



Hot Topics

Chinese Premier's presence at Rio+20 significant in advancing global cooperation on sustainable development

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's participation in the Rio+20 Conference is of great significance in pushing forward global cooperation on sustainable development, Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said on June 21.

Wen's various multilateral and bilateral diplomatic activities during the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) highlighted China's strong will to push forward global cooperation on sustainable development, Yang told the press upon the conclusion of Wen's Latin American four-nation tour, which started on June 20.

The Chinese Premier has given several important speeches to explain in a comprehensive manner China's policies concerning sustainable development, Yang said.

At a time when both the world economy and global development cooperation face difficulties, the UN conference has sent a strong signal of a ramp-up in international efforts on sustainable development, thus injecting fresh impetus to the world economy, Yang noted.

The participation of Wen and the Chinese delegation in the meetings have not only exhibit the cooperative and responsible image of China but also helped achieve consensus on advancing sustainable development across the globe, Yang said.

In his speech at the UN conference, Wen reviewed global progress made in the promotion of sustainable development in the past two decades, underlined areas that still need greater efforts and analyzed the prospects of the cause of sustainable development.

The Chinese Premier said that the international community should uphold three principles in this regard, including adherence to a just, equitable and inclusive development process, exploration of effective means to develop green economies and improvement of global governance.

Wen also emphasized China's role as a responsible global player, saying that his country will help other developing nations boost their capability in protecting the environment and coping with climate change.

At a round-table of political and business leaders, Wen focused his speech on China's policies and measures to promote sustainable development, expressing China's determination to push forward scientific and sustainable development.

He attended another sideline meeting marking the 20th anniversary of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development, a high-level non-profit advisory body established in 1992 to provide strategic advice and policy recommendation to the Chinese government.

He talked with Chinese and international council members and scholars, stressing that China is willing to conduct cooperation with related parties on sustainable development.

Leaders attending these meetings spoke

highly of the speeches and remarks by the Chinese Premier, viewing Wen's presence as an important factor for the positive outcome of these gatherings, said Yang.

Wen's participation also enables the world to gain a better knowledge of what China has done for global sustainable development, Yang added. (Source: China Daily)

Wen Jiabao chairs an executive meeting of the State Council to discuss and approve the 12th Five-Year Plan for Energy Saving and Emission Reduction

Premier Wen Jiabao chaired an executive meeting of the State Council on July 11 to discuss The 12th Five-Year Plan for Energy Saving and Emission Reduction (hereinafter referred to as the Plan).

The meeting approved the Plan which requires that target driven mechanism shall be developed to speed up the transformation of economic development pattern, sound and effective incentive and constraint mechanism shall be established and improved, energy efficiency shall be improved significantly and discharge of pollutants shall be reduced remarkably to achieving the binding targets by the end of 2015 of reducing energy consumption per unit GDP by 16%, reducing the discharge of both COD and SO₂ by 8% and reducing the discharge of both ammonia nitrogen and NO_x by 10% compared with that of 2010.

To achieve the above targets, the following tasks will be done: 1) Adjust and optimize industrial structure. We will curb too fast growth of industries of high energy consumption and high emissions; speed up phasing out of outdated production capacity; upgrade traditional industries; adjust energy mix and facilitate the development of service industry and emerging industries of strategic importance. 2) Enhance energy efficiency level. We will strengthen energy saving management in industries, buildings, transportation, agriculture and rural areas, commercial and civil use as well as public institutions and carry out energy saving and

low carbon action plans in 10,000 enterprises. 3) Strengthen reduction of major pollutants. We will strengthen the prevention and control of pollutants of industries such as power, iron & steel and cement; facilitate control of rural pollution and clean breeding of livestock and fowls; control vehicle emissions and promote control of fine particulates in the atmosphere. 4) Carry out public campaigns for energy saving and emission reduction. We will encourage green production mode and sustainable consumption pattern suitable to the actual situation of China.

The Plan identifies 10 key programs and ensuring measures such as energy efficiency renovation, promotion of energy saving products, extension of contractual energy management, demonstration and commercialization of energy saving technology, construction of urban sewage treatment facilities, prevention and control of water pollution of key river basins, removal of sulfur and nitrogen from emissions, prevention and control of pollution from scaled breeding farms of livestock and fowls, extension and demonstration of circular economy, and practice and capacity building of energy saving and emission reduction.

