



PRESS Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Pollution Control Department

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Volume 116, 7 December 2023 (B.E. 2566)

Sub-Committee on Air Pollution Management accelerates measures to solve particulate matter problems and communicate with the public

On 6th December 2023, Mr. Jatuporn Buruspat, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment was the chairman of the Sub-Committee Meeting on Air Pollution Management No. 1/2023 and Dr. Pinsak Suraswadi, Director General of the Pollution Control Department (PCD) was the Sub-committee and Secretary of the meeting along with the experts and representatives of relevant agencies to monitor implementation give recommendation and accelerate the implementation of relevant agencies according to urgent measures to handle the particulate matter situation and communicate with the public.

Mr. Jatuporn said that this year the Prime Minister has given high importance to the preparation and solving PM_{2.5} problem. He has seen changes and responses to 3 dimensions, which are 1) clear guidelines for controlling particulate matter sources that comply with the government policies and proposals from civil society, 2) formulating committees that monitors closely to implementation activities and 3) having the Clean Air Act B.E..... which was approved in principle by the cabinet. All relevant agency must fully these dimension. Though it is unable to eliminate particulate matter, its amount will be significantly reduced.

Mr. Jatuporn said that the Sub-committee accelerated the implementation of urgent measures to reduce forestfires in 11 conserved forests, and 10 natural forests by 50%; has reiterated to set map that show to prepare maps showing checkpoints/extraction points, forest fire surveillance points and to organize patrol officers, has discussed with the Department of Local Administration; has discussed with the Department of Livestock Development to do not allow livestock in forest areas, to communicate and make understanding clearly with people in the areas. In order to reduce fire in agricultural areas by 50%, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives was assigned to control burning in rice cultivation areas, especially in the provinces surrounding Bangkok and growing corn for animal feed in highland areas as well as to propose clearly plan to change types of plants cultivated that do not require burning. Each province is required to register agriculturist as well as their cultivated lands in both agricultural and forest areas to make a calendar and condition for fuel management. If they don't register, they will be fully the enforced the law. Private sectors are regulated to deny purchasing agricultural crops from agricultural burning. The Ministry of Industry by the Office of the Cane and Sugar Board was assigned to

reduce the amount of burnt sugarcane to the press into the minimum. Strictness was increased in 5 provinces with the highest amount of burnt sugarcane. In case of agricultural waste, Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) has planned to establish a purchasing centre. Consideration is made to locations near repeated forest areas/agricultural areas so as to reduce transportation costs. In relation to particulate matter control in urban areas, except of strictly detection to black smoke, to reduce the number of trucks and buses entering into Bangkok's inner areas during the crisis, provide park & ride spaces nearby electric train stations to reduce traffic volume should be considered.

There will be a communication centre to solve air pollution problems in order to communicate situation and expectation of particulate matter, recommendation for practice, and performance to the public. In addition, it also serves to analyze data to report information and provide early warnings about particulate matter situation, sources of particulate matter, critical areas, proposals for problem solving to provincial operation centers and agencies to elevate supervision and control of the sources and number of hotspots.

According to the budget, relevant agencies have been assigned propose accelerated projects for the receiving central budget in 2024. Since 2025, project will be proposed in the strategic plan to manage PM_{2.5} problem. Moreover, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has discussed with private sectors, to jointly support forestfire and particulate matter problem solving by providing benefits according to the investment promotion of the Board of Investment (BOI) to ensure that the problems will be solved quickly and get along with with the situation, Mr. Jatuporn said.