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Summary of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2024: 10-12 October 2024

In a world facing the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, rising geopolitical tensions, and persistent inequality, international cooperation models that deliver on their promise of positive change are increasingly required. The need to tackle the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, including through innovative financing mechanisms, is a constant refrain throughout all international meetings. Against this backdrop, the 32nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED), convening under the theme of “Open, Inclusive and Innovative Cooperation to Build a Clean and Beautiful World,” addressed these issues during the three-day meeting.

China’s central role in providing lessons in high-quality green development and its commitment to achieve its renewable energy and low-carbon targets were tangibly demonstrated by the outputs reported from this year’s Special Policy Studies (SPS). A key component to untangling the “Gordian knot” of economic growth at the cost of the natural environment was clearly through research undertaken and conveyed: no progress without cooperation. Breaking the walls of competition among countries, and siloed approaches within governments, requires real innovation and political courage.

Examples of such innovations were demonstrated through China’s [Belt and Road Initiative](#) (BRI), which has helped facilitate South-South cooperation. After a decade of development, the BRI—China’s modern take on the old Silk Road that linked countries through Asia and beyond—offers a paradigm for such cooperation, as it is gradually shifting from in-kind assistance to needs-based cooperation and knowledge sharing. The Chinese government has demonstrated its commitment through an eight-step plan supporting the pursuit of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, and through launching the Green Investment and Finance Partnership to realize the low-carbon transition and green, sustainable development.

The AGM also showcased China’s approach to transforming its legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, particularly at the local level. Representatives of the Supreme People’s Court and the Supreme People’s Procuratorate presented case studies



A view of the dais during the opening remarks by Chair **Huang Runqiu**, CCICED Chinese Executive Vice Chairperson and Minister of Ecology and Environment

and offered recommendations on developing legislative and judicial guarantees for carbon and pollution reduction and green growth. CCICED’s research demonstrated that the keys to a green transformation are innovative technologies and policies to ensure proper and immediate monitoring and assessment of practices on the ground.

The meeting highlighted numerous examples of the positive feedback loops that link low-carbon development, digitalization,

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and market-based innovation. Participants often cited China's success in achieving renewable energy targets, which demonstrate that trade-offs between energy security and low-carbon energy development are no longer needed. Many welcomed China's leadership in creating new, data-driven smart cities and regions based on data center integration, and demonstrating how green infrastructure can enhance climate adaptability.

Providing recommendations, the AGM encourages the Chinese government and other governments to, *inter alia*: promote a variety of area-based conservation models to deliver on the 30x30 target to protect 30% of land, fresh waters, and seas by 2030, building on existing protected and conserved areas and on China's Ecological Conservation Redlines (ECR); establish pilot projects in cities or industrial parks to advance industrial heat pump and energy storage efficiency; develop national strategies for adaptation and for key ocean industries, such as renewable energy, deep-sea mining, and offshore aquaculture, supported by robust policies; and adopt a quantitative carbon reduction performance model to guide public procurement.

The AGM discussions also addressed proposed pathways and policy recommendations contained in nine SPS undertaken during the preceding year by consortia of Chinese and international researchers, on:

- China's Pathways for Achieving Carbon Neutrality and Global Climate Governance;
- Sustainable Oceans Management Under the Vision of Carbon Neutrality;
- Biodiversity Conservation and Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
- Collaborative Mechanism for Pollution Reduction, Carbon Reduction, Green Expansion and Growth;
- Green Development and Climate Adaptation for Urban and Rural Areas;
- Digital-Green Dual Transformation and Sustainable Development of Cities;
- Innovative Mechanisms of Sustainable Investment in Environment and Climate;
- Sustainable Trade and Supply Chains; and
- Green Opening-up and South-South Cooperation.

The AGM also adopted the CCICED progress report for 2023-2024 and workplan for 2024-2025.

The meeting was held at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, China, and drew more than 500 high-level experts from government, research, the private sector, and international organizations.

