



China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development

2024–2025 Work Report



Note: This report provides a review and summary of the main work of CCICED from October 2024 to October 2025.

The year 2025 marks the final year of China’s 14th Five-Year Plan and the planning year for the 15th Five-Year Plan. It is a pivotal year for advancing the building of a “Beautiful China”¹ and for carrying forward implementation of the dual-carbon climate goals and other green goals. CCICED’s work proceeded in the wider context of both turbulence and transformation: international trade is facing its most serious disruption since the Second World War; challenges related to climate, nature, and pollution are intensifying; and the global green and low-carbon transition is encountering resistance. As a high-level international policy advisory body and platform for mutual exchange, CCICED has closely aligned its work with its annual theme, “Accelerating the Comprehensive Green Transformation and Promoting the Harmonious Coexistence Between Humans and Nature.” It has

¹ Building a Beautiful China is an important part of the Chinese Dream. The initiative, which calls for respecting, protecting, and being in harmony with nature, is based on a key national policy on resource conservation, environmental protection, and promotion of green, circular, and low-carbon development. It underscores the need for leaving more space for nature to renew itself, keeping more land for cultivation, and bequeathing a better working and living environment to future generations so that they can be blessed with a blue sky, green fields, and clean water. The Chinese Dream will not be realized at the expense of the environment. Economic development should be accompanied by strong measures of ecological protection. The initiative to build a Beautiful China will be of benefit to the country’s long-term development, to promoting sustainable global development, and to fulfilling the universal dream of protecting our beautiful earth. In 2023, China issued guidelines to comprehensively promote the development of a Beautiful China.

carried out research, organized activities, and supported evidenced-based policy guidance as well as confidence in the green transition, based on the sharing of case studies, relevant experiences involving public policy, markets, and whole-of-society engagement. Positive progress has been made across all areas of work, as outlined below.

I. Positive Progress in Policy Research

In accordance with the Annual Work Plan approved by the Executive Committee, CCICED initiated the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) on China's Environment and Development Outlook, conducting systematic and strategic research guided by the co-chairs, core experts, and four working groups charged with examining the triple crisis, green development, international cooperation, and governance.

The main body of CCICED's 2024–2025 work examined four major themes: "Innovation in Global Environmental Governance," "National Green Governance System," "Sustainable Production and Consumption," and "Low-Carbon Inclusive Transition." In the past year, eight Special Policy Studies (SPSs) were carried out, along with two Scoping Studies (SSs) on energy-environment synergy innovation and climate adaptation. CCICED's work has involved roughly 400 Chinese and international experts. Based on joint China-foreign research, the *Report on Green Transition: Successful Experiences and Case Studies* was prepared to offer reference for pragmatic action.

i. HLTF on China's Environment and Development Outlook

The Task Force aims to review the past decade of China's progress in environmental and devel-

opment transformation; to summarize China's unique path and successful experience in green, low-carbon transition; to identify and study the major challenges that China faces for high-quality development toward the middle of this century; and to make a strategic assessment for China's realization of its mid-to-long-term vision as well as for the future international role of China. On that basis, forward-looking and comprehensive policy recommendations will be proposed. The Task Force is led by CCICED Vice-Chairpersons Xie Zhenhua and Achim Steiner, with direct participation in the research from over 10 CCICED Council Members and Special Advisors. A mid-term report will be released at this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM). It will include reviews and summaries of the progress and achievements of China's green transition over the past decade, as well as policy recommendations for the preparation of the 15th Five-Year Plan. In September, the HLTF conducted research visits to France and the United Kingdom to engage with international partners and convene an international seminar.

ii. Innovation in Global Environmental Governance

1) SPS on Global Climate Governance and Green and Inclusive Transition

The study is designed to reposition China's role in global climate governance under the new circumstances, and to explore China's medium-to-long-term energy transition and the development paths of its green, low-carbon industries. The research recommends anchoring development goals in the green, low-carbon transition and decarbonization by (a) systematically and comprehensively reshaping economic structures involving energy generation, power and storage, end-use substitution, and technological innovation; (b) furthering joint climate leadership via South-North-South cooperation to rebuild confidence in global climate governance; (c) promoting trade and investment liberalization and facilitation in low-carbon products; (d) building more inclusive global energy transition supply-chain partnerships; and (e) actively participating in innovation of climate finance instruments. The SPS applied a model to 2050 in China's climate goals, underscoring the importance of an all-sector approach.

