

Summary of the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development: 15-16 October 2025

Against a backdrop of rapidly intensifying climate impacts, environmental degradation, and economic and political turmoil, experts from around the world gathered in Beijing for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED). Discussions at the 2025 AGM focused on China’s domestic work to achieve an ecological civilization, as well as its global influence in markets, supply chains, and sustainable development efforts in partner countries.

The Council serves as a platform for dialogue and cooperation between China and the international community and aims to advance innovative policy solutions for China and the world. While uncertainties created by global political and economic challenges informed discussions, many participants at the AGM lauded China’s steady progress toward a green transition. China’s sustainable development objectives were reflected in the theme of the meeting, “Advancing the Green Transformation for a Harmonious Coexistence between Humans and Nature,” and in the policy research presented by international and Chinese teams of experts. Many discussions were premised on evidence indicating that a green transition is not only a moral imperative, but an economic necessity.

Over the two-day meeting, participants considered the results of eight Special Policy Study (SPS) reports and two Scoping Study reports, and the recommendations to the Chinese government contained therein. Research was carried out on themes including land-sea coordination, a green and just transition, China’s green transition in the country’s 15th Five-Year Plan (FYP), climate change governance, and building a circular economy. Delegates also considered an interim report of its [High-Level Task Force](#) (HLTF), co-chaired by Achim Steiner, CCICED Vice Chairperson and former UN Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator, and Xie Zhenhua, CCICED Vice Chairperson and former Special Envoy for Climate Change Affairs of China. The report offers specific recommendations for near-term actions ranging from synergistic governance to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, to enhancing the application of digitalization



Huang Runqiu, CCICED Chinese Executive Vice Chairperson and Minister of Ecology and Environment of China

and artificial intelligence (AI) in green development and environmental protection.

The CCICED will draw on the discussions held during this meeting as it finalizes its policy recommendations on

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environment and development for consideration by China's highest decision-making body, the State Council. The AGM was held in Beijing, China, from 15-16 October 2025, with over 400 participants from governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society organizations, think tanks, and academia.

A Brief History of the CCICED

Established in 1992, CCICED is a high-level international advisory body whose membership includes representatives of governments, businesses, international organizations, research institutions, and social organizations from China and abroad.

CCICED's main tasks are to study critical environmental and development issues facing China and to present policy recommendations to the Chinese government. By providing a platform for international exchange on sustainable development, the Council seeks to "enable the international community to understand China and support China's engagement in the world." CCICED pursues this objective by carrying out comprehensive, cross-sectoral, and multidisciplinary research that integrates environmental, economic, and social concerns. It draws on advanced international concepts, policies, technologies, and best practices, with the aim of advancing ecological civilization and sustainable development.

CCICED's research is organized under four Task Forces, which address: global environmental governance and ecological civilization; green urbanization and environmental improvement; innovation, sustainable production, and consumption; and green energy, investment, and trade. The last one includes consideration of China's Green Belt and Road Initiative.

CCICED seeks to bring in participating experts that reflect a balance of gender, geographic regions, nationalities, and areas of expertise.

Research and Policy Recommendations: Since its inception, CCICED has carried out hundreds of research projects involving over 1,000 Chinese and international experts. It has also put forward hundreds of policy recommendations on issues such as pollution control, cleaner production, biodiversity conservation, energy and environment, circular economy, low-carbon economy, ecological compensation, social dimensions of environmental protection, sustainable consumption, media and public participation policies, corporate social responsibility, green supply chains, and green finance. In addition, the Council has partnered with national and local authorities to pilot its policy recommendations, including those on sustainable consumption, environmental information disclosure, and environmental risk management.

CCICED's annual policy recommendations are circulated as official government documents by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) to China's State Council and local governments, providing a reference for policymakers at all levels. Many of the Council's recommendations have been incorporated into China's subsequent policies, institutions, systems, and standards. Since 2008, the support team for CCICED's Chinese and international chief advisers has produced an annual report

that tracks progress on China's environment and development policies and the impact of CCICED's policy recommendations.

Annual General Meetings: The Council meets once a year to consider the reports and recommendations of the task forces and SPS groups that work throughout the year on various aspects of environmental and sustainable development policy. Experts from governments, academia, the business community, and civil society discuss the research findings and recommendations arising from CCICED reports. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Council, drawing on these reports and AGM discussions, considers a set of policy recommendations, which are then forwarded to the Chinese government.

No AGM was held in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 AGM took place in a hybrid format under the theme "For Nature and Humanity: Building a Community of Life Together." Marking the 30th anniversary of the CCICED, the 2022 AGM convened as a hybrid session under the theme "Building an Inclusive, Green, and Low-carbon Economy." The 2023 AGM considered eight SPS projects undertaken during the 2022/2023 period. Recommendations were captured under the theme "Green Transition for High-Quality Development: Modernization in Harmony with Nature." This theme demonstrated the Chinese government's intention to commit to driving a paradigm shift toward high-quality development. In 2024, the AGM convened under the theme "Open, Inclusive and Innovative Cooperation to Build a Clean and Beautiful World."

Report of the 2025 CCICED AGM

Opening Session

Huang Runqiu, CCICED Executive Vice Chairperson and Minister of Ecology and Environment, welcomed participants on Wednesday, 15 October, highlighting: China's progress towards low carbon development in the industry, transport, and energy sectors; the expansion of China's carbon market to cover 60% of China's greenhouse gas emissions; conservation of natural and marine habitats; and support for global environmental governance. Noting CCICED's role in supporting China's progress and future action, he suggested the Council: share wisdom for China's 15th FYP; and support China's growing responsibility in advancing global environmental governance and promoting a green and just transition.

Lauding the CCICED as an exemplar of international collaboration, Steven Guilbeault, CCICED Executive Vice Chairperson, Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture, and Minister responsible for Official Languages and Nature of Canada, said recent wildfires and floods underscore the need to protect nature. Highlighting CCICED's role in promoting effective action, he said in a rapidly changing and often divided world, nature inspires us to care for the planet and for each other.

Xie Zhenhua, CCICED Vice Chairperson and former Special Envoy on Climate Change of China, stressed the need to: remain firm in adhering to green and low-carbon development; not waver in pursuing reform and innovation; and uphold international cooperation. He noted that while the path may be arduous and long, currently experiencing "growing pains" and with the "low-

hanging fruits” having been picked, the transition towards green, high-quality development has proven to be a win-win solution for both people and the environment.

