There was a need for a legal basis...

Despite a number of environmental protection laws, the Republic of Korea’s national policy strongly focused on economic growth and industrialization until the mid-1990s, when the Government first recognized the importance of sustainable development. The Framework Act on Sustainable Development followed in 2007. When the Korean Government committed to achieving a significant cut in emissions through a shift from energy-intensive industries to low-carbon ones, it needed the legal grounds on which to build the implementing system for green growth, specifically the Presidential Committee on Green Growth, then to mandate that committee with the power to develop a five-year plan for the national strategy for green growth. In place were only fragmented laws and regulations.

How it works

The Korean National Assembly enacted the Framework Act on Low Carbon, Green Growth in January 2010 to provide the legal basis for implementing policy measures that address climate change and energy issues and promote eco-efficient development.

Major provisions of the act:

- General provisions cover the purpose and definitions of the act and terms, basic principles of low carbon green growth, responsibilities of the State, local governments, the business sector and the general public and the relationship with other acts.
- Establishment of low carbon green growth strategies and plans at the national and local government levels.
- Guidelines on the composition, operation and functions of the Presidential Committee on Green Growth.
- Basic principles of a green economy and green industry, facilitating research, development and commercializing of green technology and the creation of green jobs.
- Realization of a low-carbon society through basic principles and plans for coping with climate change and energy policies, reducing greenhouse gases, reporting on greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, establishing an integrated greenhouse gas information management system, introducing a cap-and-trade scheme, managing greenhouse gases in the traffic sector, assessing the impacts of climate change and implementing adaptation measures.
- Realization of green life and sustainable development through basic principles and plans for sustainable development, promoting green homeland, water management, green buildings, eco-tourisms and facilitating green life campaigns, education and public relations activities.

Supplementary provisions include a request for data, improved international cooperation and the preparation of national reports.

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1 The previous environment protection laws are Environmental Pollution Prevention Act (1963), Environmental Preservation Act (1977) and Framework Act on Environmental Policy (1990).
3 Republic of Korea, Framework Act on Low Carbon, Green Growth (2010). Available from www.law.go.kr/englSsc.do?menuId=0&subMenu=5&query= per centEC per centA0 per cent80 per centEC per cent86 per cent20 per centEB per cent85 per centB9 per centEC per cent83 per cent89 per centEC per cent84 per centB1 per centEC per cent9E per centA5 per cent20 per centEA per centB8 per centB0 per centEB per centB3 per centB8 per centEB per centB2 per cent95#liBgcolor0 (accessed 15 August 2011).
Considerations for replicating

Strategies and policies require a legal basis, which also ensures that they endure beyond the turnover of political administrations. As an umbrella law, the Framework Act on Low Carbon, Green Growth is significant because it combines the existing but fragmented laws, regulations, takes precedence over other acts and allows for more efficient control of the national goal for low carbon green growth.

Further reading