

Annual General Meeting

The 4th Annual General Meeting of CCICED Phase III held in Beijing

The 4th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of CCICED Phase III was held in Beijing on November 18-20, 2005. Mr. Zeng Peiyan, Vice Premier of the State Council and Chairman of CCICED, attended the opening ceremony and addressed the meeting. More than 150 participants including CCICED Members, leaders of relevant ministries or departments of the State Council, representatives from international organizations, experts and scholars participated in the Meeting.

Premier Wen Jiabao met international members and participants of the 4th AGM of CCICED Phase III



Premier Wen Jiabao met international members and participants of the 4th AGM of CCICED Phase III on November 20 in Beijing.

Premier Wen said, the Chinese Government is working out the 11th Five-Year Plan on National Economic and Social Development, which presents the objectives not only doubling GDP in 2010 on the base of 2000, but also reducing the energy consumption per unit of GDP by 20% on the base of 2000 and raising resource efficiency and curbing the trend of ecological degradation. These are important measures for achieving sustainable development.

Premier Wen pointed out that the next 5 years is the key period for economic development of China. It is also the period when various contradictions including the problems such as resources and environment are more pre-eminent. We shall consider the carrying capacity of resources and the environment when making overall plan, vigorously facilitate strategic economic restructuring and transform economic growth mode. We should take resource saving and conservation as one of the basic State policies, develop circular economy, protect ecological environment and accelerate the building of a resource-saving and environment-friendly society so as to promote the harmony among economic development, population, resources and the environment.

Finally, Premier Wen stressed that resources conservation, the protection of environment and achieving sustainable development require long-term and unremitting efforts of the Chinese Government and people as well as learning state-of-art technology and advanced experience from developed countries. He hoped that the international experts actively put forward comments and suggestions to contribute to sustainable development of China.

Mr. Greenhill, the International Executive Vice Chair of CCICED and President of Canadian International Development Agency, briefed to Premier Wen the main outcomes of the discussion of 2005 AGM and Policy Recommendations to the Chinese Government on behalf of CCICED.

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Vice Premier Zeng Peiyan met Mr. Greenhill, President of CIDA

Vice Premier Zeng Peiyan met Mr. Greenhill in the morning of November 18, President of Canadian International Development Agency.

Vice Premier Zeng said, as a high-level international consulting institution, CCICED has put forward many valuable comments and suggestions on the cause of environment and development of China. He hoped that CCICED continue its proactive work to study major topics, enhance the exchange of experience in environmental protection and provide valuable reference to the improvement of environmental policies of China. Meanwhile, China is willing to, with CCICED as the bridge or platform, enhance our cooperation with other countries on environmental investment, technology and relevant projects. In doing so, CCICED will make greater contribution to the realization of coordinated and sustainable development of China in an all round way. Meanwhile, Vice Premier Zeng expressed his appreciation to the support of Mr. Greenhill and CCICED Members as well as the long term assistance of the Government of Canada and other governments or international institutions.

Mr. Xie Zhenhua, Minister of SEPA and the Chinese Executive Vice Chair of CCICED, attended the meeting.

Speech of AGM

Speech at the opening ceremony of the 4th AGM of CCICED Phase III by Vice Premier Zeng Peiyan

Respected Council Members, Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. The Annual General Meeting of CCICED convenes again in Beijing. I'm very glad to meet with you again to deliberate the practical issues related to China's environment and development. At the previous two AGMs, we discussed issues related to the establishment of a well-off society & new sustainable industrialization mode, and sustainable rural development respectively. At this AGM, we will talk about sustainable urbanization, which is a topic of great importance to China, which is now at a stage of rapid industrialization and urbanization. On behalf of the Chinese Government, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the Council Members and guests and heartfelt thanks to your long-lasting support to China's environment and development.