Achim Steiner, CCICED Vice Chairperson and former UNDP Administrator, reflected on China’s rapid transition. He said past policy decisions and large-scale investments, such as in transportation and the carbon market, now “fit together” and have supported the country’s systemic transformation, changing the global economy alongside it. Steiner acknowledged the current period of uncertainty and political rupture is occurring “precisely at a moment when the world can least afford it.” He suggested CCICED include, in its future work, consideration of how to cope with challenges to fundamental assumptions about international cooperation.

Noting the world is navigating a triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, Inger Andersen, CCICED Vice Chairperson and Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), expressed appreciation that CCICED’s workplan for 2026 reflects these priorities and acknowledged China’s leadership on all three issues. Andersen emphasized that China continues to lead the renewables race, saying the frontrunner sets the pace and “where China leads, the world will follow.” She lauded China’s work on biodiversity and encouraged China to consider joining the Convention on Migratory Species. Noting China played a key role in the negotiations that led to the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution, Andersen said UNEP looks forward to China’s commitment to tackling plastic pollution. She concluded that China has a unique opportunity to lead by example and said UNEP stands ready to support the country’s efforts.

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, lauded the theme of the 2025 AGM and said that to sustain prosperity we must transform how we produce and consume. She underscored that the task before us is not to slow growth but to reshape it. She added that China’s leadership and experience in areas such as renewable energy provide practical pathways and models for collaborative action. She highlighted China’s progress in creating regional interconnections and green finance, said circularity is both an environmental imperative and economic opportunity, and underscored the importance of a just and inclusive transition that leaves no one behind.

CCICED Work Report by the Secretary General: Guo Fang, CCICED Secretary General and Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment, reported on the CCICED’s main work between October 2024 and 2025. She noted that the CCICED has carried out policy research and successfully completed its tasks, including launching the HLTF to carry out strategic research, conducting eight SPS projects, and initiating two Scoping Studies. She outlined over 30 activities and meetings the CCICED undertook during the year, including contributions to support global environmental governance and gender mainstreaming.



Inger Andersen, CCICED Vice Chairperson and UNEP Executive Director

Introduction of the CCICED Issues Paper: Scott Vaughan, CCICED International Chief Advisor and Senior Fellow, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), introduced the [2024-2025 CCICED Issues Paper](#). He explained that it highlights the need for integrated and coordinated responses to protect nature and the climate, including the sustainable use of ecosystems and a sustainable blue economy. He underscored the importance of moving from an intensity-based carbon market towards emissions caps and stressed the need to “get the science right” on carbon offsets to ensure that voluntary carbon markets are effective. On enhancing China’s international leadership role, he suggested China consider making its satellite-based climate monitoring data publicly available and explore opportunities for bilateral carbon market cooperation under the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Introduction of Draft Policy Recommendations: Shijin Liu, CCICED Chinese Chief Advisor and former Deputy President of the Development Research Center of the State Council, outlined the draft policy recommendations for the CCICED’s consideration, organized around the following themes:

- expanding green demand to support the low-carbon transition and accelerate the shift in growth drivers;



Scott Vaughan, CCICED International Chief Advisor and Senior Fellow, IISD



Dirk Messner, President, German Environment Agency

- establishing a technology-based and coordinated framework for ecosystem protection and sustainable use;
- building sustainable and circular production and consumption to mitigate the drivers of the planetary triple crisis;
- introducing supply chain finance to support low-carbon technology innovation, and developing innovative financial products and services to mitigate stranded asset risks;
- systematically planning for a just and inclusive transition in traditional energy regions to advance balanced regional development; and
- promoting high-standard opening up and advancing practical cooperation to jointly build a clean and beautiful world.

Several CCICED members delivered remarks on the policy recommendations. Kirsten Schuijt, Director General, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) International, stressed the need for urgent collective action, mobilized finance, and inclusive implementation with the involvement of communities, adding that WWF is committed to contributing to these efforts.

Dirk Messner, President, German Environment Agency, supported the call for integrated approaches addressing co-benefits and an integrated goal system. He also suggested thinking about what breakthrough cooperation initiatives might look like.

Underscoring the need for climate adaptation, Jan Hendrik Dronkers, Secretary-General, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands, encouraged the establishment of a task force on adaptation under CCICED and addressing this issue more fully in China's next FYP.

Li Xiaojiang, Professor and Dean, China Academy of Urban Planning and Design, echoed the call for enhancing the focus on adaptation, noting the urgency to do so has been acknowledged in China's plans and projects. He suggested continuing work on strengthening urban environmental adaptation capacities, supported by the Netherlands, and establishing a sustainable action plan.

Speaking on ways in which China could further contribute to the world's environmental protection efforts, Pete Harrison, Executive Vice President, Environmental Defense Fund, suggested: focusing on the Coal Triangle region, with national level coordination to ensure a successful and just transition at the

local level; expanding coverage of the carbon market and moving to absolute caps in all covered sectors; and advancing action on carbon footprinting, which would allow China, as a major market and importer of goods, to better understand embedded emissions in imported products.

Marco Lambertini, Convener, Nature Positive Initiative, highlighted the role of the private sector in advancing the conservation agenda, but pointed to insufficient guidance on how to demonstrate progress in biodiversity efforts. He stressed the need to fill this gap and provide clarity to help deliver genuine nature-positive outcomes.

Frank Rijsberman, Global Head of Policy and Public Funding, The Nature Conservancy, called for: actively exploring the potential for globally promoting China's [Ecological Conservation Redlines](#) as part of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF); making the most of China's tools, practices, and experiences for international application, especially under the [Belt and Road Initiative](#); focusing on nature-based solutions as an integrated governance approach for climate and biodiversity, citing as an example China's forest protection initiatives; and demonstrating conservation as a key driver for security and economic development with co-benefits that translate into tangible economic resilience.

Ilka Hirt, Deputy Director General, Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUKN), Germany, spoke of the risk of rollback in EU environmental policies during this time of geopolitical turbulence. She said China's steadiness in the pursuit of a green transition and economic success is motivating and proves the narrative encouraging rollbacks is wrong, and we must persist to succeed.

Drawing attention to the timely coinciding of China's 15th FYP and various multilateral goals on ocean conservation, Laura Clarke, CEO, ClientEarth, called for the judiciary to play a strong role in advancing marine conservation, including by ratifying the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement).

Zhang Hongjun, Partner, Holland & Knight LLP, called for tolerance of and support for international foundations



Ilka Hirt, Deputy Director-General for International Policy, German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection



Dai Minhan, Chair Professor, Xiamen University

and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working in China, advising the MEE to provide more guidance to these organizations.