The meeting required that all regions and departments should further strengthen the examination and check on the fulfillment of target responsibility and ensure the achievement of energy saving and emission reduction targets during the 12th Five-Year Plan period. (Source: Xinhua News Agency)

Chinese Vice Premier Li Keqiang presides over the first Meeting of China National Committee on Biodiversity Protection

Vice Premier of the State Council and Chairman of China National Committee on Biodiversity Protection Li Keqiang presided over the First Meeting of China National Committee on Biodiversity Protection and made remarks on June 4.

The meeting reviewed *China's Action Plan to Enforce UN Biodiversity 2011-2020 Strategic Plan and Implementation of the National Biodiversity Conservation Strategies and Action Plans*. The meeting noted that China has made remarkable achievements in conservation of biodiversity over the past few years. Ecosystems in some regions have been recovered and the numbers of some important species under key protection program has risen steadily. Public awareness in biodiversity conservation has been raised enormously. In the meanwhile, we must realize that the overall declining trend of biodiversity in China has not been fundamentally curbed and the situation remains severe.

Vice Premier Li pointed out that biological resources are important economic and strategic resources. At present, bio-engineering is in the forefront of modern technological development and biological industry is emerging as in an industry of strategic significance, their potential value is nearly possible to measure. Rational development and use of biodiversity resource in the course of protection is leading a new round of technological and industrial revolution and has become a vital marker to measure a country's competence and sustainability. Therefore, we should consciously take conservation of biodiversity as a strategic option to achieve effective protection, sustainable utilization and benefit sharing of biodiversity. This is not only the need for developing ecological civilization, but also the need for participating international competition and guaranteeing long-term development.

Li said that we will take into account both biodiversity protection and socioeconomic

development at present and for future period. We will stick to pursuing development in protection and securing protection in development. We believe that protection is for the sake of more robust development. We will focus on biodiversity protection in key regions and of key species, and implement major projects such as nature reserves and biological genetic resource bank. Ecological red line shall be set for important ecological functional zones, environmental sensitive and fragile areas to prohibit any development activities that have nothing to do with protection. Biodiversity protection should be given full consideration in construction projects for ecological rehabilitation.

Li emphasized that to strengthen biodiversity protection, we shall go one step further to reform and opening up. We shall improve the institutional mechanisms, especially providing financial and taxation compensation and support to improve the eco compensation mechanism which incorporates biodiversity protection. We will lay emphasis on poverty alleviation and livelihood improvement in areas with rich biodiversity. This will ensure that local communities and local governments will not suffer economic loss due to protection of ecosystem and biodiversity and will be able to equally share the benefits of protection. Cooperation with the world shall also be strengthened.

Members of the National Committee on Biodiversity Protection and those in charge of related departments attended the meeting. Mr. Zhou Shengxian, Vice Chairman of China National Committee on Biodiversity Protection and MEP Minister made a speech at the meeting. (Source: www.gov.cn)

CCICED Activities

Premier Wen Jiabo presides over CCICED+20 Side Event in Rio and meets with CCICED Council members

At 14:20, June 21 local time, Chinese Premier of the State Council Wen Jiabao, who was attending the UN Conference on Sustainable Development at Rio de Janeiro, walked to the China Corner near the

conference venue in the misty rain to take part in the CCICED+20 side event and discuss with the Council members and ministers on the sustainable development of China and the world.

20 years ago, it was in Rio that the UN Conference on Environment and Development was held and the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development was established. Composed of high-profile figures and well-known experts in the field of environment and development home and abroad, the Council devotes itself to providing policy recommendations on major issues concerning China's environment and development. Over the past two decades, more than 1,000 experts and scholars from different countries contributed to nearly 100 policy research projects, completed about 140 research reports and offered more than 200 pieces of policy recommendations. Since its establishment, it has formed a close bond with Premier Wen Jiabao, who acted as Chairperson of CCICED from 1998 to 2002 and attended 15 of its 20 annual meetings.

At the plenary session of the Rio + 20 on June 20, Wen elaborated the position and ideas of the Chinese government over sustainable development and put forward four measures to support the sustainable development of the world, which were highly welcomed by the participants. Learned that the Council would hold a side event to mark its 20th anniversary on June 21, the ministers of some countries actively requested to participate.

Premier Wen paid special attention to today's meeting. He was originally invited to give a keynote speech, but he noted that most of the Council members were his old friends and he would like more to listen to their minds.

