

Notice of the General Office of the State Council about Forwarding Guiding Opinions on Pushing Forward the Joint Prevention and Control of Atmospheric Pollution to Improve the Regional Air Quality Developed by the Ministry of Environment Protection and Relevant Departments

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The people's governments of all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government, all ministries and commissions of the State Council, and all institutions directly under the State Council:

The Guiding Opinions on Pushing Forward the Joint Prevention and Control of Atmospheric Pollution to Improve the Regional Air Quality raised by the Ministry of Environment Protection, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Construction, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Commerce and the Bureau of Energy has been approved by the State Council and hereby forward to you for your earnest compliance and implementation.

General Office of the State Council

May 11, 2010

Guiding Opinions on Pushing Forward the Joint Prevention and Control of Atmospheric Pollution to Improve the Regional Air Quality

The Ministry of Environment Protection, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Construction, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Commerce and the Bureau of Energy

In recent years, the acid rain, haze, photochemical smog pollution and other atmospheric pollution problems in some regions of China has become increasingly distinct, severely threatening people's health and impacting environmental safety. Successful experience at home and abroad proves that we must adopt regional joint prevention and control measures as early as possible to tackle regional atmospheric pollution problems. Now we put forward the following opinions on pushing forward the joint prevention and control of atmospheric pollution and improving the regional

air quality, with a view to further reinforce the work of air pollution prevention and control.

1. Guiding Concept, Basic Principles and Work Goals

(1) Guiding Concept. Taking the scientific concept of development as the guide, the improvement of air quality as the goal, the enhancement of joint efforts in regional environmental protection as the main theme and the overall reduction in emission of air pollutants as the means, establish and improve the working mechanisms of unified planning, unified monitoring, unified supervision, unified evaluation and unified coordination for the joint prevention and control of regional atmospheric pollution to soundly and effectively prevent and control atmospheric pollution.

(2) Basic principles. Stick to the combination of environmental protection with economic development to promote the coordinated development of the regional environment and economy; adhere to the combination of jurisdiction management with regional joint action to improve the overall level of prevention and control of regional atmospheric pollution; persist in the combination of pilot implementation with comprehensive promotion (in other regions) to first make breakthroughs in key regions.

(3) Work goals. By 2015, establish a joint prevention and control mechanism of atmospheric pollution, formulate a system of regulations, standards and policies of regional atmospheric environmental management, significantly reduce the total amount of main atmospheric pollutants emissions, make the key enterprises comprehensively meet the emission standards, and make the air quality of every city in the region meet or be better than the Grade II National Ambient Air Quality Standard, greatly reduce the acid rain, haze and photochemical smog pollution and improve the regional air quality. Guarantee good air quality for the World Expo 2010 Shanghai China and the Guangzhou Asian Games.

2. Key Regions and Prevention and Control Focus

(4) Key regions. The key regions for starting the joint prevention and control work of regional atmospheric pollution are the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region, the Yangtze River Delta Region and the Pearl River Delta Region; actively promote the joint prevention and control work of regional atmospheric pollution in other regions such as Central Liaoning, Shandong peninsula, Wuhan and its neighboring region, Changsha, Zhuzhou and Xiangtan region, Chengdu and Chongqing region, and the western coast of Taiwan Strait; for other regions, the local people's governments should organize and develop the joint prevention and control work of regional atmospheric pollution in light of the actual conditions.

(5) Prevention and Control Focus. The key pollutants in joint prevention and control of atmospheric pollution include sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), particulates (PM) and volatile organic compounds (VOC), etc.; the key industries include the thermal power, iron & steel, non-ferrous metals, petrochemical, cement and chemical industry, the key enterprises are enterprises that heavily affect the regional air quality; and the key problems to be fixed are the acid rain, haze, photochemical smog pollution, etc.