This report covers plenary and parallel Open Forum discussions held from Thursday to Saturday, 10-12 October. A closing session, while not covered in this report, took place on Saturday afternoon.

A Brief History of the CCICED

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

CCICED's main tasks are to study critical environment and development issues facing China and to provide 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 aim 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 latter includes consideration of China's green BRI.

CCICED seeks to bring in participating experts that comprise a balance of gender, geographic regions, nationalities, and areas of expertise. It is also making efforts to increase the involvement of youth, the private sector, and civil society in its work.

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 Meeting: 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 environment 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 from 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 CCICED, the 2022 AGM convened as a hybrid session under the theme “Building an Inclusive, Green and Low-carbon Economy,” and reviewed results from CCICED’s Phase VI in preparation of the launch of the seventh phase of the Council’s work. The 2023 AGM considered eight SPS undertaken during the 2022/2023 period. Recommendations were captured under the theme “Green Transition for High-Quality Development: Modernization in Harmony with Nature,” thus demonstrating the intention by the Chinese government to commit to driving a paradigm shift towards high-quality green development.

Report of the 2024 AGM

Opening Plenary

Welcoming participants on Thursday to the CCICED’s 2024 AGM, Huang Runqiu, CCICED Chinese Executive Vice Chairperson and Minister of Ecology and Environment, China, noted that increased complexity and uncertainty make the need to build a clean and beautiful world more urgent than ever. He emphasized China’s commitment to promoting a more inclusive and healthier planet, highlighting China’s achievements in ecological and environmental protection such as revising environmental laws, enhancing air pollution control, increasing green coverage and land recovery, and investing in clean heating and transitioning to renewable energy sources. He noted that China is actively cooperating with other developing countries through platforms for communication and financing, including South-South cooperation. He also highlighted the development of a high-level technological system to identify environmental problems and implement targeted solutions. Additionally, he noted China has already met its climate change commitments and emphasized China’s technological progress towards a green transition and its active participation in international forums to explore new paths in environmental protection.

Huang Runqiu drew attention to CCICED’s efforts in contributing to Chinese solutions, suggesting to: conduct studies to enhance the ecological system; develop low-carbon mechanisms and provide decision-making support to build a beautiful China; facilitate the low-carbon transition by creating integrated solutions to address the climate change crisis and ensure a better future; and connect China to the global community to create a safe and clean energy industry chain and enhance exchange and dialogue.

Xie Zhenhua, CCICED Vice Chairperson and former Chinese Special Envoy on Climate Change, emphasized the need for a systemic approach that integrates climate responses with other social and environmental needs. He cited: high international consensus on the urgency of action, as reflected at the 28th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 28); China’s early delivery of its climate commitments through expanding its renewable energy capacity by 2.5 times between 2020 and 2024; and its meeting with US President Joe Biden, in 2023, which affirmed the need for US-China cooperation on climate



Achim Steiner, CCICED Vice Chairperson and UNDP Administrator

change. He expressed hope that CCICED will become a platform for cooperation not only among governments but also among industry, think tanks, and civil society stakeholders.

Achim Steiner, Vice Chairperson and Administrator, UN Development Programme (UNDP), noted the importance of CCICED at a moment of geopolitical tensions. He welcomed China’s development assistance to other countries and warned that conflict among the world’s major powers would negatively affect more than 1.5 billion people on the African continent.

Kristin Halvorsen, Vice Chairperson and Director, Center for International Climate Research (CICERO), called China’s achievements admirable and inspiring, noting how unique its constant “over-performing” is. She emphasized the need for carbon pricing, free trade, and an end to fossil fuel subsidies. She also highlighted China’s key role in addressing the challenges of plastic waste and deforestation linked to trade in agricultural commodities, particularly cattle and soy, and stressing the need for international collaboration.