Saying that “the marine century is coming and the tide is turning,” Dai Minhan, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Chair Professor, Xiamen University, highlighted the outcome document of the recent UN Ocean conference, also known as the [Nice Ocean Action Plan](#), and the inclusion by Chinese President Xi of high-quality development of the ocean economy as a strategic matter. He emphasized strong infrastructure for ocean health monitoring, a blue finance fund, and more ambitious goals.

Lamenting that the environmental crisis should be an area of global solidarity but has instead been politicized, Neo Gim Huay, CCICED Special Advisor and Managing Director, Centre for Nature and Climate at the World Economic Forum, called for: strengthening science communication to make it understandable to a global audience; investing in industries that are good for nature; and building a new nature economy that will create jobs.

Citing the need to design products that are easy to repair, reuse, and recycle as part of a circular economy, Per Ångquist, Director General, Swedish Chemicals Agency, recommended phasing out substances that have severe effects on human health and not recycling materials containing substances of high concern.

Ye Yanfei, former Senior Inspectorate Advisor, Policy Research Bureau of China’s National Financial Regulatory Administration, emphasized the need for better sharing of environment-related information with financial institutions, saying this will be beneficial for the development of green finance.

Hu Baolin, Honorary Dean, Research Institute of China Green Development, Tianjin University, suggested enhanced coordination and synergies in climate, biodiversity, and pollution, and highlighted the need for further technological breakthroughs and smart green innovations.

Marjorie Yang, Chairwoman, Esquel Group, cited her company’s creation of a new waterless dye, saying it is an example of “destructive innovation” arising from a time of crisis. She underscored the need to remind the private sector that

environmental engagement is a competitive advantage, not a burden.

Xie Zhenhua, CCICED Vice Chairperson and former Special Envoy for Climate Change Affairs of China, suggested quantifying indicators for low-carbon and green development, recognizing the role of the private sector and local governments, and linking carbon markets to commitments expressed in nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. On circularity, he proposed developing a mandatory indicator on the comprehensive utilization rate of key resources. Regarding the blue economy, he called for strengthening monitoring capacities.

Policy Research Dialogue

Kristin Halvorsen, CCICED Vice Chairperson and Director, Center for International Climate Research (CICERO), said collaboration between Chinese and international researchers is key to unlocking China’s leadership in the green low-carbon transition. She asked researchers to “speak their minds” for the best possible recommendations.

Guo Fang, CCICED Secretary General and Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment of China, highlighted positive signals for green development, despite global change and turbulence. Noting policymakers require specific and quantifiable results, she proposed focusing on addressing green development bottlenecks and inputs to the development of China’s 15th FYP.

Ren Yong, Lead of the HLTF Core Expert Group and Chief Engineer and Director General, Department of Institutional Administration and Human Resources Management, MEE, highlighted accelerating growth in green sectors, biodiversity protection, and pathways towards ecological civilization. He recommended enhancing the quality of green sectors and sharing China’s data, knowledge, and experience with other countries.

Zou Ji, CCICED Special Advisor and President and CEO, Energy Foundation, China, on behalf of Kate Hampton, Co-Lead of the SPS on Global Climate Governance and Green and Inclusive Transition and CEO, Children’s Investment Fund Foundation, said China has entered its carbon peaking phase, cautioning that energy demand from big data and AI will pose new challenges. He suggested accelerating the development of



Ren Yong, Chief Engineer, Ministry of Ecology and Environment



Frank Rijsberman, Global Head of Policy and Public Funding, The Nature Conservancy

a green power system before phasing out the old, promoting Chinese leadership in global environmental governance, including bilateral cooperation, and intentionally addressing short-term imbalances between supply and demand.

Frank Rijsberman, Co-Lead of the SPS on Governance System for a Harmonious Coexistence Between Humans and Nature, said the SPS focused on nature-based solutions, as well as the realization of the GBF's 30x30 target. He outlined the five policy recommendations: strengthening China's technical support and initiating a major scientific and technical support programme for biodiversity; sharing and expanding the Ecological Conservation Redline approach internationally, including as part of the Belt and Road Initiative; focusing on high-potential, cost-effective nature-based solutions and NDCs, such as afforestation; adopting nature-based synergistic solutions on biodiversity and climate change; and building a whole-of-society and whole-of-government conservation mechanism and strengthening government-led public engagement and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Gao Xiang, Co-Lead of the SPS on Major Scientific and Technology Innovation for the Green Transition, also an Academician of Chinese Academy of Engineering, said extreme weather is threatening the stability of the energy supply globally. He noted that renewable power generation needs to be more stable and energy storage is one of the most significant technological pathways. He outlined the SPS recommendations, including: advancing energy innovation to promote larger-scale and higher-quality development of new energy; enhancing grid flexibility and construction quality; building a multi-technology, multi-scenario storage system; and promoting coordinated operation of storage with the power grid.

Wensheng Peng, Co-Lead of the SPS on Green Finance for a Comprehensive Green Transformation of Society and the Economy, presented five recommendations, *inter alia*:

- encourage financial institutions to leverage the green demand of chain-owning enterprises for small and medium-enterprise (SME) financing, in support of SMEs and transition technology innovation;

- establish a “green demand scenario + joint incubation” mechanism, which will expand the scale of the green demand scenario through the provision of research subsidies and refinancing, forming a diversified pattern of venture capital and accelerating the landing of technology;
- support financial institutions' inclusion of carbon emissions indicators when providing mergers and acquisitions financial services;
- support financial institutions' development of debt swap instruments; and
- encourage financial institutions to incorporate an equitable transition into their financial products, including by developing quantitative indicators and tools to incorporate fairness considerations in high-carbon business transformation programmes.

Dai Minhan, Co-Lead of the SPS on A Sustainable Blue Economy Toward Carbon Neutrality, presented findings from the SPS on sustainable blue economy and carbon neutrality, highlighting key recommendations, including: strengthening strategic coordination between the marine sector and other national priorities, such as China's 2060 carbon neutrality goal, and integrating the sustainable blue economy targets into green development planning at local and national levels; creating robust regulatory and disclosure systems, innovative insurance mechanisms, and diverse financing channels; and establishing pilot zones, such as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, for blue economy development.

Ilka Hirt, Co-Lead of the SPS on Promote High-Quality Development with Circular Economy, reported on findings from the SPS on the circular economy, noting its vital role in China's high-quality, low-carbon development and ecological civilization goals, as well as challenges to its upscaling. Among the SPS report's recommendations, she highlighted: strengthening top-level planning on circularity and aligning it with the dual carbon goals in the 15th FYP, including with mandatory targets; accelerating the development of national and local standards such as durability, reparability, and recyclability; advancing the transformation in key industries such as textiles and chemicals; and deepening international cooperation, including by aligning standards and platforms.