3. Optimize Regional Industrial Structure and Layout

(6) Raise the environmental access threshold. Develop and implement special emission limits of atmospheric pollutants to key industries in the key regions; strictly control the new and expanded thermal power plants in the key regions, except the “larger plants built to replace smaller ones” (“上大压小” to build a large power plant, small plants with proportional capacity have to be shut down) and the combined heat and power (CHP) co-generation plants, and forbid building thermal power plants other than combined heat and power (CHP) co-generation plants in the urban area of any prefecture-level city. In key regions, establish a regional consultation mechanism of environment impact assessment (EIA) for construction projects of key industries. The specific implementation methods should be developed separately by the Ministry of Environmental Protection. Strengthen planning environmental impact assessment for regional industry development planning, and tightly control the expansion projects of overcapacity industries such as iron & steel, cement, plate glass, traditional coal chemical, poly silicon, electrolytic aluminum and shipbuilding.

(7) Optimize the regional industrial layout. Set up an environmental supervision mechanism for industrial transfer, strengthen the environmental supervision amid acceptance of industrial transfer in the receiving region, and prevent pollution transfer. In the downtown areas and suburbs, prohibit the establishment and expansion of heavy-polluting enterprises such as iron & steel, non-ferrous metals, petrochemical, cement and chemical enterprises. Such enterprises that have been built in urban areas shall be relocated or reconstructed in line with the industrial restructuring. Complete the relocation project of Shougang Group on schedule, and organize and implement well the relocation projects of iron and steel plants in Shijiazhuang, Hangzhou, Guangzhou and other cities.

(8) Propel technical advancement and structural adjustment. Improve the clean production standards and evaluation indicators for key industries, and strengthen clean production audit and evaluation acceptance of key industries; make greater efforts to develop clean production technologies and encourage enterprises to use the advanced clean production technologies; speed up the industrial structure adjustment progress, and ensure that the outdated production capacity can be eliminated on schedule in the power, coal, iron & metal, cement, nonferrous metal, coke, paper making, tanning, printing & dyeing and other industries.

4. Strengthen Prevention and Control of Key Pollutants

(9) Strengthen the total emission control system for sulfur dioxide. Improve the desulphurization efficiency of thermal power units and perfect the franchised operation system for desulphurization facilities of thermal power plants; intensify reduction in sulfur dioxide emission of the iron & steel, petrochemical, nonferrous metal and other industries, and push forward the desulphurization work of industrial boilers. In addition, improve the pollution levy system of sulfur dioxide emissions, and work out the regional target for total emission reduction of sulfur dioxide.

(10) Strengthen emission reduction of nitrogen oxides pollutants. Establish a total emission control system for nitrogen oxides (NO_x). The newly-built, expanded and renovated thermal power plants should be equipped with flue gas denitrification devices in accordance with the discharge standard and to meet requirements outlined in the environment impact assessment report of construction projects, all the thermal power plants in the key regions should install denitrification devices during the 12th Five-year Plan period, and the thermal power plants in other regions should reserve spaces for flue denitrification devices. Promote the low nitrogen combustion technology of industrial boiler, and put an emphasis on prevention and control of nitrogen oxide pollution in the iron & steel, petrochemical, chemical and other industries.

(11) Strengthen prevention and control of particulate pollutants. The enterprises using industrial boilers, cement plants and thermal power plants should adopt bag filter and other efficient dust removing technologies. Enhance environmental management of construction site, prohibit using bagged cement and stirring concrete and mortar on the site, and adopt enclosing, covering and other dust prevention measures on the construction sites. Strengthen the cleaning work of roads to improve cleanliness of city roads. Implement projects "without soil exposed" and reduce the bare land in urban areas.

(12) Conduct pollution prevention and control of volatile organic compounds. The volatile organic compound pollution caused by paint, petrochemical production, shoemaking, electronic manufacturing, dry cleaning and other production operations that discharge volatile organic compounds should be treated according to the relevant technical specifications. Push forward control over oil and gas pollution at oil stations. The recovery and reconstruction work must be completed for the existing oil depots, oil stations and tank trucks in the key regions as scheduled and their recovery systems should run in compliance with related standards; new oil depots, oil stations and tank trucks must be installed with an oil and gas recovery system before being put into use. Strictly control the emission of cooking fume from the catering industry in cities.

5. Reinforce Clean Energy Utilization

(13) Strictly control pollutants emission from coal combustion. Strictly control the construction of coal-fired projects in the key regions and develop the pilot work of coal consumption cap in regions. Propel the construction of low-sulfur and low-ash coal distribution centers, improve the coal washing and selection proportion, and prohibit the industrial enterprises without desulphurization devices in key regions from directly burning coal containing over 0.5% sulfur. Strengthen the development of high-pollution fuel forbidden area, gradually expand its scope, and prohibit direct burning of raw coal. Build demonstration projects of joint control technologies over multiple pollutants such as flue gas desulphurization, denitrification, dedusting and de-mercury technologies for thermal power units.

