

CCICED 2021 Highlights Wednesday, 8 September 2021

Open Forums

Green BRI and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development: Zhao Yingmin, CCICED Secretary General, called for, *inter alia*, aligning Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) targets with the 2030 Development Agenda; prioritizing climate change; and mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in BRI projects.

Erik Solheim, World Resources Institute (WRI), underscored the need to strengthen BRI's focus on green finance and green technology transfer, including through closer cooperation with the private sector.

Discussing BRI Green Development and Climate Change Response (SDG13), Zhou Guomei, CCICED Deputy Secretary General, highlighted BRI's support for green development across the Asia-Pacific region and said it is critical to implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Andrew Steer, Bezos Earth Fund, emphasized BRI's "enormous potential" to achieve climate goals and biodiversity objectives and hoped China would use its position as the world's largest importer of soft commodities to galvanize the greening of global supply chains.

Zhou Wei, former Chief engineer of Ministry of Transport, outlined the transportation sector's role in achieving carbon peaking and neutrality, emphasizing that key actions will include electrification of vehicles and transitioning from road to railway.

Zhai Dongshen, National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), lamented that developed countries are not matching China's level of support for replacing coal.

Oyun Sanjaasuren, Green Climate Fund (GCF), noted that countries are de-risking investments into climate smart activities and said BRI could drive transformative change. Lawrence MacDonald, WRI, called for nationally determined contributions to be used in identifying projects for BRI investment.

Noting that fossil fuel subsidies exceed investments in renewables by nearly USD 100 billion a year across Asia and the Pacific, Liu Hongpeng, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), underscored the potential of BRI to accelerate the scaling of clean, affordable energy.

Dimitri de Boer, ClientEarth, moderated the discussion on BRI Green Development and Biodiversity Conservation (SDG15).

Arthur Hanson, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), framed green BRI as nature infrastructure and emphasized the need to look at whole systems.

Narges Saffar, Department of Environment, Iran, said BRI can restore degraded ecosystems and improve resilience. Lena Chen, National Parks Board, Singapore, highlighted Singapore's work to become a "city in nature" by intensifying nature to restore ecosystems.

Lu Winnie, WWF China, recommended that BRI development projects: mobilize stakeholders through a consultative and transparent planning framework; screen for biodiversity risks; and avoid negative impacts on habitats and species. Zhang Xiaoquan, The Nature Conservancy China Program, emphasized the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity concerns in regional development plans.

Shi Yulong, NDRC, moderated the third part of the discussion on BRI green development and post-pandemic resilient recovery.

Juergen Voegelé, World Bank, said BRI could redirect economic development towards a green, resilient and inclusive model and shift international trade of soft commodities towards environmental sustainability.

Wu Huimin, China International Capital Corporation Limited, said carbon pricing, technology promotion, and education can support green recovery. Kevin Gallagher, Boston University, outlined China's successes in global development finance and encouraged China to ramp up ambition and leverage change in multilateral institutions.

Ecological Civilization: Building a Harmonious and Beautiful World for All: This forum was chaired by Gao Jixi, Co-Team Leader, CCICED SPS Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Conservation.

Huang Runqiu, Ministry of Ecology and Environment, noted that only 6 of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets have been partially achieved. Kristin Halvorsen, CICERO Center for International Climate Research, advocated protection of intact nature areas and economic transformation to respect planetary boundaries.

In a discussion of biodiversity governance, Marco Lambertini, World Wide Fund for Nature, lamented the lack of a clear global biodiversity target and called for establishing a goal of "Nature Positive by 2030." Naoko Ishii, University of Tokyo, called for concrete pathways to this goal, especially for food production systems and pricing of natural capital.

Hideki Minamikawa, Japan Environmental Sanitation Center, called for integrating human and environmental health and urgent action to address zoonotic diseases linked to wildlife trade and deforestation. Gao Jixi cited the Chinese concept of Ecological Conservation Redlines as an integrated, systematic approach to ecological protection.

Peter Bakker, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, said businesses need clear targets that are based in science. Partha Sarathi Dasgupta, University of Cambridge, called for ensuring demands on nature do not exceed supply, measures of economic success value natural assets, and institutions and systems adapt to prevent overuse of global commons. Dimitri de Boer, ClientEarth, called for greater legitimacy of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for major projects.

Ouyang Zhiyun, Chinese Academy of Sciences, said mainstreaming ecosystem services and biodiversity into conservation policy can fill gaps in the protected area landscape. Zhu Chunquan, WEF Beijing, called for enhanced accounting mechanisms and attention to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Zhang Xiaoquan, The Nature Conservancy, called for a people-centric perspective with nature-based solutions.

In the session on biodiversity mainstreaming, Liu Ning, Ministry of Ecology and Environment, highlighted successes of red-lining in biodiversity conservation.

Jan-Gunnar Winther, Norwegian Polar Institute, said oceans can deliver up to one-fifth of needed emissions reductions if we: reduce barriers for off-shore renewable energy installations; support low carbon shipping fuels and port facilities; invest in blue carbon solutions; sustainably harvest fish, seaweed and kelp; and reduce barriers for carbon storage in the seabed.

Rodolfo Lacy, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, called for: an ambitious Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework; scaling incentives for biodiversity conservation; and reforming policies that incentivize biodiversity degradation. Beatriz Merino, The Nature Conservancy, called for smarter investment in biodiversity conservation.

Hu Blaolin, Tianjin University, called for balance between development and environmental protection. Zhang Jianyu, BRI Green Development Commission Advisory Committee, advocated for market-based approaches to biodiversity conservation.

