There was a commitment to follow...

The Republic of Korea’s greenhouse gas emissions almost doubled between 1990 and 2005, the highest growth rate among OECD countries. The Government realized it was an unacceptable development and committed to achieving a significant cut in emissions through a shift from energy-intensive industries to low-carbon ones. The Government launched its National Strategy for Green Growth and the Five-Year Plan for Green Growth in 2008. It included “a target of reducing emissions by 30 per cent by 2020 relative to a ‘business-as-usual’ baseline implying a 4 per cent cut from the 2005 level. Achieving this objective in a cost-effective manner requires moving from a strategy based on voluntary commitments by firms to market-based instruments. The priority is to establish a comprehensive cap-and-trade scheme, supplemented, if necessary, by carbon taxes in areas not covered by trading.”

What was done?

The Presidential Committee on Green Growth in the Republic of Korea was established in February 2009 to follow through on the national strategy. Formed by integrating an existing sustainable development commission and two other committees on energy and climate change, the Presidential Committee is an overarching institution that reports to the country’s president on realizing the national vision of low carbon green growth.

The Presidential Committee’s role:

- deliberate on the Government’s major policies and plans related to green growth and matters concerning the performance of such policies and plans
- coordinate appropriate central administrative agencies and local governments
- discuss various subjects relevant to pursuing green growth as a national think tank
- participate in the global green growth dialogue and international negotiations.

The Presidential Committee is composed of public officials and experts commissioned by the president, the number of which is never to exceed 50 members. The committee is led by a co-chairmanship, consisting of the prime minister and a commissioned expert member appointed by the president. As of August 2011, there were 14 public officials (including the Minister of Strategy and Finance, the Minister of Knowledge Economy, the Minister of Environment, and the Minister of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs) and 36 civil experts who have expertise and experience in low carbon green growth issues, such as climate change, energy and resources, green technology, green industries, green life and sustainable development. The cooperation between the public and private entities is due to the Government’s pursuit of creativity and capacity from the private sector in policy-making and implementation.

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A secretariat of 60 public officials assigned to six teams (policy planning and coordination, energy policy, climate change policy, green technology and industry, green life and sustainable development and international cooperation) supports the Presidential Committee. The secretariat’s main tasks include: organizing regular meetings of the Presidential Committee, coordinating green growth policies and plans between the central and local governments and supporting R&D projects on low carbon green growth.

In line with the Presidential Committee, city and provincial governments also have a local committee on green growth under the supervision of the mayors and governors to deliberate on specific matters concerning their policies that are relevant to low carbon green growth.3

Source: Presidential Committee on Green Growth website, “About PCGG: Organization”.

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