Via video message, Inger Andersen, Vice Chairperson and Under-Secretary-General of the UN and Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), said CCICED plays a critical role in addressing challenges globally, regionally, and locally. She called for an ambitious update to China’s Nationally



Inger Andersen, CCICED Vice Chairperson and UNEP Executive Director



Kristin Halvorsen, CCICED Vice Chairperson and Director, CICERO

Determined Contribution (NDC) under the UNFCCC and increased adaptation action through the elevation of a national adaptation strategy. Commending China's strong leadership on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), she expressed trust that China will continue its engagement and leadership to advance the transition to a circular economy and to end plastic pollution with an "ambitious, credible and just" start to the global agreement on plastic pollution.

Introduction of the CCICED Work Report (2022-2023) and Work Plan (2023-2024): Zhou Guomei, CCICED Deputy Secretary General and Director-General, Department of International Cooperation, MEE, reported on CCICED's work progress and work plan. He drew attention to achievements in policy research, furthering collaboration, enhancing the role of CCICED as a two-way platform to facilitate exchange, and strengthened media coverage. Going forward, she highlighted, *inter alia*: the launching of a High-level Task Force on China's Environment and Development Outlook to spur systemic and strategic research and planning; eight planned SPS, including on governance, green financing, green transition, blue economy, and circular economy; and further engagement at the local level, including through field trips as a more general practice.

Introduction of CCICED Issues Paper and Policy Recommendation Draft: Scott Vaughan, CCICED International Chief Advisor and Senior Fellow at the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), introduced the CCICED Issues Paper. He outlined the main areas CCICED focused on over the past year. On the question of climate change, he noted China has achieved notable progress in meeting its mitigation targets and likely reaching its carbon peaking target before 2030, but highlighted that significant challenges with fossil fuels persist. Concerning biodiversity, he pointed out that China has made progress by establishing protected areas and pursuing the 30x30 conservation target, but noted significant challenges in developing sustainable models for agriculture and fisheries.

Liu Shijin, CCICED Chinese Chief Advisor and former Deputy President, Development Research Center of China's State Council, highlighted CCICED's policy recommendations, including: an inter-agency working group on climate and trade to

facilitate wind and solar PV uptake internationally; multi-tiered adaptation targets; and a just transition that mitigates impacts of the low-carbon transition on vulnerable groups. On biodiversity, he called for a "green transformation" of marine industries and finding synergies between biodiversity conservation and climate action. He noted the important role of long-term "patient capital" in supporting green technological innovation. He also called for re-initiating talks on the World Trade Organization's Environmental Goods Agreement.

During the ensuing discussion, Zou Ji, President and CEO, Energy Foundation, China, provided feedback about learning exchanges with European colleagues on the importance of improving urban infrastructure to adapt to the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, citing incidents of severe storms and heatwaves.

Ani Dasgupta, President and CEO, World Resource Institute (WRI), commended China's achievements in ensuring the transition to green technologies at sub-national levels.

Drawing attention to the challenges faced by regions where coal production is concentrated, Wang Jinnan, Chinese Academy of Environmental Planning, called for: national level support in setting up a coordinating mechanism for these regions and defining their role in national pathways; zero-carbon electricity trading mechanisms; and funding for new technologies, ecological remediation, and compensation.

Peter Bakker, President and CEO, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), focused on: the importance of disclosure standards and transparency in trade; the need to hold companies accountable; and the need for businesses to start thinking about risks in supply chains.

Ye Yanfei, Policy Research Bureau, National Administration of Financial Regulation, China, called for national-level platforms that can inform investment decisions by financial institutions, including on carbon emissions, biodiversity, and climate risk.

Dimitri de Boer, Director of Programmes for Asia, ClientEarth, highlighted the need to support dialogue between China and other countries on green cooperation, mentioning a recent China-Indonesia partnership as a test case for a green BRI.



Ani Dasgupta, President and CEO, WRI



Peter Bakker, President, WBCSD

Jo Tyndall, Director, Environment Directorate, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), underscored: the importance of systemic approaches including the whole of government, economy, and society; the need for well-designed policies and investment plans; and the critical role of private-sector involvement to finance multiple environmental goals.