Pete Harrison, Co-Lead of the SPS on Low-Carbon Transition of Traditional Energy Regions of China, reported on the SPS, which focused on the so-called Coal Triangle area where almost 80% of China's coal is produced. He said the low-carbon transition in that region is both vital and extremely challenging, including in terms of jobs lost, and that an orderly coal transition pathway is essential and should be a priority in the next FYP. Among the SPS's recommendations, he highlighted establishing the Coal Triangle as a green transition hub or demonstration zone and improving diversified financing frameworks for a just transition with targeted funds.

Zhang Jianyu, Deputy Co-Lead of the SPS on Green Development Cooperation and Chief Development Officer of the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition, lamented a widening international leadership deficit,

pointing to slow progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the failure to adopt an international plastics treaty. He identified new opportunities arising from digital technologies and regional and South-South cooperation, suggesting that the UN remains an important platform for green development cooperation. He outlined recommendations, including the creation of a green development initiative, intertwining regional and multilateral collaboration, and developing a talent pool for future prosperity.

Wang Zhixuan, Co-Lead of the SPS for Collaborative Innovation in Energy and Environment for High-Quality Development, said the green energy transition creates new challenges that should be referenced in China's 15th FYP. He noted that coal phase-out requires addressing challenges relating to methane and highly saline wastewater. He outlined recommendations including: the need for an inter-departmental coordination mechanism; contingency plans for future challenges; and a legislative structure that provides clear accountability and strategies to systematically plan implementation and adaptation activities.

Ben Geurts, Co-Lead of the Scoping Study on Climate Adaptation, reported on findings from the study, including the need for additional research on innovation in adaptation, resilience, equity and social stability, and decision making under deep uncertainty. He underscored the need to create a task force and produce an SPS report on adaptation and challenged other SPS groups to include adaptation with a long-term perspective.

These presentations were followed by comments from the floor.

Marco Lambertini cited the Tropical Forest Forever Facility, a mechanism recently proposed by Brazil's President, as a new approach to mobilizing finance for sustainable development with the potential for significant private sector investment.

Wang Xin, Director General, People's Bank of China Research Bureau, stressed the importance of including social and financial security alongside nature and climate synergies and called for a coordination mechanism for adaptation and mitigation. He said the question now is "How can we turn the Chinese green revolution into a green asset for the world?"



Wang Xin, Chinese Lead of the Scoping Study on Collaborative Innovation in Energy and Environment for High-Quality Development

Erik Solheim, Senior Advisor, World Resources Institute (WRI), recommended Chinese companies invest more in other countries as a vehicle for technology transfer, and that China open its markets to investments from others, including India and the EU.

Hongpeng Lei, CCICED Special Advisor and Chief of Mitigation Branch, UNEP Climate Change Division, highlighted the importance of cooperation and sharing China's experience with macro-level low-carbon planning while securing economic growth and job creation. He cited sustainable cooling as an example for improving energy efficiency standards.

Saying that "a new world order is emerging," Craig Hanson, Executive Vice President, WRI, underscored the need for a just transition, financing, and collaboration.

Bernice Lee, CCICED Special Advisor and Distinguished Fellow and Senior Advisor, Chatham House, called for investing in policy, adding that nature must be part of China's next frontier in terms of both competitiveness and resilience.

Stephan Contius, Special Advisor on SDGs, Foundations 20, highlighted the importance of multiyear strategies and welcomed work undertaken by Brazil and South Africa in this regard.

Ye Yanfei, former Senior Inspectorate Advisor, China's National Financial Regulatory Administration, focused on the need for transparency, information sharing, and measurable outcomes as a basis for sound financial policies, incentives, and international cooperation.

Open Forums

On Thursday morning, participants joined discussions in five open forums, which were held in parallel, on:

- Land-Sea Coordination: Toward a future of Harmonious Coexistence Between Humans and Nature;
- Green and Just Transition: Building a New Engine for Economic and Social Development;
- CCICED Insights into China's Green Transition in the 15th FYP Period;
- Accelerating Action for a New Global Climate Governance Framework; and
- Breaking the Constraints of the Linear Economy: Building a New Circular Economy.



Stephan Contius, Special Advisor on SDGs, Foundations 20

Each forum provided an opportunity for Council Members and invited experts to share their practical experience, research, and insights into thematic areas that will inform the CCICED's policy recommendations to the Chinese government. This report summarizes three of the five forums.

Land–Sea Coordination: Toward a Future of Harmonious Coexistence Between Humans and Nature: Moderated by Zhou Guomei, CCICED Deputy Secretary General and Director-General, Department of International Cooperation, MEE, this forum discussed integrated land-sea approaches that recognize the interconnected nature of terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

Huang Runqiu, Executive Vice Chairperson, CCICED, and China's Minister of Ecology and Environment, outlined China's achievements in protecting the Ocean and reducing land-based sources of pollution, including through marine environmental control units, systematic regulation, marine reserves, marine restoration, and reduced overfishing. Describing land-sea coordination as a “bottleneck” problem, he suggested further work on monitoring and evaluation systems, deepening international cooperation, and building a sustainable blue economy.

Steven Guilbeault, CCICED Executive Vice Chairperson, Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture, and Minister responsible for Official Languages and Nature, said China and Canada have a special responsibility to protect nature due to their size and extensive coastlines. He highlighted that conserving terrestrial and marine biodiversity requires multi-pronged approaches, integrated programming, international coordination, and collaboration with stakeholders. He stressed that local knowledge is key to driving real progress.

Zhang Xueqiao, Standing Committee Member of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, member of the Social and Legal Affairs Committee, and Vice-Procurator-General, Supreme People's Procuratorate, outlined how law-based governance can advance ecosystem conservation, citing prosecutions that reduced land-based pollution and protected migratory birds.

Moderating a session on **implementing the GBF and advancing the BBNJ Agreement**, Frank Rijsberman, Global Head of Policy and Public Funding, The Nature Conservancy, said protection of marine ecosystems lags behind terrestrial

ecosystem conservation, noting that implementing the BBNJ Agreement can bring nature conservation into balance.

Wei Fuwen, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Science and Professor, Jiangxi Agricultural University, outlined key recommendations, including that China should announce its Ecological Conservation Redlines approach as an official contribution to GBF implementation. He highlighted the need for whole-of-society and whole-of-government approaches for integrated implementation.

Dai Minhan, Co-Lead of the SPS on Oceans, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Science, and Chair Professor, Xiamen University, proposed developing BBNJ Agreement implementation pathways that recognize the Ocean's role in climate regulation, as a carbon sink, and for economic development in coastal zones.