Upon seated, Wen said that over the past 20 years, the membership composition of the Council has changed several times, however, one thing has remained unchanged, that is the Council's strong confidence in China's commitment to sustainable development and environmental protection. The reason

behind its strong dynamism is because it fixed its attention on an eternal theme, that is, "the sustainable development of China". "I want to take today's opportunity to listen to your views", he said.

The Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Steiner spoke first. Once a member of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th phases of CCICED, he is now Vice Chairperson of the 5th Phase of the Council. He said CCICED has become a significant platform for interactions between China and the world. With China's own development, CCICED's work also evolved from pollution control to environmental governance, and ultimately to the transition towards a green economy. It speaks to the richness of the experience that China now brings to the international discussions and its own role in the world as the second largest economy.

Premier Wen responded that Mr. Steiner touched upon four particular issues. The course of China's environmental protection endeavor in the past two decades can be summed up as a process featuring pollution control, environmental management and shift in the economic growth model. For the 12th Five-Year Plan period, we have set the goal of accelerating the shift of China's growth model and making faster adjustments to China's economic structure and we also need to make energetic efforts to develop a green economy. CCICED not only facilitated China's cooperation with the world, but also had significant influence worldwide. As a big country with strong sense of responsibility, China adheres to the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and has acted as a big country.

Mr. Leape, the Director General of the World Wildlife Fund, was also a member of CCICED. He said the Rio+20 Conference highlights the concept of "natural capital". Our economy depends more and more on natural resources including forests, water and land. He noted: "The concept of ecological civilization set forth by China is similar to natural capital. However, I prefer the idea of low carbon economy."

Premier Wen responded that the Chinese

people fully recognize the significance of conserving natural resources. In particular in China we have fed 1/5 of the world's population with 9% of the global farmland and with 28% of the global average level of freshwater per capita terms. Under such circumstances, we must further recognize that we need to continue to utilize water and land on an economical basis. The concept of ecological civilization is an overarching one that is on a par with such concepts as political civilization, economic civilization and social civilization. The essence of such a concept is the harmony between man and nature. Low carbon economy is the salient feature of ecological civilization.

Premier Wen continued that since China's reform and opening up, the Chinese economy has been growing at an average annual rate of over 9.9%. In the course of pursuing development, we place high importance on the construction of ecological civilization. During the 11th Five-Year Plan period, we cut China's energy consumption per unit of GDP by 19%. On that basis, we have set the target for the 12th Five-Year Plan period to cut energy consumption per unit of GDP by 16%. It is a binding target and has been reviewed and approved by the National People's Congress.

Over the past 20 years, international organizations and environmentalist have been very keen in taking part in the activities of the Council. At the same time, the Chinese Government has shown tremendous broad-mindedness and patience in taking in the views put forward by the members. They have enjoyed a good coordination. When looking back at the 20 years' development of the Council, Mr. Lees, the former Secretary General of the Club of Rome and one of the founding members of the Council, uttered with a strong feeling that such cooperation has been truly valuable and even rare among members of the international community. He hoped the role of the Council could be strengthened and other countries could benefit from China's experience in creating and managing the Council.

Premier Wen Jiaobao agreed that the issues identified by the Council in the past 20

years suited to the realities of China. When it comes to pollution control, it covers water pollution, air pollution, soil pollution and oceanic pollution, almost all possible areas where pollution may take place in China. In all these areas, the members of the Council made great efforts, did deep research and offered many insightful views which have been of high reference to the decision makers of the Chinese Government.

The participants brought forth a number of frank opinions out of their vision for sustainable development of China and the world. The exchanges between Premier Wen Jiabao and the participants were candid and enthusiastic.

Mr. Clini, Minister for the Environment, Land and Sea of Italy stated that countries have reached a set of agreements on sustainable development at the Rio+20. Now we need actions. China has incorporated sustainable development into its national strategy and the progress of China will benefit the whole world. The Council should be used as an implementing platform for the Rio + 20.