Stanley Loh, Permanent Secretary for Sustainability and Environment, Singapore, emphasized the need to focus on climate adaptation with commonly agreed measures. He also highlighted the requirement for more international cooperation and cited the China-Singapore pilot project on low-carbon cities as a model that could be replicated in other parts of China, as well as in other countries.

Christie Ulman, President, Sequoia Climate Foundation, mentioned how the population is embracing clean future initiatives and taking pride in achievements. She noted China's critical role in sharing perspectives and enhancing cooperation globally, calling for progress at both multilateral and bilateral levels and encouraging China to continue to develop this path.

Erik Solheim, Senior Adviser, WRI, stressed the importance of encouraging a green open economy and green competition, advocating for a "people-centered approach." He highlighted the need to engage with local communities, focusing on dialogue and benefits for local people to ensure project success, rather than adopting a purely "technocratic and financial approach."

Ilka Hirt, Deputy Director General, Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), Germany, urged China to help countries reach agreement on the plastics treaty that is currently being negotiated, noting that, without global action, plastics production will double or even triple in the coming decade.

Zhang Hongjun, Tsinghua University, recommended that CCICED: establish a task force to respond to dissenting voices on climate change and strengthen consensus on the issue; and provide guidance and support to international organizations working in China on climate and biodiversity issues. He welcomed the involvement of international organizations, and

favoured facilitating more of such entities to work in China, noting that "China is big; we have too few people, rather than too many."

Kuat Akizhanov, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute, called for poverty and wealth inequality to be resolved not through constant economic growth but through redistribution, noting this is especially relevant for countries that depend on natural resource exports.

Mark Halle, CCICED Special Adviser and former European representative, IISD, highlighted the need for: convergence of the climate and biodiversity agendas; alignment of countries' economies with the GBF requirements through reforming harmful subsidies and relevant incentives; and recognizing the opportunities for investment and innovation toward a net-zero economy.

Zafar Makhmudov, Executive Director, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia, highlighted the potential for China to play a pivotal role in strengthening global climate and biodiversity agreements. He invited China's cooperation in sharing experiences and best practices with its Central Asian neighbors.

Neo Gim Huay, Managing Director, Centre for Nature and Climate, World Economic Forum, stressed the role of behavioral and social sciences in addressing unforeseen challenges in case of overshooting planetary boundaries.

Recalling the need for integration, Xie Zhenhua suggested putting the recommendations under a sustainable development framework to allow for prioritization and a more targeted approach that enables practical policy recommendations, particularly when addressing multiple challenges with competing goals.

Open Forums

On Friday, three Open Forum discussions took place in parallel in the morning, and another four in the afternoon. Of the seven Open Forums, six are covered in this report. Each Forum comprised opening keynote addresses followed by interventions from invited experts in thematic panel discussions.



Christie Ulman, President, Sequoia Climate Foundation



Moderator **Huang Runqiu**, CCICED Chinese Executive Vice Chairperson and Minister of Ecology and Environment, addresses participants at the beginning of the event.

Promoting Harmony with Nature to Implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF):

This Friday morning Forum was jointly organized by MEE, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and WWF.

Moderator Marco Lambertini, Convenor, Nature Positive Initiative, noted the timely importance of this event, ahead of the 16th meeting of the COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 16) and called the GBF the “most comprehensive and ambitious” framework ever agreed.

Minister Huang Runqiu highlighted that biodiversity conservation is crucial to China’s national strategies, mentioning the progress China made under the GBF, including enhancing regulations, introducing the ECR, and contributing RMB 1.5 billion to the newly established Kunming Biodiversity Fund, among other achievements. He called on all to face challenges realistically to restore harmony between humans and nature, emphasizing the importance of actions, coordination, and unity. He expressed hope that CCICED will significantly contribute to achieving effective biodiversity protection solutions.

Emphasizing the ambitious targets of the GBF, Achim Steiner noted the necessity for synergies and integration. He called for embedding biodiversity into broader societal transitions, moving away from siloed approaches. Mentioning the concept of “ecological civilization,” he noted UNDP’s role in exploring innovative financing to tackle sustainability challenges and stressed the importance of the private sector to contribute actively, and to address sustainability on a global scale collectively.

