by renewable sources is only five percent. Therefore, while the government attempts to achieve that goal, there will most likely be an increase in output from the current main energy sources, including coal and liquid natural gas.<sup>17</sup> And this is exactly what has happened in 2017. Coal-fired

---

15 David Josef Volodzko, "Why South Korea Needs to Fix Its Own Polluting Ways," South China Morning Post, April 15 2017, <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/2087447/china-blame-koreas-pollution-really>.

16 Darrell Proctor, "Coal Generation Reaches New High in South Korea," Power, April 1, 2018, <https://www.powermag.com/coal-generation-reaches-new-high-in-south-korea/>.

17 Volodzko, "Why South Korea Needs to Fix Its Own Polluting Ways."

capacity increased by 35 million kilowatts in 2016, contributing to an increase of 3.6 percent of the nation's energy production.<sup>18</sup> After a NASA study by Hu, they concluded that over half of the Korean air pollution is caused internally.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, how much countries spend on environmental protection as a percentage of GDP is important. Based on OECD data, While in 2016, Japan spent 1.18 percent of their GDP on environmental protection—ranking number four in the OECD—Korea spent 0.77 percent of their GDP, positioning it in the middle.<sup>20</sup> Direct comparisons with China's non-market economy are difficult, but since 2013 China has drastically increased its efforts pollution control. China imposed a nationwide cap on coal usage, banned new coal burning capacity, and sped up the use of filters and scrubbers in existing coal-fired plants. The government delayed or cancelled large construction projects, imposed output controls on steel and aluminum smelters and created a new environmental protection agency.<sup>21</sup> The result was a drastic reduction in Chinese air pollution in northern China. Therefore, there are grounds for change within Korea. While international cooperation is necessary, much can be done at the national level; this includes policy changes and increased expenditure on environmental protection.

### **Research Variables**

Korea has much responsibility for its air pollution, but despite there being multilateral institutions, bilateral deals and NGOs specifically working toward improved environmental conditions, the government's actions are not truly effective. Political green movements in Korea have not been institutionalized, and this is a factor in why the government doesn't move toward increased action. There is also major information asymmetry. The Korean public often blames China for the issue of air pollution, while the government spreads information to keep blame away from the Korean industry and focused on China. As a result, the Korean people feel that the causes of air pollution are China and consumer behavior. When environmentalism is embedded within the country's politics and society, the government is more likely to take action on environmental issues. But when they are not, the government will become more reluctant to strive for change (see Figure 1).

---

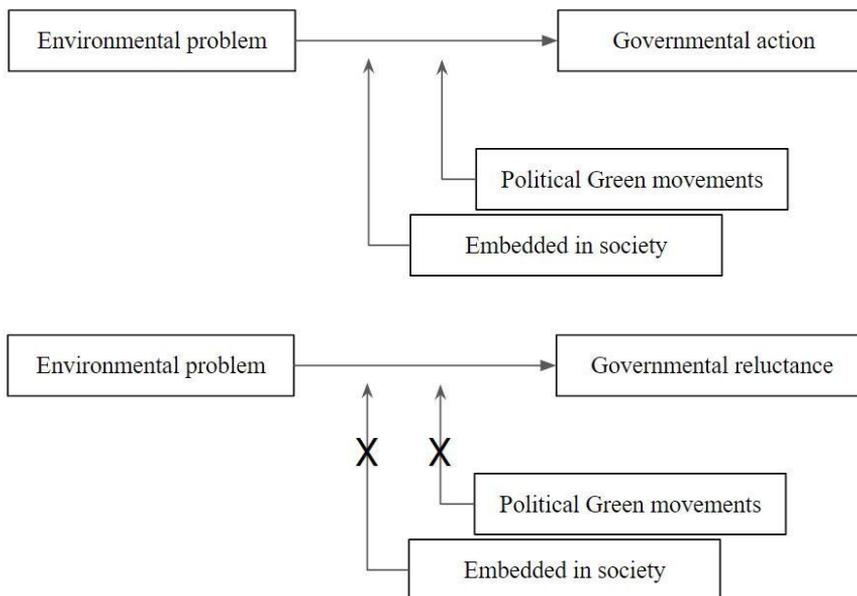
18 Proctor. "Coal Generation Reaches New High in South Korea."