2) SPS on Governance System for a Harmonious Coexistence Between Humans and Nature

The SPS focuses on ensuring that China's system of ecological conservation red lines (ECR) to advance large-scale land-use planning to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). Additionally, the SPS recommends stronger synergies among multiple environmental conventions, in particular to enhance climate and nature synergies, while linking China's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) with

local action. The research proposes that the ECR be adopted as an important solution for China's implementation of the KMGBF and its compliance reporting. The ECR can also be promoted with international partners. Finally, the SPS working group underscores the importance of whole-of-government governance mechanisms to support the sustainable use of biodiversity. In July, the SPS team visited Belgium and Serbia to engage international partners and conduct field visits on biodiversity, climate, and conservation practices.

3) Scoping Study on Climate Adaptation

The Scoping Study focuses on how to effectively address the immediate and longer-term risks posed by climate change to areas, such as food security, urban systems, inland waterway transport, and ecological conservation, through systemic, cross-sectoral cooperation and innovation. The research recommends launching cross-sectoral cooperative studies on climate adaptation and building collaborative networks to ensure the systemic and coherent implementation of adaptation efforts; initiating pilot programs for inland waterway transport; improving financial support mechanisms for climate adaptation; clarifying public- and private-sector roles and responsibilities; and creating an enabling environment for implementation.

iii. Promoting the Development of a Modern National Green Governance System

4) SPS on Scientific and Technological Innovation in Green Transformation

The SPS focuses on promoting the development of a new energy system in which renewable energy, such as wind and solar, serves as the mainstay, integrated with complementary energy sources. It concentrates on innovation pathways for China's renewable energy technologies, including wind and photovoltaics; energy storage technologies and business models that support renewable energy development; and new grid models to enable renewable energy integration. The research recommends promoting innovation through "renewable energy+" models to accelerate technology application; developing demonstration projects and advancing frontier technologies, such as deep-sea wind power and tandem solar cells; building a diversified energy storage system with multiple technologies and application scenarios to achieve large-scale deployment across different time scales; and constructing a new type of power grid integrating transmission, distribution, and micro-grids, with innovative dispatch models to enhance grid capacity for renewable energy.

5) SPS on Green Finance for a Comprehensive Green Transformation of the Society and Economy

The SPS examines how financial instruments can be leveraged to drive the low-carbon transition of high-emission industries. The study identifies three main challenges in this process: obstacles to technological innovation, risks of stranded assets, and difficulties of ensuring a just transition. The research recommends promoting technological innovation through supply-chain finance, using bond and equity financing to

empower small and medium-sized enterprises through leading firms; managing stranded asset risks with financial instruments, incorporating carbon-emission indicators into mergers and acquisitions to guide capacity optimization, and developing debt-swap tools to accelerate the early retirement of high-carbon assets; and ensuring a just transition by embedding worker resettlement requirements into investment and financing conditions, promoting fiscal-financial coordination, and supporting worker re-employment and skills training. In June, the SPS team visited London to engage UK and European partners on green bonds, biodiversity finance, green steel, and third-country cooperation.

6) Scoping Study on Collaborative Innovation in Energy and Environment for High-Quality Development

The Scoping Study analyzes the current status and major trends of energy-environment synergies at home and abroad, and examines the issues and challenges faced, including ecological and environmental pollution from abandoned coal mines, emerging environmental problems associated with the development of modern coal chemical industries, land and resource constraints for new energy projects, and equipment decommissioning challenges. The research recommends establishing a national-level integrated early warning and coordination mechanism, setting up a cross-ministerial coordination body, and, during the 15th Five-Year Plan period, conducting forward-looking contingency plan studies to prevent systemic environmental and resource risks. It also recommends that top-level

design should integrate energy transition, environmental protection, and climate governance, thereby strengthening the legal framework to safeguard high-quality development and achievement of the dual-carbon goals.