Erik Solheim, WRI, said the economic values of nature for tourism and as a carbon sink provide an economic rationale for conservation and benefits to local populations. Kirsten Schuijt, WWF International, suggested focusing on biodiversity-friendly supply chains and collaboration with other large, biodiverse countries like Brazil and Indonesia. She noted the 30th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 30) provides an opportunity to support new initiatives, such as Brazil's proposed Tropical Forest Forever Facility.

Ye Yanfei, National Financial Regulatory Administration, advocated for clear criteria, baselines, and measurement systems for biodiversity-friendly development standards. Marc Halle, Better Nature, highlighted the need to finance GBF implementation, noting opportunities in aligning public expenditures with GBF requirements and performance-linked finance. Doreen Lynn Robinson, UNEP, said “fit-for-purpose policies” must be systemic and coordinated, technically sound, and immediately actionable, noting the BBNJ Agreement provides a streamlined procedure that can avoid overcomplicating implementation.

Liu Yan, Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), recommended developing a marine protected area zone management tool, engaging stakeholders in spatial planning, and focusing on science-informed selection and delineation. Craig Hanson, WRI, suggested focusing on a new ocean economy that can provide benefits to stakeholders, noting all ocean areas, not only protected areas, must be managed sustainably.

Opening the session on **synergies among the Ocean, climate, and biodiversity to support high-quality development**, moderator Jan-Gunnar Winther, CCICED Council Member and Research Director, Norwegian Polar Institute, said recognizing that climate, biodiversity, and the Ocean are connected is important in a world where politics are increasingly disconnected.

Su Jilan, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Science and Honorary Director, Second Institute of Oceanography, MNR, described how overfishing multiple species leads to ecosystem collapse. Noting aquaculture can provide the same high-quality protein as wild fish, he said capture fisheries “add nothing to the Chinese economy.” Pete Harrison, Executive Vice President, Environmental Defense Fund, outlined three opportunities: positioning resource users, such as fishers, as ecosystem stewards; designing policies with a systems lens that recognizes ocean-land-human linkages; and elevating the Ocean's role in climate action.



Zhou Guomei, Deputy Secretary General, Director-General of the Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Ecology and Environment



Erik Solheim, Senior Advisor, World Resources Institute

Mattie Bekink, Chief Representative, Ford Foundation Beijing Office, said empowering local communities is an affordable approach to conservation that also protects livelihoods. She further noted that the priorities of traditionally neglected communities must be recognized and included in conservation planning. Zhang Zhifeng, Deputy Director, Department of Marine Ecology and Environment, MEE, called for coordinated biodiversity protection, monitoring and warning systems, coordinated land-sea adaptation mechanisms, and pilot projects for innovative institutions and coordination mechanisms in river basin areas.

Li Xia, Deputy Director-General, Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center, MEE, suggested regional green investment frameworks and developing indicators for investor orientation. Wang Juying, Director-General, National Marine Environmental Monitoring Center, MEE, recommended strengthening climate adaptation research, policy development for coastal areas, and coastline protection.

Lars Johanning, Professor, University of Plymouth, UK, recommended strengthening research on interactions between marine energy and marine ecology. Long Chunlin, Chair Professor, Minzu University of China, underscored the critical role of traditional ecological knowledge, calling for more collaboration with Indigenous and local communities.

Ping Xiaoge, Senior Engineer, Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Science, suggested exploring coordinated implementation of biodiversity-related conventions to build a virtuous cycle of conservation, sustainable use, and economic development. Wee Kean Fong, Head of Nature and Climate, Greater China, World Economic Forum, highlighted that while companies increasingly recognize environmental risks, they do not understand the urgent need for action.

Summarizing the session, Winther recognized the potential for more collaboration between land and ocean conservation communities, including between CCICED's SPS groups on nature and the Ocean.

The final session in this forum on **policy recommendations for the 15th FYP on nature-ocean synergies** was moderated by Marco Lambertini, Convenor, Nature Positive Initiative.

Jan-Gunnar Winther outlined key recommendations in the Ocean SPS report, including: reflecting strategic coordination as a national priority in China's 15th FYP; building a robust regulatory and disclosure framework with innovative financial mechanisms; and piloting institutional frameworks for a

sustainable blue economy in coastal economic hubs such as Hong Kong or Macau.

Minamikawa Hideki, CCICED Member, Chairman of the Japan Environment Sanitation Center, and former Administrative Vice-Minister of the Environment, Japan, explained that Japanese oyster farmers started a reforestation movement after realizing the importance of mountain forests for nutrient inflow regulation in coastal waters. Laura Clarke, CCICED Member and CEO, ClientEarth, said the 15th FYP coinciding with the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement and the 2030 timeline for achieving the GBF targets provides a historic opportunity for Chinese leadership.

Tian Xinze, Vice President, Environment and Resources Division, Supreme People's Court of China, explained how law-based conservation can advance progress towards ecological civilization, noting courts across China share case studies and best practices on addressing detrimental effects on biodiversity.

John Baker, President and Chief Program Officer, WildAid, suggested including capacity building and storytelling to engage the public. Peng Kui, Science Director, China Program, The Nature Conservancy, described successful collaboration with the Chinese government in establishing China's first national parks, and encouraging the extension of China's Ecological Conservation Redlines as a type of Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure (OECM). Cao Ling, Nanqiang Distinguished Professor, Xiamen University, highlighted participatory marine spatial planning as a tool that reduces conflict and called for a ban on bottom trawling.

Zhou Wenliang, Researcher and Assistant to the Director, Southern Marine Science and Engineering, Guangdong Laboratory, said the carbon capture potential of coral reef ecosystems is significantly undervalued, and recommended protecting coral reefs in the South China sea through a fishing moratorium and benchmarking against OECM standards.

Quinyan Fu, Deputy Director General of Shanghai Environmental Monitoring Center, discussed measures to achieve a green shipping transition, including retrofitting existing and building new ships, upgrading shore power and clean fuel infrastructure, and introducing life-cycle carbon accounting for ocean vessels.

Kristin Kleisner, Associate Vice President, Ocean Science, Environmental Defense Fund, discussed macroscale strategies for ocean-based CO₂ removals including biotic approaches, such as ocean fertilization, and abiotic approaches, such as ocean alkalinity enhancement. She recommended developing unified frameworks and governance structures and robust and transparent standards.

Patrick Yeung, Director, Climate Action, Asian Venture Philanthropy Network, recommended developing definitions and holistic indicators for the blue economy, fixing data gaps, enhancing ocean accounting, and promoting blue finance in national policies and partnerships.