19 Elise Hu, "Armed with NASA Data, South Korea Confronts Its Choking Smog," *NPR*, October 10, 2017, <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/10/10/552264719/armed-with-nasa-data-south-korea-confronts-its-choking-smog>

20 OECD, "General Government - General Government Spending - OECD Data," 2016.

21 "How China cut its air pollution," *The Economist*, January 25, 2018, <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2018/01/25/how-china-cut-its-air-pollution>

**Figure 1. Conceptual framework for environmental change in Korea. ‘Embedded in society’ refers to environmentalism being an important factor for the population.**



### Main Arguments and Findings

This paper must begin with a disclaimer: Not all air pollution in Korea is the yellow sand that originates in China and Mongolia, with local emissions playing a significant role according to the KORUS-AQ report.<sup>22</sup> While present, it is not a year-round issue, and therefore the entirety of South Korea’s air pollution cannot be caused by that one source. Hence, while yellow sand does indeed come from China, it is incorrect to assume that all Korean air pollution is “yellow sand.” This idea most definitely stems from asymmetry or lack of information.

When looking at which organizations leading the region in terms of environmental protection, Korea is a participant in each of them (Table 1). They are involved in multilateral organizations with China, Japan, and other countries in the region. They also help NGOs, and provide funding for the operational costs. However, the actual accomplishments of these organizations are more or most important.

<sup>22</sup> US Environmental Protection Agency, “KORUS-AQ: An International Cooperative Air Quality Field Study in Korea,” (Washington DC: US Environmental Protection Agency, 2016).

**Table 1. Major East Asia multilateral and NGO organizations<sup>23</sup>**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Main objectives</i>
TEMM	Multi-lateral	The Republic of Korea (ROK), China, Japan	information sharing monitoring pollution, restoration projects
NEASPEC	Multi-lateral	ROK, The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, China, Japan, Russia, Mongolia	Monitoring/collecting pollution data
ECO-ASIA	Multi-lateral	24 Asia Pacific countries	Information exchange
AANEA	NGO	ROK, Japan, Russia, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Mongolia	Study atmosphere pollution
NEAFF	NGO	ROK, China, Mongolia	Forest management and information exchange
ENVIROASIA	NGO	ROK, China, Japan	Information exchange
KFEM	NGO	ROK, China	Educational environmental exchange

Source: Whasun Jho and Hyunjoo Lee, "The Structure and Political Dynamics of Regulating 'Yellow Sand' in Northeast Asia," 2009.

The goals for each organization or meetings are to include an exchange of information, such as environmental technology and air pollution data. While this is necessary to promote coordination between countries, it is not enough to show results. Participation in each of these organizations creates the idea that the country is doing a lot toward addressing climate change, and really cares about environmental issues. It shows the Korean public that they are taking action toward improving air pollution by working with Japan and China by monitoring and data collection. But, this is merely a facade. It perpetuates the idea that China is the main cause for air pollution on the peninsula. It maintains a distance between Korean industry and the problem to prevent the public from assigning blame to the Korean industrial and energy sectors. While the government pursues regional information exchange, there is asymmetric information between the government and the public. As long as the Korean public believes China is to blame for air pollution, it will not demand change from the government. However, if the public is made fully aware that over half of the air pollution is internally-created, the demand for cleaner air from the government would more likely change. There would no longer be a "there is nothing you can do about it" attitude.

<sup>23</sup> Jho and Lee, "The Structure and Political Dynamics of Regulating 'Yellow Sand' in Northeast Asia."