Premier Wen acknowledged that the ultimate purpose of holding such a conference is for all of us to take action. China now faces three daunting tasks. First, we need to continue to pursue development. We need to deliver a decent life for the 1.3 billion Chinese people. Without this, nothing else can be spoken of. Second, we must lift all the poor population out of poverty. Over the past thirty years, we have lifted over 200 million Chinese impoverished population out of poverty, but according to our newly adjusted poverty line last year, we still have 120 million people living below the poverty line. We must continue to close the urban-rural and regional gap in development. While pursuing urbanization and industrialization, we must not neglect the importance of achieving agricultural modernization. While improving the lives of urban residence, we must not forget improving the lives for the rural population. Third, we will continue to pursue green and sustainable development. We must promote economic and social development and

constantly improve people's livelihood on the one hand, and achieve the environmental target and keep committed to green and sustainable development on the other. This is an important and long-term task facing China.

One after another, participants erected their desk label, trying to get a chance of speaking. Premier Wen Jiabao named Danish Environment Minister Auken.

Auken raised a question. Cities are now getting a more important role to play in terms of sustainable development. What effective actions can be taken to achieve the sustainable development of the cities?

After hearing this question raised by this Minister from Copenhagen, Premier Wen said he cannot help but recall the little mermaid and more importantly, the unforgettable experience he had at the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference. In the course of rapid urbanization, the environmental friendly and sustainable development of the cities is becoming more important. There are three things which are vitally important. First, may there be more buses and fewer cars. Second, there should be better development of the garbage disposal facilities in the surrounding areas of cities. Third, there should be equal treatment for rural migrant workers coming to work in the cities. There should not be such a thing as slums for those people.

Mr. Ben Knapen, Minister of European Affairs and International Cooperation from the Netherlands asked a question on new energy resources. Recently, the price for solar panels went down dramatically. How can we achieve sustainable development in these fields?

Premier Wen replied that the Netherlands has a strong capacity in wind power and solar power development and has maintained good cooperation with China. China has also come a long way in the development of solar and wind power facilities in recent years. As a matter of fact, our generation output in recent years has become the largest in the world. However, it

seems that three problems have occurred. The first is the problem of technology, how we can integrate such power into the overall power grid, the big power grid. Second, it is about the pricing of electricity. It involves the overall reform of the electricity pricing regime. The third is about export control. China's solar energy and wind power facilities have encountered the cases of anti dumping and countervailing duties. But even so, we still believe that solar and wind power are promising power sources and we will continue to adjust our energy mix.

The planned one-hour soon passed and Premier Wen Jiabao should leave for another important activity. However, when noticed that the participants have not given full expression to their views, Premier Wen decided to invite one more speaker.

President of French Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations, Ms. Laurence Tubiana expressed her hope that France would copy China in organizing a council of this type. She asked Premier's opinion how China's investment can play a leading role in guiding the financial market to invest in the green economy in the future, giving that the financial market did not work particularly well to direct investment in green economy.

Premier Wen echoed that if there is such as an organization similar to CCICED in France, China would certainly be represented at the organization. With the continuous spread of the international financial crisis and the severe European debt issue, it seems that financing has become a headache topic for many people. But I still believe that financing is essential and it should be rightly guided. The banks should make generous moves towards the development of green economy. Chinese Government has taken such incentive measures to encourage the sustainable development as providing fiscal resources compensation and encouraging the banks to provide financing facilities for those who consume energy-saving household appliances, for those who buy small volume vehicles, and also for those who replace their old household appliances with new ones.

Finally, Premier Wen Jiabao asked Peter Altmaier, Environment Minister of Germany to share his views. Altmaier said both China and Germany have a vital interest in prospering growth. How can we all together think about new and innovative ways of financing investment in green technology all around the world?

Premier Wen said China and Germany will hold the intergovernmental consultation in August. The environment will be prominently featured on the consultation agenda. Germany has formulated ambitious targets for the development of renewable energy which require both fiscal and financial support. When it comes to the support for green economy development, the banks must show a strategic vision on the one hand, and the government must put forward a certain amount of fiscal guarantees for financing the development of green economy on the other. I hope that the governors of both central banks will be present at the upcoming intergovernmental consultation.

The meeting was prolonged for nearly 20 minutes. Premier Wen Jiabao stood up and bade farewell to the Council members by handshake. He expected more quality policy recommendations from them and expected the world economy could overcome the current difficulties and move towards sustainable development. (Source: Xinhua News Agency)

Minister Zhou Shengxian meets with foreign representatives attending CCICED+20 Side Event at UN Conference on Sustainable Development

MEP Minister Zhou Shengxian, who accompanied Premier Wen Jiabao at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro of Brazil, met with foreign representatives who attended the CCICED+20 Side Event in the afternoon of June 21 local time, Mr. Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Leape, Director General of the WWF, Mr. Corrado

Clini, Minister of Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Seas, Ms. Auken, Environment Minister of Denmark, Mr. Ben Knapen, Minister for European Affairs and International Cooperation of the Netherlands and Ms. Annika Markovic, Sweden's environmental ambassador with the Swedish Ministry of the Environment.

