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Commercialization of AI-Enabled Products Set to Boost Environmental Industry

- Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment launches a KRW 41 billion program to support development of environmental products
- Call for proposals from March 19 to April 20 will identify 17 promising projects
- Tailored support for companies, from rapid market entry within one year to intensive two-year development

The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE, Minister Kim Sungwhan) and the Korea Environmental Industry & Technology Institute will launch a public call for the “2026 AI-Enabled Product Rapid Commercialization Support Program (Environment)” from March 19 to April 20 to promote the swift commercialization of environmental products and services utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) technologies.

This initiative is being jointly implemented by 11 relevant ministries* to accelerate the AI transformation (AX) across industry and everyday life. The government will support the development and launch of a total of 246 products and services and plans to invest KRW 754 billion over 2026–2027.

* Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment; Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources; Ministry of Science and ICT; Ministry of National Defense; Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Ministry of Health and Welfare; Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport; Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries; Ministry of SMEs and Startups; Ministry of Food and Drug Safety; and the Ministry of Planning and Budget (lead coordinator)

Through this call, the MCEE will select a total of 17 promising AI-enabled products or services across five key climate, energy, and environmental sectors: carbon neutrality, water management, resource circulation, environmental safety, and weather and climate,

and support their commercialization with approximately KRW 41 billion in government funding.*

* Government funding of KRW 41 billion (KRW 30.5 billion in 2026), with private contributions of at least 30% of the total project cost

This program targets AI-enabled products and services that are closely related to the environmental industry and everyday life and can be brought to market within a short period. Support is divided into two categories based on the nature of the product or service and the duration of support.

Type 1 covers projects with a one-year support period. It selects 10 projects involving products or services at the prototype-completion stage, where the application of commercial AI models enables development within one year and rapid market entry, with approximately KRW 20 billion in support.

Type 2 covers projects with a two-year support period. It selects seven projects that have high public utility and strong potential impact but require a longer development timeline. Although these projects have not yet reached the final development stage, they show significant potential for advancement, and will receive approximately KRW 21 billion in support over two years.

The MCEE will provide tailored support based on company needs, covering the full range of costs required for commercialization of products and services, including AI model development, demonstration and mass production system building, certification and intellectual property acquisition, and consulting.

In addition, systematic follow-up support will be provided to help expand project outcomes. This includes offering opportunities to attract investment in connection with the Green IR Day, as well as participation in domestic and international environmental industry exhibitions such as the ESG-ECO EXPO Korea and Global Green Hub Korea. Furthermore, support will be provided for securing commercialization funding through programs such as Future Environmental Industry Development loans, green policy financing, and green transition guarantees.

In addition, the MCEE will continue to work closely with relevant ministries to provide comprehensive and effective support for businesses, including designation as an innovative product for public procurement by the Public Procurement Service, preferential access to startup support funds or innovative growth funds from the Ministry of SMEs and Startups, and application of ICT regulatory sandboxes by the Ministry of Science and ICT.

Detailed implementation plans for the program can be found in the official notices posted on the websites of the MCEE (www.mcee.go.kr), the Korea Environmental Industry & Technology Institute (www.keiti.re.kr), and the Environmental Technology & Industry One-Stop Service (www.ecosq.or.kr). Further details will also be provided through the project briefing session.*

* (Date/Time & Venue) March 25, 2026 (Wednesday), 14:00 - 16:00, Main Auditorium (2nd Floor), Korea Environmental Industry & Technology Institute headquarters (with simultaneous online livestream)

Ahn Se-chang, Deputy Minister for Planning and Coordination Office at the MCEE, stated, “We will actively support this program so that it serves as a catalyst for expanding AI-enabled environmental products in the market, contributing to the resolution of environmental issues in people’s daily lives and to the growth of the environmental industry.”