In 2005, the general situation of China's environment and development is good. The national economy has been growing steadily and rapidly, and GDP growth is expected to exceed 9%. Various social undertakings, including education, health care and culture, have been further promoted, and the income of urban and rural residents has increased significantly. The environmental quality of the country remained generally stable, and the environmental quality of some cities and regions have improved. Also, the environmental awareness of the public has been raised remarkably. However, we should also be well aware of the fact that along with rapid economic growth, there has been rapid growth in resource consumption and the pollution load, posing great pressure on the economy and society. Therefore, we are faced with the crucial and urgent task of easing resource and environmental constraints and promoting sustainable development.

The 5th Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, which was held recently, examined and approved the proposal for the formulation of the national economic and social development plan for the next "Five-Year Period". The plan will aim to promote scientific development, enhance renovation by relying mainly on China's own efforts,

improve institutions, and promote social harmony. The two major objectives of the plan are to 1) double the per capita GDP of 2000 by 2010 through adjusting economic structure, improving efficiency, and reducing consumption; and 2) reduce the energy consumption for per unit GDP by 20% within five years through promoting the efficiency of resource utilization, so as to basically contain the trend of ecological and environmental degradation and effectively prevent the rapid loss of arable land.

In order to meet these targets, we will speed up the transformation of the traditional economic growth patterns, adopt resource conservation as a basic state policy, strengthen efforts in environmental protection, and adopt a series of measures to establish a resource-saving and environmentally-friendly society and promote the coordination among economic development, population growth, and environmental protection. In particular, we will focus on the following key tasks:

First, we will devote comprehensive efforts to resource conservation. We shall pay high attention to both the development and the conservation of resources, but will give priority to the latter. We will devote major efforts to the comprehensive utilization of resources (including energy, water, land, timber, etc.) according to the principles of "reduce, reuse, and recycle". We will also promote cleaner production as a means of establishing a conservation-based economic growth mode that is characterized by low input, low consumption, low pollution, and high efficiency. We will establish pilot programs in key sectors, industrial parks, and cities, and establish a system for resource reuse and recycling, so as to promote the development of circular economy. We shall encourage the production and use of resource-saving and environmentally-friendly products, foster a favorable social atmosphere for resource conservation, and build healthy consumption patterns.

Second, we will further strengthen pollution prevention and control. We will adhere to the principle of comprehensive treatment with main emphasis on prevention. Pollution and conservation problems will be tackled first from their sources. The traditional approach of "taking treatment measures only after pollution has already occurred" must be changed. We will strictly implement the system of controlling the total pollution load, the pollution permit system, and the environmental impact assessment (EIA) system, in order to solve the problems that constrain social and economic development, especially those seriously jeopardizing people's health. We will continue to implement pollution prevention and control programs in key river basins and key regions. Special attention should be paid to the treatment of water pollution, particularly pollution by non-point agricultural sources. We will implement comprehensive environmental treatment programs for large and medium-sized cities, including the prevention and control of industrial pollution (including SO₂ and greenhouse gas emissions), the proper disposal of household and hazardous waste, and the reduction of the total pollution load.

Third, we will promote ecological conservation in a practical and effective way. We will give priority to ecological conservation, and ensure that natural resources are developed in a regulated way. Our focus will be on the control of irrational resource exploitation activities, in order to protect water, land, grassland, and oceans, etc. We will continue to promote ecological programs such as the "Natural Forest Protection Program", the "Program of Converting Cropland back to Forest", the "Program of Converting Grazing Land back to Grassland", the "Sand Source Treatment Program", and the "Soil Erosion Treatment Program", so as to promote the protection of nature reserves and regions that serve key ecological functions. Given regional variations in environmental carrying capacity and development potential, different ecological requirements should be put forward for different regions. According to the ecological functions that a region serves, development activities will be regulated, limited, restricted, or even banned. Such an ecological zoning system will be established step by step with a view to promoting a harmonious relationship between human beings and nature.