Stephan Contius, German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, called for climate and biodiversity actions that account for links to health, agriculture and other sectors. Tim Benton, Chatham House, called for increasing the resilience of ecosystems by stopping land use change, reconsidering consumption patterns, and regenerating degraded areas.

Implementing China's 2030/2060 Carbon Targets and Empowering a High-Quality Development: This session was co-organized by Energy Foundation China, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, and Institutes of Science and Development of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. It was co-chaired by Wang Yi, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and Kate Hampton, Children's Investment Fund Foundation.

Liu Shijin, CCICED Chinese Chief Advisor, noted that China is still developing and must address carbon neutrality, pollution, biodiversity loss and economic growth in an integrated manner.

Nicholas Stern, London School of Economics, outlined "a new growth story" based on natural, human and social capital. Laurence Tubiana, European Climate Foundation, spoke on enhancing global climate action and promoting green recovery. Zou Ji, Energy Foundation China, discussed supportive policies for a new growth logic.

Zhu Baoliang, State Information Center of China, underscored the importance of addressing equality. Jos Delbeke, European University Institute, shared the EU's experiences with target setting. Xu Huaqing, National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation of China, called for targets led by the right philosophy and scientific knowledge.

Noting that China would be undertaking the fastest reduction in carbon intensity in history, Wang Tianyi, China Everbright Environment Group Limited, underscored the importance of improving resilience and green production and consumption.

Nick Mabey, Third Generation Environmentalism (E3G), highlighted the role of the international system in signaling the kind of investment needed, including through a common 1.5°C goal, stronger rules on adaptation and mitigation, and finance cooperation.

In the discussion of policy pathways toward carbon neutrality, Wang Yi discussed institutional arrangements for achieving the dual carbon targets, emphasizing the need to understand the transitional pattern of developing economies. Noting that cities in China also include rural areas, Qiu Baoxing, State Council, addressed the role of cities in achieving carbon neutrality.

Francesco La Camera, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), highlighted IRENA's role as a platform for international cooperation on a more energy efficient, resilient and inclusive world.

Scott Vaughan, CCICED International Chief Advisor, noted the spirit of the Paris Agreement is cooperation based in sovereign self-interest.

Plenary

In the afternoon, Zhao Yingmin and Liu Shijin co-chaired the policy research dialogue. Scott Vaughan discussed key outcomes of a scoping study on nature-based solutions and said CCICED should continue to prioritize this work. Co-leaders of the special policy studies introduced the research and findings from each area.

Climate Governance and China's Role: Kate Hampton, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, recommended, *inter*

alia: that China introduce and gradually strengthen an absolute cap on emissions, prioritize renewable energies; accelerate development of carbon pricing by setting market signals and promoting green financing; and strengthen international climate diplomacy.

Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Conservation: Ma Keping, Chinese Academy of Sciences, recommended: identifying initiatives and actions to maintain high-level momentum; determining how much protected area is needed and where; and elaborating ecological redlining mechanisms.

Global Ocean Governance and Ecological Civilization: Jilan Su, Chinese Academy of Sciences, reported that building a sustainable ocean economy requires governance of sustainable fisheries, marine pollution, and the future of the ocean.

Green Urbanization Strategy and Pathways toward Regional Integrated Development: Zhang Yongsheng emphasized that a green transition will require a development paradigm that uses carbon neutrality and peaking targets, redefines cities, and considers green rural revitalization.

Scoping study on managing river areas: Jan Bakkes presented preparatory studies on the Yangtze and Rhine basins, noting that a special policy study would be doable and interesting.

Green Transformation and Sustainable Social Governance: Ren Yong recommended, *inter alia*: integrating green consumption and production in national legislation; strengthening monitoring and data collection systems; and defining sectoral interventions, starting with the automobile, steel, food, and waste management sectors.

Major Green Technology Innovation and Implementation Mechanisms: Li Xiaojiang stressed the importance of, *inter alia*, reducing consumption and scaling low carbon technologies. Antonia Gawel, Climate Action, highlighted the need for: a national carbon market; incentivizing technology transformation to achieve a net zero transition; and recognizing subnational governments' role in deploying green technologies.

BRI and 2030 SDGs: Kevin Gallagher recommended, *inter alia*, that China devise a compulsory set of BRI environmental management systems that include risk screening and an assessment framework.

Global Green Value Chains: Manish Bapna said greening global value chains would increase their security and support China's dual circulation economic model and commitment to carbon neutrality.

Green Finance: Zhang Chenghui recommended, *inter alia*, establishing regulatory financial frameworks for nature-positive activities; increasing product selection for green finance; encouraging lenders to use quantitative approaches to better apply standards, assess risk and determine impacts of green investments; and extending liability for environmental crimes and strengthening enforcement.

Gender Mainstreaming in SPS Research: Kristine St-Pierre, The WPS Group, recommended, *inter alia*, commissioning a gender analysis for each SPS; documenting relevant case studies; and including gender-focused recommendations in each area of research.

In subsequent discussion, Richard Florizone, IISD, highlighted the importance of the Council's work on gender and lauded China's leadership on nature-based solutions. Jennifer Morris, The Nature Conservancy, underscored the importance of ensuring that renewable energy doesn't undermine biodiversity goals and called for supporting regenerative agriculture. Dirk Messner, German Environment Agency, highlighted the potential of technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and digitalization to address sustainability challenges. Hideki Minamikawa highlighted the importance of taking a holistic approach to sustainable development and using taxation and economic incentives to encourage green lifestyles.

Zhao Yingmin closed the session, thanking the CCICED members, special advisors, and experts for their gracious support of CCICED.