



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

Open Forum on Environment and Development
10 December 2017
Beijing, China

Green Development Transformation in China and the World

FORUM OBJECTIVE

China is anticipated to play a more active role in shaping green global governance and transformative action in the years ahead, through sharing of its own green development experience, and by international cooperation for human wellbeing and eco-environmental improvements within China and elsewhere in the world. The objective of this Forum is to identify important priorities for strategic policy action to further promote green development in China and the world, especially over the coming 10 to 15 years.

VALUE OF THE FORUM

CCICED Phase VI (2017 – 2021) research will be organized under four overarching research themes, one of which is **Global Governance and Ecological Civilization**. This Open Forum will provide useful ideas for future topics under this theme. As well, discussions in this forum may contribute to this year's recommendations of CCICED to the State Council.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. **What are the most significant improvement needs in Green Global Governance? Which are likely to be of highest value and have a good chance of both short and long-term success?**
2. **To what extent should greater attention be given to emerging ideas such as those associated with digital age, sharing economy, and innovations in green finance?**
3. **How can China ensure its green development, environmental protection and ecological civilization goals are met? Also, how can China stay competitive and continue its economic growth if it steps up its environment and development efforts in order to accelerate progress on important green global targets?**

BACKGROUND

National level and global environmental challenges require an urgent and comprehensive transformation towards green development. There has been some encouraging progress in global governance on these issues, such as the follow-up to the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG2030), etc. The coming decade is a critical period, since well-defined targets have been set through comprehensive international agreements as well as more specific arrangements. Over the past few years environmental sustainability has been mainstreamed to an unprecedented degree within enterprises, the financial sector, in cities and rural settings throughout the world. However, political, economic and social

situations differ, within and between countries and progress on environment and development stewardship is affected. Implementation capacity is needed. Even for the most environmentally advanced countries, urgent attention is required to accelerate green development progress.

Green development can offer new economic, technological and social improvements. From the time of the seminal 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development document, *Our Common Future*, to the 2012 Rio Earth Summit's important point about designing *The Future We Want*, it has been apparent that nations and the world community can shape desirable outcomes through efforts that are inclusive, with many types of partnerships, and sharing of experience. Through improved governance, rule of law, and adequate financial mechanisms, we can address the challenges of existing problems, and take advantage of emerging opportunities as attitudes and technologies change. The digital age offers many innovations to help us live well and sustainably.

China has taken a proactive and long-term strategic approach to a green development. At the very significant 19th Communist Party of China (CPC) Congress, there was a strong affirmation that China must place greater effort to solve its serious environmental protection problems. President Xi Jinping has called for greater effort internationally to achieve a "common future", where the well being of people throughout the world can be improved. China has pledged to share its own experience to help other nations and peoples in their development, and to protect the planet's eco-environment. China recognizes that over time it can contribute to addressing many of the global environmental issues, including ways to partner with developing countries on their environmental improvements, actions to improve global green governance, and to improve actions that will reduce global threats such as climate change, biodiversity loss, unsustainable production and consumption, and toxic substances.

These efforts will be linked to three key strategic targets of China's own development: the goal of becoming a moderately well off society by 2020; a basically modern country by 2035; and a prosperous country by 2050. By 2050 the intent is to build an Ecological Civilization in China, and also to share this experience globally. In the period from now until 2035, major environmental declines need to be reversed. Action must be accelerated on air, soil and water pollution in cities and the countryside, low carbon economy, green industrial changes, sustainable resource use, biodiversity protection, and ocean sustainable use. The second period from 2030 to 2050 will see tremendous changes in energy and environment relationships, plus sustainable consumption and new production approaches that we can hardly comprehend today.

China has multiple roles in the world. It is the largest developing country, it has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty in recent decades, and it is the fastest-growing consumer market. Other developing countries are eager to achieve similar economic development for their people. China is also well prepared to play a much more active role in the world through the Belt and Road Initiative. It has contributed more than one third of global economic growth in every year since 2012.

China cannot avoid being a major player in the global green transformation. It is the world's largest greenhouse gas emitter, pollution is still widespread, and environmental quality in its large cities is still far from ideal. And there is great awareness among the Chinese population about the environmental problems, leading to strong political momentum. On the global stage, China's efforts to create an ecological civilization are of major relevance to others.