One way in which environmental problems could bring about governmental action is through green politics. A party running on environmental issues is not enough to create the necessary change. Change requires inclusion of environmental issues in the major party platforms. Once the major parties include environmental issues as part of their platforms, the action will truly begin to take place. Green movements must become politically internalized in order for them to begin affecting environmental policies and remain part of the discourse each year. Green movements in Korea began around the time of the democratization, but in both the 2012 and 2014 elections, they were unable to effectively gain enough power. As a result, they failed at institutionalizing their platforms into the political system.<sup>24</sup> Although, in 2010, the three political parties, the Progressive, the Democratic, and the Former Grand National parties' environmental policies did include either increased regulation or aid to businesses (Table 2).<sup>25</sup> This shows that environmentalism is making its way into political groups. Even the Conservative party is beginning to consider some "green" initiatives, but for this to effectively institutionalize a green agenda, it must permeate through all parties. Looking to the United States as an example, the current administration's environmental policy is very weak and doesn't even consider climate change to be a real issue. This is the case, despite the Democratic Party having stronger environmental policies because the same is not true for the currently governing Republican party. Therefore environmentalism must be a part of every major political movement for it to have a long term effect on society. As this topic continues to gain importance to Korean society, the issue will increase in size and envelop more than simply environmental protection but become part of Korean politics and society itself, following a parallel process with Korean democracy.

**Table 2. Korean political parties and environmental policies in 2010.**

Party Name	Progressive	Democratic	Former Grand National	Conservative
Environmental Policy	Increased governmental regulation	Government regulation-support	Business support	"Green initiatives"

Source: Min-jeong Kim, "Liberal Politics and Green Politics-Based on Review of Green Policies of Progressive Parties," 2010.

The second variable to consider is public opinion and knowledge. News articles, public discourse, and surveys show that the Korean public often

24 Shin, "Political Opportunity Structure and the Institutionalization of Green Movements in Korea: The case of the Green Party."

25 Min-jeong Kim, "Liberal Politics and Green Politics-Based on Review of Green Policies of Progressive Parties," *Environment and Life*, Spring Edition 63, (2010): 28-47.

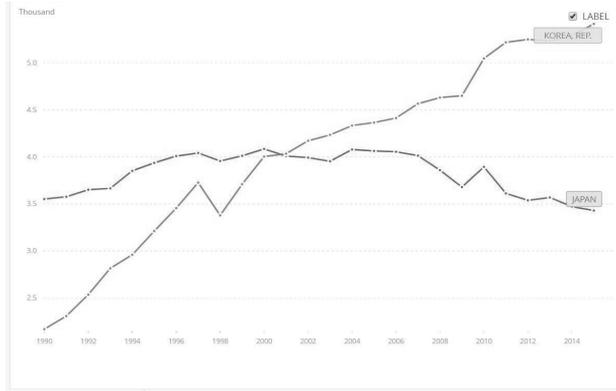
blames a few key actors for the year-round pollution in the country: China and automobiles. Interestingly enough, the governments often state both as reasons for the high level of air pollution in the country. Returning to Table 1., there are several non-governmental organizations that Korea either takes part in or leads. The specified NGOs are involved in combating climate change and facilitating information exchange, but much of the work occurs abroad in China and Inner Mongolia. Therefore, while tackling transnational issues and attempting to help mitigate the air pollution by addressing the source of yellow dust, it effectively continues the narrative that the pollution is caused in China, and is not a domestically induced problem. Civil society actors—mainly corporations—are also involved through investments made in companies and organizations combating climate change.<sup>26</sup> However, much of the investment is made abroad in China.

The continued belief that China is the cause for air pollution is also reflected in consumer behavior. When people believe that China is to blame and not their own actions, they are unlikely to change their behavior to help mitigate domestic energy demand and the resulting pollution. Japan offers an appropriate comparison for Korea's energy consumption as both countries import almost all of their primary energy sources and Korea's only land border—with North Korea—is effectively closed to land transport, making Korea like an "island." Although Japan's total energy consumption exceeds that of Korea due to its significantly larger population, when energy consumption is measured on a per capita basis, the numbers tell a different story. According to the World Bank's statistics, Korea leads Japan in both, total energy consumed per capita (measured in kilograms per oil equivalent) (Figure 2) and electric power per capita (measured in kilowatt-hours) (Figure 3).