At the meetings, MEP Minister Zhou Shengxian spoke highly of the cooperation and fruitful achievements under CCICED framework and expressed heartfelt thanks to the continuous support of all parties to CCICED over the past years. He hoped that all participants pay attention to and support the long-term development of CCICED, further strengthen exchanges and cooperation with the help of CCICED platform, and jointly facilitate sustainable development of China and the whole world.

Foreign representatives congratulated the achievements of the Chinese Government in environmental protection and sustainable development and felt an honor to take part in this process through CCICED. They expressed their willingness to strengthen environmental cooperation with the Chinese side and actively participate in and support the activities of CCICED.

Mr. Li Ganjie, MEP Vice Minister and Mr. Xu Qinghua, MEP Chief Engineer on Nuclear Safety and Director General of Department of International Cooperation, MEP accompanied Minister Zhou Shengxian during the meetings.

Vice Minister Li Ganjie meets with Canadian Vice Environmental Minister

Vice Minister Li Ganjie, who attended UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro of Brazil, met with Ms. Andrea Lyon, Vice Environment Minister of Canada on June 21.

At the meeting, Vice Minister Li Ganjie spoke highly of environmental protection cooperation between China and Canada. He pointed out that China and Canada have

wide and good cooperation foundation with active achievements in the fields such as pollution prevention and control, certification of environmental technology and CCICED project. In particular, the cooperation under CCICED framework over the past 20 years has obtained great achievements. The achievements of CCICED depend on the strong support of the Canadian Government as the most important donor of CCICED over the past years. He hoped that the Canadian Government would keep on its support to the activities of new phase of CCICED and Canadian Ministry of Environment would

play more active and leading role in this cooperation. Vice Minister Li also introduced to Ms. Andrea Lyon the key areas of China's National 12th Five-Year Plan for Environmental Protection.

Vice Minister Andrea Lyon indicated that the Canadian Government attaches great importance to the environmental cooperation with China and the cooperation with CCICED. Canada is willing to further deepen the bilateral cooperation, actively seek appropriate mechanism and continue the cooperation under the framework of CCICED.

CCICED Policy Studies

The second meeting of CCICED Special Policy Study on Marine Environment Management Mechanism in China - Case Study on Oil Spills in the Bohai Sea holds in Beijing

CCICED Special Policy Study on Marine Environmental Management Mechanism in China - Case Study on Oil Spills in the Bohai Sea was held in Beijing during June 26-27. Professor Shi Peijun, Vice President of Beijing Normal University and Chinese Co-chair of the Special Policy Study and Olof Soren Linden, Professor of World Marine University, International Co-chair jointly chaired the meeting. Mr. Lim Haw Kuang, CCICED member and Executive Chairman of Shell Company in China, Mr. Knut H. Alfsen, assistant of CCICED International Chief Advisor and former President of Norway International Institute for Environment and Climate as well as representatives of CCICED Secretariat and other Chinese and international team members attended the meeting.

The meeting mainly listened the briefings of the progress of each topic including the following: case study on oil spill in the Bohai Sea, marine environment management laws

and institutional response mechanism of China - Case Study on Oil Spills in the Bohai Sea, development of China's marine economy development and its impact analysis, marine economy development and eco environment protection, emergency response to oil spill in North Sea, Norwegian experience: spill containment boom in different areas in emergency response to oil spills, comparison of Chinese and international (The United States + Norway) emergency response to oil spills. In the end, Mr. Lim Haw Kuang presented a summary speech after listening to the briefings of Chinese and international experts on the progress of the research. The experts attending the meeting exchanged views and offered comments and suggestions.

It is decided that each group should make revision based on the comments and suggestions. Meanwhile, a Policy Recommendation Drafting Group led by Vice President Shi Peijun will be established. Professor Wu Wei and Du Qun will be in charge of specific implementation and drafting of general report and policy recommendations. The International Co-chair and experts should accelerate the research on international experience and comparison of Chinese marine environment management regime with international one

and submit the report before the next meeting. The meeting agreed that the Third

Work Meeting will be held in Beijing during August 13-14.

