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The 5th Annual
SEOUL Climate-Energy Conference 2018

Session Sketches

Opening Plenary

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[SESSION NAME]: Opening Plenary

Date / Time: 11/16/18

Moderator: Kim N/A

Speaker: Kim, Sang-Hyup(Chairman, Coalition for Our Common Future), Park Chun Kyoo (Vice Minister of Environment), Park ChunKyoo (Deputy minister for Energy & Resource), Kim JongKap (President & CEO Korea Electric Power Corporation, Katherine Richardson (Professor, University of Copenhagen)

- Keywords:

Conference Overview

Chairman Kim SangHyup has welcomed all the speakers who are going to present today. He has shown how the today's session is structured and organized to allow audience to follow him more easily. He also presented the main themes that would be discussed today. So, the main theme for this conference includes how to mobilize change for sustainable future; "actions" and "the kinds of actions" that need to be taken to prevent the earth becoming a hothouse. In addition, Chairman Kim SangHyup emphasizes that there needs to be shift from BAU(Business As Usual) to BAW (Business As Wanted). Chairman Kim SangHyup has also shared a graph with two lines. So, one line presents projector of carbon emission that is BAU but another line shows a trajectory that represents a significant carbon emission. Between the two lines, a triangle is formed and Chairman Kim SangHyup describes this area as potential profits that can be made from going green. Furthermore, in Chairman Kim SangHyup's own wording, this stream of opportunity is described as "green big bang chance" for investors and businessmen to make significant profits. Thus, in order to reap these low hanging fruits, in Chairman Kim SangHyup words, "we need very good policies." For changes, Chairman Kim SangHyup emphasizes the need for entrepreneurs to step up and to take this opportunity to make profits. Chairman Kim has also spoken highly of a strong partnership between Green Climate Fund and Global Green Growth Institute. Specifically, GGGI and GCF have together mobilized 1 billions investment to support developing countries. He phrases this achievement as the "beauty of good strategy." Then Chairman Kim further cites the physical barriers that Korea faces in exporting and importing energy, which calls for the need for Korea to seriously take actions in transforming the energy sector. Super grid is offered as a potential powerful energy solution that is under discussion. Digitalization is highlighted as the mode which energy solutions can be realized. Chairman Kim has pointed out how President Moon has affirmed his dedication to pursue "green growth "practices which show hop. Finally, Chairman Kim concludes with a statement: "So, let us face the challenge of climate change and translate it to new opportunities!" Lastly, Chairman Kim ends with the famous motto: "green and growth can go together, they are not contradictory! Let's take the big bang chance together."

Park Chun Kyoo (Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea) first thanks everyone participating in the conference. Vice President Park notes of bad micro-pollutant level that was recorded today. He also mentions about the recent unrecorded weather variation from climate change and the number of people who have died from heat strokes. Vice President Park then goes into specific plans, which the Korean government plans to take in decreasing carbon emission. According to Vice President Park, under President Park, the Korean government made a rather ambitious commitment but it's a pledge that may not be so easy to achieve. In addition, Vice President Park highlights the importance of actualizing bottom up process. Furthermore, Vice President Park mentions how although the Korean government has decreased overseas reduction pledge, it has increased the domestic pledged. Next, Vice President discusses the change in the Korean energy mix: first, the consumption of LNG is likely to increase in Korea in supplant of coal consumption. As for cars, vice president Park Chun shares the government's plan to expand "green" cars and implement hydrogen cars on the road. He also mentions how much government is planning to subsidize the expansion of hydrogen cars. Vice president Park accentuates the importance of engendering a benchmark system to allocate funds more effectively. Moreover, he notes the need for nationally determined contributions to be more flexible. Next, he moves to how energy transition can be achieved through increasing the renewable energy proportion. He notes how abandoned salt farms have been transformed into solar farms. In addition, not only in terms of pure energy reduction, life quality overall can be enhanced through safeguarding clean water sources. The Korean government also plants to implement more stringent air policies. An example includes banning cars that were manufactured before a certain yea in fear of emitting high level of carbon emission.