---

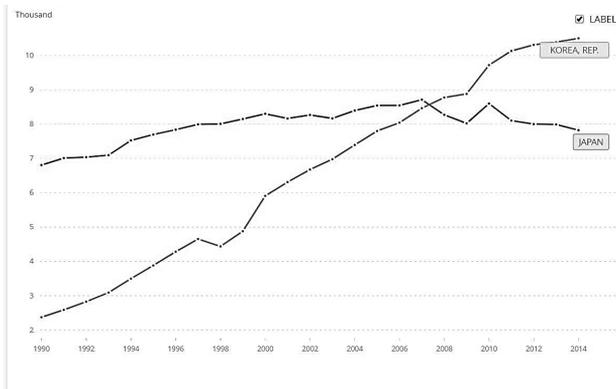
26 Michael Vodrazka, "From Dust to Trust: Environmental Peacemaking in Northeast Asia," MA Thesis, (KDI School of Public Policy and Management, 2009).

Figure 2. ROK vs. Japan in total energy consumed per capita (kilogram per oil equivalent) from 1990 to 2015.



Source: the World Bank.

Figure 3. ROK vs. Japan in total electric power per capita (KWh) from 1990 to 2015.



Source: World Bank.

These signs show very different consumer behavior within the two nations. While there may be several reasons why the Japanese consume less than the Koreans, one thing is for certain, the Korean population does not have strong beliefs that the air pollution is domestically caused. Until they begin to accept this fact, the consumption behavior of Koreans will most likely not move towards the level of the Japanese people. For the change to occur, the narrative must switch from China, into one which accepts Korean responsibility.

### Conclusion

The Asia Pacific region, like the rest of the world, is not immune to the rising number of environmental problems. Whether a transnational issue such as

air pollution and climate change, or a national problem such as deforestation, countries in the region must coordinate to take action. Each country faces similar issues and a joint effort is necessary to successfully tackle the major environmental concerns. Despite Korean presence in multilateral deals and NGOs on climate change and pollution, the majority of it is more focused on monitoring, collecting, and sharing data. There is a lack of results coming from participation in the organizations, despite appeasing the public demand for environmental change. Simply participating in organizations and institutions does not mean change will occur. And the agents of action are the countries themselves. However, until environmentalism becomes truly embedded within the Korean public and politics, it will not become a driving force pushing the Korean to take an action at mitigating the negative externalities from their internal polluters. The current discourse in Korean society is heavily focused on China and the government echoes these thoughts, keeping accountability at a minimum. On top of this, the government blames most domestic pollution on the public, such as cooking habits and automobiles.<sup>27</sup> While there may be factual evidence to these claims, it further removes the government from taking responsibility and protects the polluting industries. It should be noted that President Park's administration strayed away from the "green" initiatives initiated by the previous administration, but the current Moon administration is returning to the green concept more than the Park government.

As history has shown, in democratic societies, the way to bring about major change is from solidarity within the population. Civil society in Korea evolved from decades of subordination from a powerful central government and may, therefore, be seen as weaker when it comes to democracy being consolidated. However, in Korea, the collective effort of the people had a major effect on the impeachment of President Park in 2017, showing democracy has planted its roots within the society. If the public begins to truly stand behind environmentalism, and it seeps into political movements, increasing green politics, then the government will take more action toward its internally-caused pollution and demand for greater regional environmental institutions. When voters begin to choose candidates who use environmentalism as a major platform, a push for great regionalism will most certainly follow. The first step is acceptance of responsibility, followed by action. As the demand for cleaner air increases, the Korean government will continue to take further steps toward improving the current conditions. The 3020 project is a result of increased demand and a step in the right direction for improving air quality on the Korean peninsula. After, the country can truly stand behind the claim that

---

27 Volodzko, "Why South Korea Needs to Fix Its Own Polluting Ways."

pollution is from abroad, and it will be stronger in dealing with the problem at the transnational level.