



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

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

**Green Belt and Road Initiative and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development**

FORUM OBJECTIVE

This CCICED Forum will explore the challenges and opportunities of aligning the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN SDG2030).

VALUE OF THE FORUM

CCICED Phase VI (2017 – 2021) research will be organized under four overarching research themes, one of which is **Green Energy, Investment and Trade**. Discussions in this forum may contribute to this year's policy recommendations to the State Council and will provide useful topics for CCICED's future research.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1. What has been China's progress and experience of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, domestically and in relationship to other countries?**
- 2. How will China enhance its engagement of International Organizations and platforms in creating a Green and Sustainable Belt and Road?**
- 3. What is the role of technological innovation and trade in realizing the 2030 SDGs?**
- 4. What are the challenges and opportunities presented by the 2030 SDGs to developing countries?**
- 5. How can the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and other financial institutions such as the China Development Bank and the EXIM Bank best promote green finance and support green infrastructure construction in Belt and Road projects?**

BACKGROUND

Developing economies around the world are driving global growth. As these economies continue to grow and expand, there is increased need for infrastructure and economic integration. This moment in global development is a critical inflection point in which the pressing needs for infrastructure and growth must be met with an eye towards long term sustainability and environmental protection.

China's own experience in answering the challenge of encouraging economic growth while seeking to protect the environment has yielded positive and cautionary examples. Furthermore, China is an important participant in infrastructure and construction, and is therefore vitally positioned to partner with developing countries to meet their infrastructure and development needs. The Belt and Road Initiative seeks to achieve this vision by fostering economic and policy integration across a Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

In practice, the Belt and Road Initiative is a multi-dimensional infrastructure network with key economic corridors at its foundation. It achieves this primarily through an integrated network of transport infrastructure that will link China with other regions physically, financially, socially, and digitally. BRI has five priority themes that facilitate the formation of these linkages: policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people to people linkages. China is estimated to invest 150 billion USD in Belt and Road countries in the next five years, which will meet significant regional infrastructure gaps in agriculture, water management, electric power, communications, and transport. A green Belt and Road would definitely contribute to the sustainable development of relevant countries.

China has committed to aligning the Belt and Road Initiative with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Formed in collaboration with over 100 countries and based on the experience of the Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs are a broad framework that cuts across three dimensions: social, economic, and environmental. To achieve these goals, coordination is needed at local, national, regional, and global levels. In particular, the United Nations has outlined three broad principles for successful implementation: universality, integrated approach, and leave no-one behind.

As China realizes the vision of Belt and Road, the question of how the broad framework of the 2030 Agenda is applied to specific infrastructure projects becomes critically important. In particular, the choices of multilateral lending institutions and Chinese development banks are critical to ensuring sustainable development, as most of BRI projects are supported by loans for infrastructure investment.

Green Finance is an exciting category of investment that seeks to identify environmentally sustainable projects and initiatives, as well as a set of policies that seeks to encourage the development of a more sustainable economy. The decisions of financial institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Silk Road Fund, the China Development Bank, the China Export-Import Bank, and other Chinese state-owned banks are critical to shaping the long-term sustainability of Belt Road projects.