Summarizing the forum, Wei Fuwen highlighted advice received on developing innovative, integrated governance systems, scientific expectations, and opportunities and challenges regarding land-sea coordination. He suggested gathering information on practices in land-sea coordination and joint studies on BBNJ implementation.

Closing the forum, Dai Minhan said the land-ocean challenge is so complex it can only be addressed through collaboration.

Green and Just Transition: Building a New Engine for Economic and Social Development: In a speech in April 2025, Chinese President Xi Jinping said the green transition should advance both climate governance and the well-being of people. During this forum, participants sought to build on this objective by discussing such issues as: visions and practices for accelerating the green and just transition; the status and prospects for zero-carbon energy technologies and innovative business models; and initiatives and practices at the sub-national level for advancing the green and just transition.

Zhang Xiaohua, Chief Representative, ClimateWorks Foundation, moderated the forum. In his opening remarks, he emphasized that the green transition must meet multiple objectives and said China's leadership in accelerating the transition is encouraging.

Shijin Liu, CCICED Chief Advisor, said carbon reduction has become the driving force for economic growth, and green technology can achieve similar or even better productivity than older technologies.

Pete Harrison, Executive Vice President, Environmental Defense Fund, and International Co-Lead of the SPS on Low-Carbon Transition of Traditional Energy Regions of China, underscored that a just transition involves rethinking how our societies create value, support workers and communities, and ensure fairness. He said the decline of coal-based industries will cause direct and indirect job losses, but jobs based on new energy can fill the gap if they are supported by local training and education systems.

Gao Xiang, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and Co-Lead of the SPS on Major Scientific and Technology Innovation for Green Transition: called for restructuring our energy and industrial systems; said science and technology should be the driving forces behind the green and just transition; and underscored the importance of international cooperation to promote scientific innovation and high-speed global development.

Lv Wenbin, Director-General, Energy Research Institute, China's National Development and Reform Commission, and Co-Lead of the SPS on Low-Carbon Transition of Traditional Energy Regions of China: emphasized that higher targets will drive the energy transition; said a green and just transition is about inclusiveness; highlighted the importance of creating jobs; and called for ensuring that new products and technologies can circulate the world freely.

In the first session of the forum, on **building technology innovation systems and accelerating green energy and a just transition**, Meng Fei, China Program Senior Director, Energy Innovation, cited progress in scaling up technologies like wind and solar energy and highlighted the need for new pathways to coordination of different grids.

Li Qionghui, Chief Expert of China Energy Research Society and Chinese Deputy Lead of the SPS on Major Scientific and Technology Innovation for Green Transition: said China's new energy development has made outstanding contributions to the global green transition; highlighted the need to build a new power grid that supports a higher percentage of new power; and recommended refining the operational, balancing, and market mechanisms for power grids.

Mike O'Boyle, Acting Policy Team Director, Energy Innovation, explained the German distributed grid balancing



Gao Xiang, President, Zhjiang University of Technology

model. He said the model pushes responsibility for balancing supply and demand to a more local level, which, *inter alia*, provides incentives for more accurate forecasting and scheduling and helps align the financial incentives with the entities that can coordinate consumer behavior.

Noting that the green transition is generally fast, even when countries are unsure about costs, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and Dean of Institute for Carbon Neutrality, Tsinghua University, He Kebin called for prioritizing technological development and international collaboration to create a more sustainable and inclusive future.

Saying a people-focused approach to the just transition is critical, Patricia Fuller, CCICED Member and President and CEO, IISD, called for working together with communities, creating inclusion and a sense of ownership, and ensuring programming meets local needs. She cited the risk of skepticism and burnout among local communities if they are not included in implementation processes and cautioned that once trust is lost it is very difficult to reestablish.

Scott Vaughan, CCICED International Chief Advisor and Senior Fellow, IISD, agreed that building trust in the green transition is critical, highlighted many different job types associated with coal mines, some of which may not be reskilled, and – citing the example of the Tennessee Valley Authority – said repurposing legacy sites may bring secondary benefits, including employment opportunities.

Christoffer Groenstad, CCICED Special Advisor and Senior Policy Advisor, Norwegian Institute for Water Research, underscored that gender equality in Norway's workforce is what makes his country economically successful.

Galit Cohen, CCICED Special Advisor and Israel Director, Jewish Climate Trust, highlighted the importance of energy security and resilience. She called for innovation and dual use of land and infrastructure, empowering consumers, and effective governance, including through policies that link technology, society, and the market under a shared vision.

Kuat Akizhanov, Deputy Director, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute, said transformational justice depends on a circular economy and resource efficiency, digital innovation and connectivity, and social inclusion and just governance.

Patrick McMaster, International Energy Agency, said energy efficiency is key to ensuring an inclusive energy transition and has, *inter alia*, reduced fossil fuel imports in some countries by up to 20%, created jobs, and lowered household bills globally by up to 25%.

In another session, moderated by Qin Hu, Vice President and Chief Representative, Environmental Defense Fund, participants considered the **regional integration of practices and intensification of just transition implementation**.

Mark Watts, Executive Director, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, said the transition will only succeed if it is locally driven, called for a focus on upskilling, reskilling, multilevel partnerships, and multistakeholder financing, and said cities and municipalities will lead the charge.

Zhao Chunyu, Deputy Mayor of Ordos, Inner Mongolia, outlined developments in Ordos, including the building of industrial clusters for new energy equipment manufacturing and the world's first zero carbon park.

Pawel Adamów, Deputy Mayor of Konin, Poland, said China is an important partner in achieving a just transition, highlighted practical steps taken in Konin, such as shifting its transport to hydrogen and electric buses, and emphasized the importance of education.

Fabby Tumiwa, Executive Director, Institute for Essential Services Reform, Indonesia, underscored that a just transition is essential and leaving no one behind is a moral imperative.

Noting China relies mainly on fossil fuels, Wu Qiang, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and Professor, China University of Mining and Technology, suggested new clean technologies could guarantee that high carbon energy will be used in a low carbon manner.

Wang Xin, Director General, People's Bank of China Research Bureau, encouraged financial institutions to pay attention to the just transition when issuing loans and consider factors including job creation and potential mental health issues arising from changing job structures.

Oyun Sanjaasuren, Director of External Affairs, Green Climate Fund, highlighted China's collaboration with partners across 140 developing countries. She said China's Belt and Road Initiative presents a unique opportunity to facilitate an equitable transition, especially in countries facing economic vulnerabilities, and that both South-South and North-South cooperation are essential.