(14) Vigorously promote the use of clean energy. Improve the urban energy consumption structure, make more efforts to promote use of natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, coal gas, solar energy and other clean energies, therefore to gradually increase the use proportion of clean energies in cities. Continue the clean energy campaign and actively demonstrate the use of clean energies. Promote energy conservation of industry, transportation and buildings, and improve the energy utilization efficiency. Accelerate the development of rural clean energies, encourage the comprehensive utilization of crop straws, promote Biomass Molding Fuel (NMF) technologies, and vigorously develop rural methane projects. Prohibit burning straws and other crop wastes in the open air and ensure good air quality around cities, traffic trunk lines and airports. Encourage use of energy-saving stoves and gradually eliminate the traditional high-polluting stoves.

(15) Actively develop urban centralized heating system. Push forward the construction of urban central heating supply projects, strengthen heating boiler networks in cities and towns, and constantly increase the urban central heating area. Intensity the comprehensive pollution prevention and control of flue gas desulphurization, denitrification and efficient dedusting for central heating boilers. Develop the cleaner coal technologies, and step up efforts to demonstrate and promote the central heating supply by highly-efficient, cleaner-coal boilers. In the downtown area and suburbs, prohibit building small coal-fired boilers with low efficiency and heavy pollution, and gradually dismantle the existing small coal-fired boilers.

6. Strengthen Prevention and Control of Motor Vehicles Pollution

(16) Reduce the emissions of motor vehicles. Strictly implement the national emission standard of motor vehicles, improve the environmental protection type approval system of newly produced motor vehicles, and prohibit production, sales and registration of vehicles that fail to comply with the national emission standard of motor vehicles. Deepen the government subsidy program for "auto replacement" work, speed up the elimination of "high-emission vehicles" and low-speed trucks, and vigorously develop clean energy automotives.

(17) Improve the environment management system of motor vehicles. Strengthen regular inspection of motor vehicles for environmental protection, actualize environmental label management for motor vehicles, and specially rectify the vehicles that fail to meet the emission standard. Reinforce supervision and management of environmental protection inspection institutions according to law and promote their sound development. Strengthen construction of the environmental protection supervision capability of motor vehicles, establish an environmental protection management information system of motor vehicles, and consider adopting tax policies favorable for pollution prevention and control of motor vehicles.

(18) Accelerate the use of clean vehicle fuels. Promote low-sulfur vehicle fuels, accelerate rebuilding of oil refining devices, and increase the market supply of quality vehicle fuels. Formulate and implement the national standards for vehicle fuels in Phase 4 and Phase 5 and the standard for limited toxic substances in vehicle fuels as soon as possible, and intensify the approval and management of vehicle fuel detergent.

(19) Greatly develop public transportation. Improve the traffic infrastructure of cities, practice the development strategy of public transport priority, speed up the construction of dedicated bus and electric car lanes (roads), and set up the passing signal system of bus priority. Improve the conditions for residents to travel on foot or by bike, and encourage them to select eco-friendly mobility means.

7. Better the Regional Air Quality Supervision System

(20) Strengthen air quality monitoring of the key regions. Improve the air quality monitoring capability, optimize air quality monitoring sites of the key regions, develop monitoring of acid rain, particulates and ozone and road-side air quality monitoring, prepare the atmospheric pollution incident forecast, early warning and emergency action plan, better the environmental information release system, and realize monitoring information sharing of the key regions. By the end of 2011, preliminarily complete the air quality monitoring network in the key regions.

(21) Improve the air quality evaluation indicator system. Speed up the revision of air quality evaluation indicators, improve the air quality evaluation methods of ozone and fine particulates, and add the corresponding evaluation indicators.

(22) Strengthen management for urban air quality classification. Cities that fail to meet the Grade II national ambient air quality standard must formulate plans to meet the air quality standard, and ensure the air quality improvement on schedule. The key cities of environmental protection in the country (113 cities) should report their plans for meeting the air quality standard to the Ministry of Environment Protection for approval and implement the plans afterwards. Cities that meet the Grade II standard

should formulate plans for continuous air quality improvement and prevent deterioration of air quality.

