



CCICED 2021 Roundtable and High-level Dialogue on International Cooperation for Ecology and Environment **Building a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity: Synergies between Pollution Control and Carbon Emission Reduction**

Thursday 3 June 2021

China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) has established its roundtable mechanism since 2008, which is held once a year to share the results of CCICED policy research with decision-makers at local governments, and discuss hot topics, challenges, and urgent issues on environment and development. The roundtable discussions for this year focused on the theme of “Building a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity: Synergies between Pollution Control and Carbon Emission Reduction”. CCICED research outcomes was shared on the topics of climate governance, nature-based solutions, and others, as well as exchanging ideas with the local government on the following topics: 1) Implementation of the new development concept, and coordinated governance of pollution control, carbon emissions reduction, and ecological improvement; 2) Possible pathways and challenges in early peaking; 3) Good practices in the Yangtze River Delta region in promoting ecological and environmental protection together with economic development.

Opening Remarks

Chaired by Mr. GUO Jing, CCICED Deputy Secretary General, Director General of Department of International Cooperation, MEE

Mr. ZHAO Yingmin, CCICED Secretary General; Vice Minister, MEE, kicked off the roundtable by highlighting the importance of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) period as a vital phase for China's ecological conservation drive that aims for overall green transformation of economic and social development. With China's commitments to peak carbon before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060, Mr. ZHAO stressed that carbon reduction will be the key strategic direction during this period. In this context, Mr. ZHAO presented three

key factors in achieving carbon neutrality: 1) implement innovative development concepts to continue the battle against pollution; 2) accelerate the construction of innovative development mechanisms to support and guarantee the role of ecological and environmental protection; 3) continue to encourage multilateralism for the common objective of harmonious coexistence between men and nature. He further stated that the Yangtze River Delta, as a highly open region with strong economic vitality and innovative capability, could play an important and demonstrative role as the country endeavors to bring its climate targets to reality.

Mr. PAN Xianzhang, Vice Governor Jiangsu Province, pointed to the relevance of the topics to be discussed at this roundtable with Jiangsu Province's green development pathway. As one of China's top performers in economic growth and openness, the concept of "clear waters and green mountains" are deeply embedded in Jiangsu's development strategy towards ecological civilization. In accordance with China's carbon commitments, Mr. PAN highlighted several key improvements taking place across the province: 1) optimize the industrial sector with focus on innovation and modernized services; 2) optimize the energy section with strict control over coal-based fossil energy, as well as promoting renewable energy systems; 3) strengthen pollution and carbon reduction across all industries; 4) fully utilize Jiangsu's ideal geographic location to implement nature-based solutions; 5) improve governance across all sectors.

Ms. Kristin Halvorsen, CCICED Vice Chairperson; Director, Center for International Climate and Environmental Research – Oslo, stressed the impending financial crisis from climate change if emissions are not reduced. It has been an encouragement to the global community when China took a leading role in addressing climate change, as this is vital for the health and wellbeing for the planet and mankind. Ms. Halvorsen further stated that clean energy is the key in reducing greenhouse emissions, which would require fossil and other emission-heavy sectors to peak quickly. Ms. Halvorsen congratulated China's ambitious climate goals and looks forward to strengthening collaboration.

Keynote Speech

Professor LIU Shijin, CCICED Chinese Chief Advisor, Deputy Director of the Economic Committee, National Committee of the CPPCC, pointed to the recent technological and institutional innovations that was driven by the carbon targets. Although these carbon targets appear insurmountable, Professor LIU pointed to China's unique advantages, including relative low-cost for green transition, China's growing domestic consumer market, rapid technology innovation to complement green development, as well as favorable policies and strengthened government support. With these advantages, Professor LIU reiterated the importance of the interdependent technological and institutional innovations; he also highlighted the concept of establishing consumer friendly

“carbon/green accounts”, with the purpose of bringing together multiple stakeholders to concurrently work towards China’s carbon targets.