Emphasizing that some challenges cannot be comprehended by single jurisdictions, Howard Bamsey, former Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund and Honorary Professor, School of Regulation and Global Governance, Australian National University, said the range of options for reskilling and alternative economic activities are broadened when a whole region is brought together. He said engaging whole communities in their futures can build vital trust and ensure transitions are both green and just.

In closing remarks, Achim Steiner, CCICED Vice Chairperson, said China is asking itself whether investing in fossil fuels is the most effective engine for economic and social development, noting that energy demand will increase exponentially despite energy efficiency measures. He underscored that governance

is not just about setting targets, rules, and regulations, but also about creating systemic enabling conditions, including finance, capacity building, and accountability through the legal system. He said the "remarkable dynamism" China has been able to unleash creates an innovation culture in which the bottom is as much a part of shaping what is being set as policy at the top.

Patricia Espinosa, CEO and Founding Partner, onepoint5, and former Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, expressed hope that China will help lead the climate change process to a more practical vision. She noted no agreed definition of just transition exists and that while some see this as a way of delaying action on climate change, the transition is about real issues that need to be addressed, and people need to be at the center of the process. She called for building resilience in societies to confront climate-related challenges and encouraged the central bank to lead work on national planning and budgeting.

Zhang Hongjun, International Deputy Lead of the SPS on Major Scientific and Technology Innovation for Green Transition, noted most speakers in the session supported a green transition, and highlighted the importance of listening to all stakeholders, including those with opposing views. He emphasized that open, inclusive collaboration among stakeholders will support consensus and lead to greater success.

Xiaohua closed the forum with a call to join hands toward a green and just future.

Breaking the Constraints of the Linear Economy: Building a New Circular Economy: In opening remarks, Jocelyn Blériot, Executive Lead, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, emphasized that the circular economy is a matter of resilience and a delivery mechanism for climate and biodiversity. He cautioned that the discussion is too often focused on waste management when it should be on production processes and the creation of social and ecological capital, adding that, on this, "China is leading the charge."

Kristin Halvorsen, CCICED Vice Chairperson, and Director, CICERO, agreed that the circular economy is a strategy rather than an end in itself. She emphasized the need for well-established markets, involvement and concentration, but above all innovation. She pointed to China's extended responsibility



Fabby Tumiwa, Executive Director, Institute for Essential Services Reform, Indonesia

pilot schemes. Halvorsen lamented that the disappointing failure to reach agreement on a plastics treaty means missing out on significant opportunities and access to capital for alternatives to plastic as well as recycled plastic.

Fang Guo, CCICED Secretary General and Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment, highlighted China's commitment to the circular economy, noting various national laws, policies, and regulations, including on sorting, solid waste reutilization, and efficiency gains. She referred to zero-waste city construction and zero-waste schools as examples. She called for, *inter alia*: prioritizing key industries, sectors, and regions; clear institutional frameworks; a unified green product standard certification system; strengthened research and development; and harnessing AI.

Jocelyn Blériot then moderated a session on **building a new circular economy system**. Lupeng Zhang, Deputy Director General, Department of Resources Conservation and Environmental Protection, National Development and Reform Commission, elaborated on China's improvements in adopting a circular economy as laid out in the 14th FYP, including through advancing regulation, institutions, and accountability for batteries and electric vehicle (EV) waste, as well as various fiscal and taxation mechanisms. He expanded on innovation in reduced industrial resource use and consumer campaigns, and stressed the importance of furthering international knowledge sharing and cooperation.

Hu Qing, Professor, Southern University of Science and Technology, presented the SPS report on Promoting High-Quality Development with a Circular Economy, noting key gaps identified in the study include lack of scale and of systems in place despite innovations. She called for pressing ahead with waste-free cities and digital product passports, for example for no-waste textiles, and reiterated the need for integration with decarbonization and green economy goals.

Ilka Hirt, Deputy Director General, BMUKN, Germany, presented on increasing the circular economy along the textile value chain in Germany and Europe more broadly. Noting fast fashion leads to overproduction, she cautioned that only 1% of textiles are recycled, and most of these come from plastic bottles. She called for aligning rules across borders and avoiding shifting impacts to places with weak waste management systems. She outlined some of the EU's new instruments, including regulation on eco-design, digital product passport, and waste shipment regulations. She also highlighted Germany's national circular economy strategy adopted in 2024, recalling that the circular economy is not a burden but a competitive advantage.

Shuhua Dou, Vice Chairperson of Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee of the National People's Congress, pointed to China's legislation for promoting a circular economy, which includes a development plan, objectives, and incentives, as well as electronic waste regulations with standards and codes. Noting challenges in technological upscaling and incomplete adherence, he called for: a strengthened and binding legal framework; coordination with supporting measures; clear legal responsibilities, especially in the dismantling of EVs; and added fiscal and financial incentives.

Marco Lambertini cautioned against equating circularity with recycling, and stressed the importance of reducing energy consumption, sustainably sourcing renewable materials, and focusing on design durability.

Hideki Minamikawa, President, Japan Environmental Sanitation Center, emphasized the need for indicators, including on resource productivity. He pointed to the EU's End-of-Life Vehicles Directive as a major factor in improvements and stressed the need for interregional, intercity, and international cooperation.

Qiong Ding, Deputy Director General and First-level Inspector, Department of Solid Waste and Chemicals, MEE, emphasized the importance of design and information tracking systems to ensure market competitiveness for the products. He drew attention to China's action plan for new pollutant management for 2035, digitalization, and other measures to support safer recycling.

Per Ångquist, Director-General, Swedish Chemicals Agency, underscored the need to phase out per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) as a group, avoid recirculating them through recycling, and avoid similarly harmful substitutions.

Xin Yao, Vice President, Research Institute for Environmental Innovation (Suzhou) Tsinghua, focused on the economic boost potential of the circular economy, and called for implementable goals and mandatory reductions. He added that updating industries should be a key measure in the 15th FYP, and emphasized the need to address data privacy concerns, security issues, and harmonization of standards.

Patricia Espinosa, CEO and Founding Partner, onepoint5, lamented that, although mentioned in a superficial manner, the circular economy is not addressed in the climate change process despite the clear externalities. She called for mindset changes.

Wenqiang Li, Director General, Solid Waste and Chemicals Management Center, MEE, moderated a session on **pathways to a circular economy in key industries**. Yingmin Zhao, President of the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition, presented on green synergies and new pathways for "Belt and Road" cooperation, underscoring the importance of a circular economy for developing countries and China's



Zhang Hongjun, Board Chair, Energy Foundation China

willingness to support them by: incorporating it into cooperation plans for industries, construction, and in key parts of EVs and batteries; promoting capacity building to share best practices; and green investment and finance through the Green Partnership.