Fourth, we will adopt an integrated approach to promote sustainable development. Industrialization should provide technical support for agricultural production, and urban development should support rural development. We will promote rural development through rational rural development planning, land conservation, and rural environmental treatment. In

the mean time, we will coordinate the development of large, medium and small-sized cities and towns. We will aim to increase the carrying capacity of cities and towns on a step-by-step basis through land conversion, intensive development, and rational planning. We will promote the urbanization process actively and steadily through rational regional planning, urban planning, and land use planning, with a view to improving people's living environment, protecting local characteristics, and increasing the quality of administration. Policies will be adopted to promote scientific and technological innovation, so as to support the enterprises in upgrading technologies for energy and resource conservation and implementing the concept of circular economy. On a step-by-step basis, we will establish a pricing system which can reflect the scarcity of natural resources, the market supply and demand, and the cost of environmental damage. In particular, we'll establish a financial and taxation system that is favorable for the transformation of the traditional economic growth patterns, for scientific and technological progress, and for resource conservation and environmental protection. We will improve the existing environmental financing mechanisms by resorting to all potential sources and channels. Market instruments will be used to encourage the private sector to participate in pollution control. An ecological compensation mechanism should also be established. These policies will provide institutional support for the establishment of a society that is resource-conserving and environmentally friendly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The next five years will be a key period for China's drive to build a well-off society, and for China's environmental protection. As the world's largest developing country, China must do well in tackling development and environmental issues, which will not only enhance welfare for 1.3 billion people but also contribute significantly to global sustainable development. Based on the principle of "mutual benefits", China would like to further enhance international cooperation in the following areas of environment and development.

1) Environmental projects: For some period in the future, China will strengthen efforts on water pollution prevention and control in the following regions: the "Three Rivers" (Huaihe River, Haihe River and Liaohe River) and the "Three Lakes" (Taihu Lake, Chaohu Lake and Dianchi Lake); the Three Gorges Reservoir region; the upper reaches of the Yangtze River; the upper and middle reaches of the Yellow River; and, the water source areas for the "South-to-North Water Transportation Project", as well as the areas along the transportation lines of the Project. China will also implement a number of environmental engineering projects in urban wastewater treatment, garbage disposal, hazardous waste disposal, and desulfurization for power plants. In addition, some key social and economic development programs require the construction of matching environmental infrastructure. We welcome foreign investment in these programs and China's environmental protection in general.

2) Environmental technologies: China's environmental industries are experiencing accelerated development. This opens up a large market. We would like to strengthen international cooperation on environmental industries and technologies so as to introduce advanced technologies, especially key and core technologies, into China from other countries. In particular, we encourage international exchange and cooperation in various forms in the areas of energy-efficient vehicles, energy-efficient and land-saving buildings, clean coal, waste water reuse, sea water desalinization, exhaust gas purification, and large-scale facilities and equipment for the comprehensive utilization of resources, etc.

3) Capacity building for environmental protection: Through the years, we have been learning from the useful experiences of various countries in environmental protection. In the mean time, we have also acquired some experiences and applicable technologies through our own practices. We hope to further increase international exchange to enhance our capacity through environmental training, legislation, planning, policy research, information collection, and monitoring, etc.

4) Global environmental issues: Our current understanding of a number of environmental issues is still limited. To these issues, we haven't figured out effective solutions. This is an important challenge for us all. We encourage Chinese and international environmental scientists and practitioners to increase academic exchange and carry out more joint research in such key issues

as ozone depletion, global warming, desertification, loss of biodiversity, and persistent organic pollutants, etc.

As a signatory to The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and The Kyoto Protocol, the Chinese Government will, according to the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", make joint efforts with other developing countries to build their capacity for sustainable development and contribute to global environmental protection. Meanwhile, we call for the developed countries to shoulder due environmental responsibilities and provide more financial and technical support to developing countries including China.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a bridge between China and the international community in the field of environment and development, the China Council has been playing a unique and important role in promoting China's environmental protection. We hope that Council members will continue to provide us with recommendations on newly emerging issues, and play even greater roles in the future in promoting China's international cooperation in the field of environment and development and helping China transform the traditional economic growth patterns and establish an environmentally friendly society. All experts are welcome to voice your views freely and frankly around the theme of this AGM. Your experience and wisdom will be very useful for China's policy-makers in promoting sustainable urbanization and sustainable development in general. Let's share our ideas and join our hands to create a better future.

Lastly, I wish a complete success to the meeting, and hope you all enjoy your stay in Beijing!

Thank you for your attention!