Mr. Scott Vaughan, CCICED International Chief Advisor, highlighted three areas of CCICED’s work relevant to today’s roundtable discussions: 1) carbon neutrality, 2) nature-based solutions, and 3) river basin management with large-scale spatial planning. Currently CCICED’s work examines many dimensions of carbon neutrality, including establishing a national carbon trading market and decarbonizing the infrastructure and transportation sectors; China’s dual circulation framework aims to frame these different aspects of carbon neutrality roadmaps (i.e. supply chain security, green lifestyle, efficient energy consumption, sustainable food systems). Mr. Vaughan also noted CCICED’s achievement in low-carbon urbanization, river conservation and restoration, as well as utilizing nature-based solutions to achieve carbon targets.

Mr. WANG Guorong, Chief of Wujiang District, Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province, shared the many advantages of Wujiang District, including being geographically well endowed with abundant natural resources and strong industrial foundation. In the context of peaking carbon by 2030, Mr. WANG highlighted activities undertaken within the district to prioritize its ecological assets, including 1) strengthen protection of its river and lake resources; 2) piloting pollution compensation programs across the district; 3) recognize the complexity of ecological governance and identify innovative solutions; 4) adhere to the concept of “clear waters and green mountains”. Mr. WANG emphasized Wujiang’s green development pathway that focused on integration and innovation, as well as full participation in the [Yangtze River Delta Integration Plan](#) with the objective to develop Wujiang (and surrounding districts) into world-class city clusters.

Roundtable Discussion: Pathways and Challenges in Carbon Peaking in the Yangtze River Delta

Chaired by Mr. LI Yonghong, CCICED Assistant Secretary General, Deputy Director General of Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center, MEE

Mr. Juergen Voegelé, CCICED Member; Vice President for Sustainable Development at the World Bank, remarked the needs to speed up efforts from all sectors to meet the Paris Agreement. Mr. Voegelé also noted that many Chinese cities have already begun to take measures to meet the carbon targets with a whole-of-society approach, thus recognizing that green development requires an all-hands-on-deck approach from all levels of all sectors. In this context, Mr. Voegelé shed attention on a few areas that are intricately linked with multiple stakeholders from varying industries, including greening the soft commodities supply chain and low-carbon urbanization. Finally, Mr. Voegelé highlighted China’s success in poverty eradication in the past 30 years and looks forward to sharing the Chinese experience abroad in eradicating poverty at the global level.

Mr. Hideki Minamikawa, CCICED Member; President, Japan Environmental Sanitation Center, stated that both air and water pollution are of common interest to tackle for many countries, as reflected in China and Japan's long-term climate goals and joint efforts for addressing climate change. Mr. Minamikawa stated that a series of decarbonization measures in Japan has been scaling up and implemented through the revision of [global warming countermeasures](#), which focused on two fundamental pillars: 1) nationalize renewable energy projects and strengthen the development of innovative green technologies; 2) establish framework for individual regions and communities to set their own targets and further tailored measures for localized emissions reduction programmes (i.e. [2050 Zero Carbon Cities in Japan](#)).

Mr. Wim Geerts, Ambassador of the Netherlands to China, highlighted Netherland's long and fruitful relationship with China, and aims to continue to work with China in meeting the Paris Agreement climate targets. As mentioned by other speakers, Mr. Geerts remarked that emission reduction requires commitments from all sectors, and Netherlands has been taking holistic measures by working with international partners to tackle emissions, including recent alliance for the [decarbonization of the transportation industry](#), soil protection and rehabilitation, and mainstreaming climate adaption tools to enhance resilience. Mr. Geerts also highlighted CCICED's river basin scoping study that examined both the Yangtze and Rhine River systems.

Mr. LI Xiaojiang, Team Leader, SPS on Major Green Technology Innovation and Implementation Mechanisms, noted the roundtable topic relevance to current CCICED scoping study of river basin management. Mr. LI proceeded to introduce the research progress and findings of SPS Green Technologies, with focus on carbon emission analysis from five communities and recommendations for consumer-friendly green technologies. With questionnaires distributed among these communities for a holistic view of energy consumption and emissions produced, it has been concluded that both consumption and emissions level vary from community to community dependent upon multiple factors (i.e. core population demographic, income, geographic location, degree of urbanization). Mr. LI concluded that changes in community lifestyle and consumption patterns are vital for China's green transition process.