Hongpin Mo, Department of Energy Conservation and Comprehensive Utilization, Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, China, spoke on significant advances in promoting comprehensive utilization of industrial resources and the green manufacturing system, including in the extraction of lithium and other elements from battery power. He noted work on an action plan and an innovation center for effective extraction methods, and the need for better demonstration projects to build the “last mile solution.”

Smail Alhilali, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), focused on large scale eco-industrial parks in China, where circularity has already been incorporated, and UNIDO’s work promoting it as a standard in Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere. Recalling that circular economy is not waste management and that recycling is designed for today’s products, he urged upstream thinking to change the products.

Calling for a focus on economic opportunities and job creation as common ground for cooperation, Jonquil Hackenberg, CEO, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, elaborated on the potential for circularity in critical minerals, retail fashion and textiles, and plastics and packaging. She drew attention to environmental services payments for waste picking in Brazil as an example of good practice and stressed the importance of: innovation; diversification of revenue streams; transitioning from single-use products to services, for example battery swapping; tax breaks and incentives for both producers and consumers; and reskilling through AI.

Baoxing Qiu, International Eurasian Academy of Sciences, advocated for *in situ* treatment of construction materials and waste in China given the scale of building and renovation. He pointed to new anticorrosion treatments for bamboo, recyclable green cement, degradable plastics, and community-based waste treatment centers that turn waste into fertilizer for *in situ* use, stressing a focus on users and their participation.



Marco Lambertini, Convener, Nature Positive Initiative

Liyang Zhu, President of the China Association of Circular Economy, emphasized the need for improved standard setting, industrial chain connections and practical pathways focusing on key industries.

Minshan Pei, China Communications Construction Company Ltd., shared his company’s success in improving resource use, referring to more than 50 breakthrough technologies, such as smart sludge cleaning devices and residual heat use in projects in the Philippines and Singapore.

Silian Wang, Everbright Group, underscored the importance of focusing on whole-life cycle management, integrated business models, and increased accountability of designers and manufacturers.

Huiyong Zhang, Energy Foundation China, reported on a successful long distance heat transmission project which produced residual heat for residential, agricultural, and industrial use along the pipeline in a coal-reliant region, expressing hopes to scale up the heat transmission technology.

Zhipeng Tang, General Manager of Beijing Industrial Research Institute, Huafeng Huajin Co., Ltd., spoke about improvements in the textile industry and the need to link the chain upstream and downstream and for regulation and green certification schemes.

Noting more than 90% of raw materials in the world are used only once, Kuat Akizhanov, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute, called for developing green logistics corridors, with social inclusion and protection designed from the outset. He recalled that millions of people depend on informal recycling and stressed the need for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society agenda, as well as a focus on regional eco-design capacity and regional knowledge platforms for joint research.

In concluding remarks, Hu Qing drew attention to shifts in China in energy and circular economy, and the empowerment resulting from turning products back into energy, emphasizing the need to address resources, energy, and carbon in an integrated manner.

Ilka Hirt drew attention to multilateral work ahead, urging agreement on the plastics treaty, and integrating circular economy



Patricia Espinosa, CEO and Founding Partner, onepoint5

into the climate change regime and the post 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Closure of the Meeting

The 2025 AGM concluded on Thursday at 5:30 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

Sixth Session of the COP to the Minamata Convention (COP 6): Minamata Convention COP 6 will discuss issues such as trade control, waste management, and mercury use in cosmetics, dental fillings, artisanal and small-scale gold mining, and industrial processes. **dates:** 3-7 November 2025 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** minamataconvention.org

37th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (MOP 37): MOP 37 will discuss issues related to the implementation, monitoring, and phase out of ozone-depleting chemicals and relevant greenhouse gases. **dates:** 3-7 November 2025 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** ozone.unep.org

Second World Summit on Social Development: The Second World Summit on Social Development will bring together Heads of State or Government and aims to foster inclusive social development and address key challenges to achieve well-being for all. **dates:** 4-6 November 2025 **location:** Doha, Qatar and online **www:** social.desa.un.org/world-summit-2025

2025 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 30): This conference will include COP 30, the 20th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 20), the 7th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 7), and the 63rd sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 63). **dates:** 10-21 November 2025 **location:** Belém, Brazil **www:** unfccc.int

20th Meeting of the CoP to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES CoP 20): The CoP will review implementation of the Convention and progress in conservation of species included in the Appendices, consider proposals to amend the list of species in Appendices I and II, and recommend measures to improve the effectiveness of the Convention, among other work. **dates:** 24 November – 5 December 2025 **location:** Samarkand, Uzbekistan **www:** cites.org

Seventh Session of the Open-ended Committee of the Permanent Representatives (OECPR 7): OECPR 7 will prepare potential resolutions ahead of the seventh session of the UN Environment Assembly. **dates:** 1-5 December 2025 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** unep.org

Seventh Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 7): UNEA, the highest decision-making body on environmental matters under the UN, will meet under the theme “Advancing Sustainable Solutions for a Resilient Planet.” **dates:** 8-12 December 2025 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** www.unep.org/environmentassembly/unea7

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution (ISP-CWP): The Plenary of the ISP-CWP will hold its first session, which will be preceded by regional and stakeholder meetings on 1 February 2026. **dates:** 2-6 February 2025 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** unep.org/isp-cwp

12th Session of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-12): IPBES-12 will consider interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health, as well as transformative change. A Stakeholder Day will convene on 2 February and a Media Day will be held on 9 February. **dates:** 3-8 February 2026 **location:** Manchester, United Kingdom **www:** ipbes.net

High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2026 (HLPF): The 2026 session of the HLPF will convene under the theme “Transformative, equitable, innovative, and coordinated actions for the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs for a sustainable future for all.” The HLPF will conduct in-depth reviews of SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy), SDG 9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals). **dates:** 6-16 July 2026 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** hlpf.un.org

17th session of the COP to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 17): COP-17 will discuss the interconnected challenges of desertification, land degradation, and drought. COP 17 is expected to foster collaboration and action across sectors and advance sustainable land management, ecosystem and land restoration, and implementation of land degradation neutrality targets. **dates:** 17-28 August 2026 **location:** Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia **www:** unccd.int

2026 CCICED AGM: Details to be confirmed on the CCICED website.

For additional upcoming events, see: sdg.iisd.org

Glossary

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AI	Artificial intelligence
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
CCICED	China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development
CAE	Chinese Academy of Engineering
FYP	Five-Year Plan
GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
HLTF	High-Level Task Force
MEE	Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China
NDC	Nationally determined contribution
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPS	Special Policy Study
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Organization