



**China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development
2017 AGM**

**Open Forum on Environment and Development
9 December 2017
Beijing, China**

Green Urbanization and Environmental Quality Improvement

FORUM OBJECTIVE

This forum will gather together high-level representatives from national governments, international organizations, research institutes, business and local governments to discuss and share experiences in planning and building the green cities of tomorrow. The intent is to promote green urbanization with the special attention given to the protection and improvement of environmental quality of the cities' surrounding rural and semi-rural areas.

VALUE OF THE FORUM

CCICED Phase VI research will be organized under four overarching research task force/themes, one of which is **Green Urbanization and Environmental Quality Improvement**. This Open Forum will provide useful suggestion for identifying future topics under this theme. As well, discussions in this forum may contribute to the 2017 recommendations to the State Council. This forum builds on a roundtable held by CCICED in September 2017 on Green Urbanization. Together these meetings will help in the scoping effort of this complex topic.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1. How to facilitate regional, cross sector and multi-stakeholder (government, business and general public) cooperation to stimulate innovative and integrated solutions for urban environment improvement?**
- 2. How to integrate ecosystem approach and the value of ecosystem services into urban development plans for green urbanization?**
- 3. How can north-south and south-south countries best collaborate for green urban development?**

BACKGROUND

Cities cover 2% of the Earth's land, but host 50% of the population and generate 70% of the GDP, and further produce 70% of the Earth's greenhouse gases. By 2030, about 60% of the world population will be in cities, and about 95% of the cities' expansion will be happened in developing countries.

According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics of China, in 2016 the urbanization rate of China's permanent population was 57.35%. According to the experience of developed countries, China is still in a period with accelerating urbanization. While bringing huge

opportunities of economic development and livelihood improvement, rapid urbanization also brings enormous pressure on environment and resources – from air, water and soil pollution, through ecosystem degradation to pressure of resource consumption. China's huge population base and uneven regional development creates other challenges for China. In the 19th National Congress of the CPC, China's President Xi Jinping announced that we are now facing a new contradiction between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's ever-growing needs for a better life, and that we should treat ecological environment as if it is our own life. These new situations and challenges together with new opportunities brought by information and technology development require us to explore new solutions for green urban development and environmental quality improvement.

Environmental problems brought by cities are not isolated and limited by city boundaries. Air pollution, for example, requires city cluster and other regional solutions. Environment quality improvement requires regional, cross-sector and multi stakeholders' coordination and cooperation.

In addition, in the past unsustainable and non-resilient urbanization patterns have caused the fragmentation, depletion and destruction of habitats, biodiversity loss and the degradation of ecosystems and their services. At the implementation level, there are many problems that need systemic solutions. How to better work together with nature, integrate the eco-system approach and value the eco-system services in urban development plans, is key for building harmony between city and nature, and to improve the life quality of urban citizens.