iv. Advancing Sustainable Production and Consumption

7) SPS on Sustainable Blue Economy Under the Vision of Carbon Neutrality

The SPS explores pathways toward sustainable oceans management and aligning blue economy nature and other goals with the achievement of carbon neutrality goals. The study finds that although developing a sustainable blue economy has been established as a national strategy, it lacks effective integration with other major national strategies. China's support system for developing a sustainable blue economy remains incomplete, making it difficult to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of financial support. The research recommends the following: strengthen synergies between the marine sector and other major national strategies; systematically incorporate the sustainable blue economy into national and local development plans; provide policy incentives to promote innovation and optimization in key marine industry technologies and business models; advance the development of domestic blue-space pioneer demonstration zones; and establish a comprehensive, systematic marine environmental assessment framework, formulating technical standards or developing a blue finance taxonomy at the national level, while deepening multistakeholder collaboration

among government, industry, and research institutions, as well as enhancing international cooperation. On June 13, the SPS team hosted a UN Ocean Conference side event in Nice, France, on "Sustainable Blue Economy. in the Vision of Carbon Neutrality" to showcase research findings.

8) SPS on Promote High-Quality Development With Circular Economy

The SPS draws on international best practices and policy comparisons, focusing on the textile and chemical industries to identify key pathways for achieving a high-quality, resource-efficient, and inclusive circular economy. The SPS notes that the global economic system remains predominantly linear, exacerbating the triple planetary crisis. Current circular economy efforts are fragmented and underfunded, and they lack binding targets. As a major global manufacturing hub and raw material consumer, China plays a critical role in driving the transition toward a circular economy. The research recommends deepening the top-level design of circular economy development and setting mandatory quantitative targets; accelerating the establishment of a technical and product standards system; promoting circular economy transformation in key industries in line with waste classification principles to foster new engines of economic growth; and strengthening innovation in circular economy financing mechanisms and international cooperation. In June, the SPS team visited Germany and Belgium to exchange with government, industry, and NGOs on European circular economy poli-

cies and transition strategies.

v. Low-Carbon Inclusive Transition

9) SPS on Low-Carbon Transition Pathways in Traditional Energy Regions

The SPS explores the low-carbon transition objectives and pathways of China's "Coal Triangle" (Shanxi, Shaanxi, Inner Mongolia, and Ningxia) under the dual-carbon goals. The report studies models for establishing zero-carbon trade pilot zones, financing and funding schemes for low-carbon transition, as well as institutional and policy measures to ensure a just transition. The study finds that the Coal Triangle is one of the world's largest coal energy clusters and a key intersection of ecological protection and energy development in China, giving its low-carbon transition significant global demonstration value. The research recommends building the Coal Triangle into a national just transition demonstration zone and incorporating it into the overall framework of the regional coordinated development strategy; leveraging the new three major initiatives of new energy systems, hydrogen-based industry development, and carbon removal technologies to create new industrial transition pathways; establishing national or regional-level zero-carbon trade pilot zones to provide institutional carriers and platform support for regional green development; and accelerating the improvement of diversified funding support systems in the Coal Triangle, including setting up a national just transition fund and developing diversified investment and financing models. In June, the SPS team visited Poland and Spain to

discuss transition policies and study coal region transformations and renewable energy developments.

10) SPS on Green Development Cooperation

The SPS aims to systematically review the evolution of international cooperation on green development, analyze the opportunities and challenges under the new circumstances, and explore innovative pathways for cooperation. The study finds that the profound adjustments in the current international landscape bring greater uncertainty to international cooperation on green development, while the international community has new expectations for China's role. Scientific and technological innovation and cooperation in the digital economy provide new momentum for green development cooperation. The research recommends that China maintains its strategic commitment to the green and low-carbon transition by launching a "Global Green Development Initiative," and establishing a dedicated fund for international cooperation on green development to increase support in this area; leverages the demonstration role of green technologies, deepens technology sharing and cooperation with developing countries, and supports the green and low-carbon transition in the Global South; and innovates cooperation models by establishing a tripartite mechanism of government guidance, enterprise leadership, and think tank support to enhance the systematization and effectiveness of international green cooperation. In August, the SPS team visited Malaysia to engage government, think tanks, and industry on energy transition challenges and cooperation opportunities.

