

Summary Report of the 17th Environmental Subcommittee Meeting of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments

On Wednesday, January 28, 2026, the 17th Environmental Subcommittee Meeting of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR) was held online.

In the meeting, Toyama Prefecture was selected as the coordinating municipality for the next term. Presentations were given to report on the 2025 individual projects. Regarding the 2026 individual projects, five projects from 2025 (three by Toyama and two by Tomsk) were proposed for continuation and approved. Participants also exchanged opinions on ways to revitalize individual projects.

1. Objective

The meeting aims to promote environmental conservation efforts in the Northeast Asian Region by facilitating the smooth implementation of the individual projects and encouraging information sharing among the NEAR member municipalities.

2. Date and Format

- Date: Wednesday, January 28, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:40 p.m.
- Format: Online

3. Organizers

Toyama Prefecture

The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR)

(Secretariat: Northwest Pacific Region Environmental Cooperation Center (NPEC)

NPEC is commissioned by Toyama Prefecture to operate the Environmental Subcommittee of NEAR.)

4. Participating municipalities

10 municipalities from 3 countries

- Japan(6) : Yamagata, Toyama, Hyogo, Tottori, Shimane, Okinawa (Observer)
- Korea(2) : Chungcheongnam, Gyeongsangnam
- Russia(2) : Khabarovsk, Tomsk

5. Outcomes

(1) Selection of the next coordinating municipality (Discussion)

Toyama Prefecture was selected as the coordinating municipality for the next two-year term.

(2) Report on the 2025 individual projects

Each municipality presented its report on the 2025 individual projects.

2025 Individual projects	Organizers
Youth environmental summit in the Northeast Asian Region	Toyama (Japan)
Survey and educational activity to reduce washed-up litter at source	Toyama (Japan)
Environmental poster exhibition in Northeast Asia	Gyeongsangnam (Korea)
Survey of coastal organisms	Toyama (Japan)
Contest of photos “Eco-selfie – selfie with utility”	Tomsk (Russia)
Biological season survey in Northeast Asia	Toyama (Japan)

(3) Discussion of the 2026 individual projects

Five of the individual projects from 2025 were proposed for continuation in FY 2026 and approved. Participants also exchanged opinions on how to further revitalize the proposed projects.

Individual Project 2026	Proposer
Survey and educational activity to reduce washed-up litter at source	Toyama (Japan)
Environmental poster exhibition in Northeast Asia	Tomsk (Russia)
Survey of coastal organisms	Toyama (Japan)
Contest of photos “Eco-selfie – selfie with utility”	Tomsk (Russia)
Biological season survey in Northeast Asia	Toyama (Japan)

(4) Other issues discussed

- (i) The coordinating municipality (Toyama) introduced anti-desertification initiatives implemented by Dundgobi Province in Mongolia as a reference case.
- (ii) Toyama, Yamagata, Gyeongsangnam, Khabarovsk, and Tomsk presented their initiatives on environmental education (EE), followed by a Q&A session and an exchange of views on their efforts. It was decided that the coordinating municipality would consider new EE projects based on the current status of EE in each municipality and consult with the relevant municipalities to gather their perspectives.
- (iii) The coordinating municipality explained the Environmental Subcommittee’s activity plan for the next two years, which was approved.

It was decided that the subcommittee’s activities should align with global environmental trends, such as the SDGs, climate change countermeasures, biodiversity conservation, and marine environment conservation, while also incorporating the recommendations made by students at the 2025 Youth Environmental Summit in the Northeast Asian Region.

Furthermore, the activities of the environmental subcommittee are positioned as one of the practical actions for environmental conservation in the Northeast Asian Region, in response to the “2016 Toyama Declaration.” Therefore, all participating municipalities were encouraged to actively engage in the subcommittee’s activities.



Scene from the secretariat venue of the Environmental Subcommittee

* **Toyama Declaration of 2016 Environmental Experts Meeting among Northeast Asia Region (Toyama Declaration 2016)**

The G7 Environmental Ministers' Meeting was organized in Toyama in May 2016. Following it, Toyama Prefecture held "2016 Environmental Expert Meeting among Northeast Asia Region" with participants from municipalities and universities in China, Japan, Korea and Russia. "Toyama Declaration 2016" was adopted with aims to work on environmental conservation together for the next generation.

The declaration mentions directions of efforts under items, including "positive contribution to global environmental issues," "civic collaboration and environmental education," and "international dialogue."