Joon, KooYoung (Deputy Minister for Energy & Resource) starts his speech by saying energy is in fact not the main culprit of pollution, but energy is the driving force . He then notes that supply of renewable energy has increased significantly over the years and by the end of this year, the performance of renewable energy is expected to increase. He organizes rest of his speech into four pieces : supply of energy, changing consumer behavior, economic contributions that can be made from the energy transition and finally super-grid. First, because nuclear energy is largely perceived negatively by the civil society, the most strategic way to reduce energy consumption would be through forming a strategic energy mix which consist of electricity, gas and hydro energy. Second, although there is much talk about supply side, there is not much discussion on how consumer behavior can be changed. Compared to Denmark where energy consumption per capita is much lower, Korea's energy consumption per capital is relatively high. With changes in consumer's behavior on top of technological development, growth trajectory and green trajectory can be decoupled. Third, Deputy minister Joon emphasizes that this transition contributes to the economy. It creates jobs.

Lastly, super-grid is tangible and there is much discussion on possibility of actualizing super-grid in China. If countries corporate and the tension between North Korea and South Korea is resolved, super-grid can actually be implemented.

Kim JongKap (President and CEO of KEPCO)

President Kim starts his speech with the role of KEPCO in Korea and its energy portfolio. In fact, President Kim states that decarbonization is one of the main task that KEPCO needs to take care of. He asserts that in order for Korea to achieve that reduction goal it has pledged, it needs to reduce its coal consumption to 28%, which may be difficult to render in real life at this current stage. Thus, for now KEPCO aims to achieve this through other creative means including enhancing energy efficiency and individualizing services. President Kim gives examples of how Google and Apple are already doing this where they ensure they can offer the kind of services that their consumers/clients desire. Since consumers now want sustainability to be incorporated into their consumption of goods, Apple and Goggle have been transforming their energy portfolios. However, President Kim notes that unfortunately the majority of Korean consumers want to consume more energy at cheap price. Thus, nudging them away from such preference is crucial. In addition, from just providing traditional utility, KEPCO aims to expands its service including helping to design smart cities. By designing smart city and using digitalization, energy consumption can become more flexible which would help to reduce overall consumption

Katherine Richardson Christensen

Professor Christensen starts by saying we need to understand the fact when the earth runs out of resources, we have nowhere else to turn. Unlike our ancestors who have migrated to other parts of the world when they ran out of resources, we no longer have anywhere to go. We need to be stewards of the earth because if resources run out, we do not know what lays ahead of civilization. Although many people talk about climate change just as a climate issue, it is in fact not; it is a coupling of climate and biodiversity that makes life possible. So, just focusing on climate will not fix problems for humans. In fact, humans have transformed the landscape so much that it is becoming more like a global scale farmland. The biodiversity is wiped out when lands are turned into a farmland. Thus, biodiversity issue needs to be also tackled. In addition, earth acts like a system, not segregated bunch of functions that have no relations to each other. So, just because politicians offers capping increase in global temperature to 2 Celsius degrees as the panacea to climate change, the reality is not so merry. When the global average temperature goes up by 2 Celsius degrees, other parts of the earth's system will not stay stationary and change for worse which would lead to global temperature increase to 3 Celsius degrees. When the global average temperature goes up by 3 Celsius degrees, one might say the earth has hit the tipping point and life on earth might no longer be the same. Thus, we need to see ourselves as part of the system, not outside. In fact, Professor Christen fears that earth will soon become a hothouse from the trajectory it is on currently. When the earth becomes a hothouse, the state of earth's system that we are familiar with no longer will be. We may be setting a chain of dominoes that we do not know the consequences to and impact of climate change may be a lot more serious than imagined. Thus, Professor Christensen concludes that we need to see earth as a system as a whole and from there become stewards of the earth. intrinsic biosphere dynamics that would shift ice house state

List

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