Providing keynote remarks in a first session on **Ecological Protection Model Achieving 30x30 Target**, Kirsten Schuijt, Director General, WWF International, emphasized the importance of the 30x30 target for enhancing climate resilience, underscoring the need for collaboration and inclusive approaches to long-term conservation. She mentioned WWF’s key priorities, including establishing ecological corridors, securing diverse biodiversity funding, integrating Indigenous and local

communities, and employing robust disclosure frameworks for risk identification.

Dou Shuhua, Vice-Chair, China’s Environmental Protection and Resources Conservation Committee, highlighted China’s leadership in updating national policies under the GBF and implementing global conservation goals. He shared China’s efforts, citing legal advancements for environmental and biodiversity protection, such as the draft law on national parks to protect key parts of the country’s natural ecosystems, which has recently been submitted to Congress.

Wei Fuwen, Chinese Academy of Sciences, highlighted that scientific and academic contributions are crucial to realizing the GBF. He noted that promoting research using technological tools such as AI, satellite technology, and intelligent systems will aid in achieving framework goals.

Invited speakers provided further reflections. Ilka Hirt stressed that achieving the 30x30 target requires better climate-biodiversity coordination, mobilizing private finance, and maintaining public pressure on politics to support biodiversity and resist weakening environmental regulations.

Gao Jixi, Chief Scientist of Centre of Satellite Application for Ecology and Environment, MEE, emphasized the crucial “triangle” approach integrating biodiversity conservation, and carbon and pollution control, with biodiversity as the cornerstone.

William McGoldrick, Regional Managing Director for the Asia Pacific, TNC, listed key strategies for the 30x30 target, including: precise planning, monitoring and reporting to ensure compliance; mainstreaming the biodiversity agenda with public and private involvement; and a synergistic approach to financing and managing protected areas.

Zou Changxin, Nanjing Institute of Environmental Science, MEE, mentioned China’s ECR as a successful model of ecological protection, which could be helpful for other countries. He highlighted China’s technical and legislative efforts and noted the country’s commitment to strengthening these initiatives for future success.

A second session on **Financing and Resource Mobilization for the Kunming-Montreal GBF** was moderated by Linda Krueger, Director, Biodiversity and Infrastructure Policy, TNC, who stressed the need for significant investment to close the biodiversity finance gap, noting that a blended finance mechanism combining public and private efforts is crucial.

In a keynote address, Liu Ning, First-Level Inspector, Department of Nature and Ecology Conservation, MEE, emphasized the importance of financial resources for successful implementation of the GBF. He mentioned that the initiative, launched recently, sets aside RMB 50 million for 2024 and outlined its objectives, funding opportunities, goals, and expected outcomes.

In the ensuing discussion, invited speakers offered additional insights. Jo Tyndall emphasized key enablers for biodiversity financing: enhancing government economic incentives that protect biodiversity; identifying and reforming harmful subsidies;

and integrating biodiversity risks into financial institutions' decision-making processes.

Mark Halle urged redirecting funds to stop undermining biodiversity. He called for: aligning public and private actions with the GBF; developing “nature markets”; enhancing interest in biodiversity credit markets and performance-based funding; and shifting financial mechanisms “from negative to positive” to seize biodiversity conservation opportunities.

Ye Yanfei discussed financial institutions' role in achieving biodiversity conservation, and the need for: developing biodiversity platforms with inventories and maps to guide finance institutions; having sustainable agricultural and blue economy standards; and a taxonomy catalog for identifying real problems.

Xiao Xuezhi, Chief Scientist, Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center, MEE, emphasized the importance of implementing the GBF, stating that closing the financial gap requires a multi-stakeholder approach, aligning global strategies with local conditions, incentivizing private finance, and researching innovative resource mobilization and multilateral financing synergies.