Mr. ZOU Ji, CCICED Special Advisor, CEO & President of Energy Foundation China, shared pathways to peaking carbon with China's new green growth logic model. He notes that the carbon targets will be achieved with lower per capital income (in comparison with western countries), a shorter plateau period for carbon peaking, and high-speed structural and technological innovation. In this context, Mr. ZOU believes that China's growth logic will achieve unprecedented innovative benefits for the world. He also notes that 80% of China has already peaked its emissions and the driving forces behind these activities will play a key role in China's long-term green development roadmap; As the Yangtze region growth is less reliant on activities that produce

emissions, surrounding community living standards will inevitably rise as well.

Mr. ZHANG Jianyu, CCICED Special Advisor, Vice President of EDF (Environmental Defense Fund), noted that many conservation and low-carbon development pilot projects originated in the Yangtze region. Thus, for continuous green development, Mr. ZHANG outlined the following recommendations: 1) fully engage the local lower-level governments in low-carbon development as they are rooted in the community and are responsible for the ultimate implementation of the pilot initiatives; 2) understand the unique characteristics of each region and tailor-made development pathways are necessary; 3) ensure that Yangtze continues to be the ideal region to introduce pilot policies, including introducing regional carbon markets, promoting innovative technologies and green investment opportunities.

Mr. Iskandar Abdullaev, CCICED Special Advisor; Deputy Director, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute, brought attention to developing countries surrounding China and implores for more international collaboration and technical support for these countries. Mr. Abdullaev pointed to the increase in the volatility of the energy supply chain brought on by climate change, as well as the challenges of the energy sector within central Asia countries that are mostly state-owned with low efficiency, limited regional interconnectivity and lack of private financing; in countries such as Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, renewable energy is still relatively scattered. Though there is growing awareness that energy consumption would require a complete overhaul of the existing energy structure, more financing is required for this green transition.

Mr. BAI Guoqiang, Chief Engineer, Shanghai Ecology and Environment Bureau, highlighted Shanghai City's active participation in international collaborations in reducing emissions and addressing climate change; while China's carbon peaking target timeline is 2030, Shanghai has ambitiously set its own target for peaking by 2025. In this context, Mr. BAI shared the example of activities the city has undertaken to meet that ambitious goal, including the construction of [Chongming Carbon Neutral Island](#). He also stressed the importance of private enterprise involvement in green development, noting the example of Baowu Steel Group that has put forward ambitious strategies for both peaking and achieving carbon neutrality in the traditionally emissions heavy steel industry.

Mr. LAI Li, Director of Institute for Energy and Resources, Jiangsu Strategic and Development Research Center, highlighted Jiangsu Province's achievements in tackling climate change and promoting low-carbon development, as well as recognizing the challenges of peaking carbon while still catching up to western nations' level of development. Mr. LAI explained that while Jiangsu is currently China's largest offshore wind power base, it is also one of China's highest energy consumption regions as well. In this context, Mr. LAI identified the following three recommendations: 1) strengthen collaboration with international partners as the demand for clean

renewable energy grows steadily; 2) identify successful case studies from the international community that can be used in the China context; 3) continue to take advantage of Jiangsu's manufacturing sector and reduce solar technology cost.

Mr. CHEN Qi, Deputy Director, Zhejiang Ecological Environment and Low Carbon Development Center, reported on the emissions reduction work on behalf of Zhejiang government, where he introduced the “four-six-one” project indicator model undertaken by the province. The “four” indicators focused on total energy consumption, total carbon emissions, energy intensity, carbon emissions intensity; the “six” refers to the energy, industrial, construction, transportation, agriculture, and community living quality; and finally, the “one” encourages technological innovation with the objective of formulating a technical roadmap for achieving Zhejiang's carbon targets. Mr. CHEN shared several aspect of Zhejiang's emissions reduction work, including the utilization of big data to establish a clear and accurate carbon accounting system.

This summary has not been previously reviewed by the speakers and does not reflect CCICED official opinions.