

China implements coordinated control of PM2.5 and O₃

China will implement a plan to control the country's major air pollutants, PM_{2.5} and ozone (O₃), the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) said Tuesday.

While reducing the level of hazardous fine particle matter PM_{2.5} is still the top priority, the country will take measures to simultaneously curb O₃ pollution, Liu Youbin, a MEP official, said at a press conference.

In order to contain O₃, the country will reduce the emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOC), which are considered O₃ precursors.

China's environmental authorities have been undertaking inspections to discover the sources of air pollution, especially in the smog-plagued Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei area.

The MEP reiterated Tuesday that it will have "zero tolerance" for companies that have violated environmental laws, and encouraged local authorities to protect the legal rights of enterprises that abide by the law.

Latest data showed that the density of PM_{2.5} nationwide dropped 6.9 percent year on year in July, while Beijing reported PM_{2.5} density of 64 micrograms per cubic meter in the first seven months of 2017, down 34.7 percent from the same period in 2013.