II. Successful Organization of the CCICED AGM and Major Events

With the strong support from partners and the active engagement of Council Members and Special Advisors, the CCICED 2024 AGM was successfully convened. In addition, round tables and thematic seminars were held on key issues of the year, with their outcomes and policy recommendations informing decision making by the Chinese government and contributing to relevant international processes.

i. The CCICED 2024 AGM

From October 10–12, 2024, the CCICED 2024 AGM was held in Beijing under the theme, "Open, Inclusive, and Innovative Cooperation to Build a Clean and Beautiful World." Ding Xuexiang, Vice-Premier of the State Council of China and Chairperson of CCICED, attended the Closing Ceremony, received the Council Members' research findings and the outcomes of the AGM, and delivered an important address. He emphasized that the Chinese government will, as always, support the growth and strengthening of CCICED and enable it to play its role as a bridge and link more effectively. He also expressed the hope that Council Members and experts will continue to contribute their insights and recommendations, making greater contributions to building a Beautiful China, and jointly fostering a clean and beautiful world.

During the AGM, seven open forums were held on environmental and developmental issues of common concern to the international community. Approximately 500 participants—including CCICED Members and Special Advisors, as well as representatives from 36 countries, 46 international organizations, relevant Chinese government departments, universities, research

institutions, the business community, and civil society organizations—took part in various activities of the AGM. Prior to the meeting, a group of Council Members visited Ordos, Inner Mongolia, to study the development of renewable energy.

The AGM discussed and adopted the Policy Recommendations under the theme, "Further Deepen Comprehensive Reforms, Seize New Opportunities Brought by the Technological Revolution and Industrial Transformation, and Accelerate the Comprehensive Green Transition of the Economy and Society." The recommendations emphasized the need to adopt a systemic approach to address environmental, climatic, and developmental challenges, and to maintain certainty in long-term goals through strategic commitment. The Policy Recommendations included 20 specific proposals, which were submitted to the Chinese government for reference and adoption.

Nearly 20 major domestic media outlets in China covered the meeting. Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB) provided full English reporting, which was disseminated through 350 international media outlets across 63 countries and regions in Asia, the Americas, Europe, and Africa.

On new media platforms—including WeChat, X, and Facebook— reels, interviews with Council Members, and posts highlighting research findings were released, reaching a total viewership of nearly 3 million. Several Council Members also shared their reflections on participating in CCICED activities through their personal social media accounts, noting that CCICED is a unique multilateral cooperation platform, and expressed their hope that CCICED will further expand its global influence and continue to contribute ideas and solutions to sustainable development in China and worldwide.

ii. Convening of More Than 30 Major Domestic and International Meetings and Events

1) Active Participation in Global Environmental Governance Processes and Sharing CCICED's Research Findings

With support from its partners, CCICED organized a side event—Biodiversity Conservation Models and Monitoring Technologies for the Kunming-Montreal Framework—during the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, in Cali, Colombia. Huang Runqiu, Executive Vice Chairperson of CCICED and Minister of Ecology and Environment of China, attended and delivered remarks. About 150 participants exchanged views and offered recommendations on biodiversity conservation. During the 29th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Baku, Azerbaijan, CCICED

convened an expert seminar on “China’s Pathways for Achieving Carbon Neutrality and Global Climate Governance,” where nearly 60 senior Chinese and international representatives contributed insights on tackling the challenges of the energy transition. On the same day, CCICED also held a side event — Belt and Road South-South Cooperation on Climate Change and Green Opening-Up: Cases and Practices — with then-CCICED Secretary General Zhao Yingmin and several Council Members, calling for further advancement of South-South cooperation on climate change.

At the 3rd UN Ocean Conference in June 2025, CCICED organized the side event, Sustainable Blue Economy in the Vision of Carbon Neutrality, which called for the early initiation of planning for a new post-2030 ocean agenda.

2) Promoting Dialogue on Green Development in Key Regions to Deepen Consensus on Green Transition

During the 10th China–EU Environment Policy Ministerial Dialogue, as well as the China–UK and China–France Environment and Climate Ministerial Dialogues, CCICED organized the China–EU think tank seminar, “Consolidating Consensus on Transition, Collaboratively Advancing Green Growth,” in Brussels, and carried out a series of exchange activities in London, Oxford, and Paris. These events engaged governments, enterprises, and think tanks in multi-level dialogue, contributing to a deeper China–EU green partnership. In Chongqing, China’s most populous provincial-level city, CCICED con-

vened the round table, Green and Low-Carbon Transition for a Beautiful Chongqing. International experts were invited to gain a firsthand understanding of local progress in green and low-carbon transition, and to contribute insights on the development of green and low-carbon industries, ecosystem protection, and digital-intelligent governance.