Ma Chaode, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP, discussed lessons learned and next steps in biodiversity protection, emphasizing the importance of flexibility in resource mobilization, constant engagement with different stakeholders, and the need for an integrated approach.

Shi Yinghua, Director, Macro-economic Research Center, Chinese Academy of Fiscal Sciences, underscored the need for innovative financial mechanisms and measuring biodiversity conservation performance to enhance climate financing and identify harmful subsidies for better public funding.

Robert Smith, Principal, Midsummer Analytics, called for “moving beyond GDP,” emphasizing its inadequacy in assessing sustainability. He encouraged CCICED to explore the feasibility of a “comprehensive wealth” approach, to include “all forms of wealth,” embracing nature and biodiversity. He urged CCICED to explore pilot policy studies, and governments to commit to new measures.

John Ganzi, Managing Director, Climate Change Risk Management Institute, emphasized the critical need for

accounting breakthroughs, especially in stranded assets like fossil fuels. He called for clear government leadership, with China potentially leading this process.

A third session on **CCICED Policy Recommendation on Implementing the Kunming-Montreal GBF** was moderated by Gao Jixi who also provided a keynote address. He presented CCICED's key policy recommendations for implementing the GBF, which include: establishing an area-based ecological conservation model for the global 30x30 target in line with international standards; strengthening protected areas for key ecosystems at the global level; developing sustainable agricultural practices to ensure food security; and leading in resource mobilization by implementing market incentives and phasing out harmful incentives.

Marco Lambertini highlighted that other effective area-based conservation measures can be a great and innovative conservation tool to achieve the 30x30 goal, but only if applied correctly. He underscored that incentivizing regenerative agriculture is crucial, and that the low level of funding stability is an obstacle to sustainable agriculture. He mentioned that resource mobilization must be tackled urgently, noting that green credit and markets can deliver positive outcomes with clear principles and safeguards.

During the subsequent discussion, invited speakers provided further reflections. Zhang Linxiu, Director, International Ecosystem Management Partnership Programme, UNEP, highlighted UNEP's commitment to supporting member states in GBF implementation, emphasizing the need for integrated approaches, promoting South-South cooperation, monitoring assessments, focusing on livelihoods and addressing poverty and food security, and designing evidence-based policies for effective solutions.

Prasanna De Silva, Executive Director of Country Offices, WWF International, recommended fully integrating the GBF into national policies, reducing deforestation, and involving the private sector and communities. He urged China to lead on a binding plastic treaty and emphasize inclusive engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Cao Derong, President, China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Foodstuffs, Native Produce and Animal By-products, mentioned the importance of having a traceability system and recommended focusing on enhancing value chain coordination, increasing public awareness of green commodities, and balancing food and biosecurity to support “a beautiful China.”

Jeremy Eppel, Co-founder, Eppel Sustainability, emphasized three key cross-cutting aspects for successful GBF implementation: information, integration, and innovation. He highlighted the need to prioritize data transparency, learning from past successes and failures, and mainstreaming biodiversity goals in finance, with China leading in aligning finance with GBF goals.

Linda Krueger provided concluding remarks, highlighting the SPS focused on implementing the GBF with a concrete and practical approach. She noted that panel discussions provided



Mark Halle, former European Representative, IISD

numerous new and valuable ideas. Emphasizing that while the study covers only a few GBF targets, she stated that significant research and implementation work remain ahead and thanked all participants for their support.

Technical Support and Rule of Law for Enhancing Co-Control of Carbon Emissions, Pollution Reduction, and Green Growth: This Open Forum was co-supported by Tsinghua University, Energy Innovation, ClientEarth, and China's Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center, MEE. It was moderated by He Kebin, School of Environment and Dean of the Institute for Carbon Neutrality, Tsinghua University, and CCICED Council Member.

In opening remarks, Xie Zhenhua underscored that, as China's renewable energy transformation shows, synergy between green growth and carbon and pollution co-control can be highly productive. He emphasized the importance of technology innovation, including in energy storage and carbon capture and storage (CCS), and a governance system that ensures participation of regional bodies and society at large.