(23) Strengthen supervision on environmental law enforcement in regions. The Ministry of Environment Protection will determine and publish the list of key enterprises together with the related local governments and departments, make joint law enforcement inspection over regional atmospheric environment, and rectify non-compliance enterprises. The environmental protection department in each region should enhance its supervisory monitoring of key enterprises, and urge them to install online monitoring devices of pollution sources. By the end of 2012, all the key enterprises should equip online monitoring devices and should be connected with the environmental protection departments.

8. Strengthen Guarantee Capability of Regional Air Quality

(24) Increase capital investment. The people's governments at all levels shall, in light of the particular conditions of atmospheric pollution prevention and control, increase capital investment, strengthen the utilization management of the special environmental protection fund, and propel the construction of key pollution control projects and the monitoring and supervision capabilities of regional air quality. For cities failing to meet the air quality standard, the government there should increase capital investment on a year-on-year basis, and accelerate the construction of the infrastructure for urban atmospheric environment protection and pollution abatement projects.

(25) Strengthen scientific and technological support. Strengthen research into the formation mechanism of regional atmospheric pollution, tackle major and difficult scientific problems, including flue gas denitrification, toxic and harmful gas treatment, clean coal utilization, control of volatile organic compound pollutants and atmospheric mercury pollution, and rural biomass energy development, and make more efforts to demonstrate and promote pollution prevention and control technologies of fine particulates and ozone. Accelerate the application of high-and-new technologies in environmental protection, and promote development of the environmental protection industry.

(26) Improve the environmental economic instruments. Continuously implement the discriminatory electricity price policies for high energy and pollution industries, and strictly examine the environmental audit of listed companies in industries such as thermal power, iron & steel, cement and electrolytic aluminum. Vigorously push forward the paid use of emission allowance and the emission trading. Perfect the regional ecological compensation policy and study the incentive mechanism for the places where air quality is improved significantly.

9. Strengthen Organization and Coordination

(27) Establish the joint prevention and control coordination mechanism for regional atmospheric pollution. Based on the national ministerial meeting system for environmental protection, convene on an irregular basis the thematic meetings in which the related departments and people's governments of the related provinces and municipalities directly under the Central Government participate. The mechanism need to solve the major issues in joint prevention and control of regional atmospheric pollution through coordination, and organize to prepare joint prevention and control planning of atmospheric pollution in key regions, and articulate air quality improvement goals, atmospheric pollution prevention and control measures and key pollution treatment projects in key regions. The regional air quality management plans need to be complete and reported for approval by the end of 2011.

(28) Fulfill responsibilities strictly. As the responsible body for prevention and control of regional atmospheric pollution, the local people's government should strengthen its organization and leadership, work out a joint prevention and control plan for local atmospheric pollution, assign all tasks to responsible institutions and enterprises, and consolidate supervision and assessment. All the related departments should strengthen coordination and collaboration, work out corresponding measures and practice suggestions, and urge and guide related local departments to complete the work.

(29) Improve the evaluation system. The Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China should evaluate and examine the implementation of joint prevention and control of atmospheric pollution along with related departments, assess the completion of key prevention and control projects of regional atmospheric pollution and the improvement of urban air quality, and annually publish the assessment results to the public as the major content of comprehensive and quantitative examination for urban environment. For the cities that fail to complete planned tasks and whose air quality is severely deteriorated, the Ministry of Environmental Protection will strictly control new construction projects that discharge atmospheric pollutants. The specific implementation method should be worked out separately by the Ministry of Environmental Protection together with the related local governments and departments.

(30) Strengthen publicity and education. Organize to compile scientific knowledge publicity and training documents about prevention and control of atmospheric pollution, develop publicity and education about atmospheric environment protection in diversified forms, and mobilize and guide the public to participate in the prevention and control work of regional atmospheric pollution. Regularly publicize the information about regional air quality and progress of prevention and control of atmospheric pollution, and bring into full play the public supervision functions of media.

Each region should submit the implementation plan on fulfilling these guiding opinions to the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China for filing before the end of June 2010.