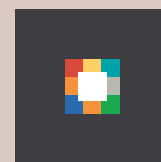


News from Northeast Asia

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Fine dust issues in Northeast Asia

Kyuhoon CHO

THE IMPRESSIVE economic growth of China and other East Asian countries in the past 20 to 30 years has also resulted in significant harm to the region's natural environment. Consequently, air pollution, and fine dust in particular, has arisen as an important social issue for countries in East Asia. Fine dust (i.e., PM_{2.5}) is known to be a contributing cause of asthma, cardiac arrest, and cancer. Although transboundary air pollution substances such as this are domestic issues in China, Japan, and Korea, there is a growing recognition of the need to ascertain the causes and prepare measures not only for the regional level within East Asia, but on a larger, global level as well.

The following four essays address the issues of fine dust in Korea, China, and Japan, as well as the legal case of an environmental organization against the Chinese and Korean governments. “Fine dust and sustainability in Northeast Asia” (Soojin Park) deals with the problem of sustainability and the dangers of environmental pollution in East Asia, focusing on the fine dust issue in Korea. “Japan’s long-range transboundary PM_{2.5} problem” (Shunji Matsuoka) discusses the context in which the fine dust issue first arose in Japan, changes in environmental standards in order to deal with fine dust, and the extent of influence of fine dust from China on Japan. In “Particulate matter pollution in China”,

Jangmin Choo analyzes the status of major areas affected by fine dust in China, looks into the primary causes of fine dust, and examines the measures of the Chinese government. Finally, in “Suing Beijing for harm caused by fine dust”, Yul Choi, president of one of Korea’s representative environmental organizations, explains the recent legal case against the Chinese and Korean governments over the issue of fine dust within the context of his efforts for protecting the environment in Korea for over 40 years.

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