3) Promoting Mutual Learning Between International Research and Practice to Advance Global Knowledge Sharing

CCICED organized study missions and expert meetings in countries, including the United

Kingdom, France, the United States, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Poland, and Malaysia, as well as in Chinese locations, such as Chongqing, Shanxi, Fujian, Sichuan, and Jiangxi. These activities focused on important topics such as medium- and long-term environmental and developmental strategies, ocean governance, biodiversity conservation, green finance, circular economy, just transition, and international cooperation. The activities provided opportunities to share China’s progress in practice, while learning from and drawing on the latest international experiences.



III. Active Engagement of CCICED Members and Special Advisors

Members of the Executive Committee attended the CCICED AGM plenary and thematic forums and took part in discussions on the Policy Recommendations. The transition of the CCICED Secretary General was completed, and 13 Chinese and international Members and Special Advisors were newly appointed. More than 40 CCICED Members and Special Advisors contributed to policy research through participation in meetings, field visits, report drafting, interviews, and report reviews. Chief Advisors provide strategic guidance by reviewing research

outlines, participating in SPS meetings and field visits, supporting peer reviews, and contributing to the drafting of the Policy Recommendations and Issues Reports. In addition, they serve as vice-chairs of the HLTF, helping to steer the overall direction of the work. Their combined insights lay a solid foundation for CCICED to deliver high-quality Policy Recommendations, significantly enhancing both the impact of CCICED's activities and the foresight of its policy research.

IV. Advancing Gender Mainstreaming

CCICED supported the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality by promoting gender mainstreaming throughout the research process. Gender perspectives were incorporated into SPSs, with women playing an active role, and the proportion of women's participation in research further increased. Suggest to continuously make progress in women's involvement in leading and participating in CCICED's work.

For example, 60% of CCICED's SPSs are coordinated by women. In addition, each SPS was required to designate a gender focal point, and gender experts were invited to provide specialized training and guidance tailored to the content of each project. Gender monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) methods were introduced, establishing gender tracking indicators for each research project to identify good practices and challenges.



V. Effective Secretariat Support With Strong Contributions From Partners

Over the past year, CCICED's work has continued to receive broad attention and strong support from the organization's partners. Government agencies from Canada, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden, along with organizations including the Sequoia Climate Foundation, Energy Foundation, Energy Innovation, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, ClimateWorks Foundation, Ford Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, World Resources Institute, and World Wide Fund for Nature, provided financial support to CCICED.

International organizations, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as institutions, including the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Tsinghua University, Peking University, University of Macau, Xiamen University, Southern University of Science and Technology, Zhejiang University of Technology, Jiangxi Agricultural University, Energy Research Institute of NDRC, CICC Global Institute, State Grid Energy Research Institute, Beijing Huanqing Environmental Smart Data Institute, and the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition, also provided financial support and expertise by participating in policy research, co-hosting events, and carrying out capacity-building activities.

Over the past year, the Secretariat and the Secretariat International Support Office (SISO) worked efficiently together to implement the decisions of the Executive Committee. Through a regular joint meeting mechanism, they strengthened meeting organization, event planning, and communications, supported the work of the Chief Advisors, and provided high-quality services to Council Members and Special Advisors. The Secretariat visited CCICED partners and held 19 bilateral consultations. On social media, CCICED's Facebook account published 140 posts, reaching 961,000 followers and generating more than 18.8 million views. CCICED's X account published 143 posts, with around 23,000 followers and 5.98 million views. The WeChat official account grew to 6,683 followers and published 62 articles that generated a total of 26,800 views. In addition, 12 issues of the CCICED newsletter (English edition) were produced, sharing CCICED's research findings, updates on its work, and the latest developments on the environment and development at home and abroad, providing strong support for Council Members and Special Advisors to participate in CCICED's work.