Kristin Halvorsen focused on the need for: a high and predictable carbon price; government support for new technologies, such as CCS and offshore wind; plans for zero emissions in all sectors; and ensuring public support and clarity on benefits to local communities.

Speaking on the importance of comprehensive, integrated, synergistic approaches, and the huge gains to be made by leading in highly competitive markets, Scott Vaughan drew attention to technological innovation opportunities, including, for example,

in the deployment of industrial heat pumps and the use of salt instead of limestone in cement production.

Yang Linping, Vice President, Supreme People's Court, China, spoke about China's advances in environmental protection through the judicial system, with thousands of public interest cases dealing with biodiversity and pollution taken up. She highlighted the importance of enhancing synergies, work towards a strengthened judicial system, and international collaboration in this regard, including with UNEP and UNDP.

Emphasizing the Supreme People's Procuratorate's key role in environmental governance and in advancing ecological civilization in China, Zhang Xueqiao, Deputy Prosecutor General, Supreme People's Procuratorate, reported on success in solving environmental protection cases through the public interest litigation system, including in large river basins such as the Yangtze, Yellow and Pearl Rivers, in spite of challenges related to lack of consistency of standards across regions.

Michael Starbaek Christensen, Denmark's Ambassador to China, said the success of China in the green transition is "the single most important factor" affecting global efforts to address climate change, and welcomed expected large investments in grid upgrade. He stressed the importance of China's revised NDC, which will influence what India and others do.

A first session, moderated by He Kebin, addressed **Major Technology Innovations for Carbon Reduction and Pollution Reduction, and the Upgrades of Air Quality Standards.** Lei Yu, Director, Institute of Atmospheric Environment, Chinese Academy for Environmental Planning, MEE, reported on a



Participants gather for the Open Forum on "Technical Support and Rule of Law for Enhancing Carbon Reduction, Pollution Reduction, and Green Growth."



Liu Shijin, CCICED Chinese Chief Adviser and former Deputy President, Development Research Center of the State Council, China

study on air pollutants and carbon emissions which share the same sources. He emphasized, *inter alia*, the importance of: synergistic co-control of carbon and pollutants in key areas and regions; upgrading ambient air standards; optimizing evaluation methodologies and expanding monitoring; including hard-to-reduce emission areas; and establishing targets.

Marjorie Yang, Chairman, Esquel Group, drew attention to opportunities in addressing consumption and waste reduction, for example, in the textile sector, including through improvements in cotton yarn recycling and the development of zero-water dyeing technologies. She stressed the setting of goals, synergistic mechanisms, and the importance of a clear government strategy.

Peter Bakker underscored the need for “speed and scale,” and called for a focus on accountability, including emissions measurement, greenhouse gas (GHG) and global circularity protocols, and disclosure frameworks, saying these are key to financing. He highlighted WBCSD’s work on “avoided emission accounting rules.”

Wang Tianyi, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, spoke on the advantages of waste-to-energy processes, including for reducing landfill emissions and replacing coal, particularly when combined with CCS.

Dechen Tsering, Director, Climate Change Division, and Director, Regional Office of Asia and the Pacific, UNEP, highlighted lack of air quality legislation and monitoring as a key problem. She emphasized the importance of sharing best practices, promoting national air quality governance, and having health and environment ministries work together.

Bernice Lee, Research Director, Futures, Chatham House, stressed the importance of picking the right technology, with scalability and modular capacity as key factors. She hailed China’s experience working with different markets worldwide and said lessons on grid optimization can be huge for all countries, calling on China to co-develop new technology absorption capacities.

Addressing air quality challenges, Kuat Akizhanov underscored the need for improved standards, real time data and monitoring, AI to interpret the data and enhance predictive power, and international cooperation.

During the panel discussion, Gao Xiang, President, Zhejiang University of Technology, highlighted the need for storage, long-term thinking, complementary energy sources, demonstration projects, and international cooperation on research and development. Lu Xi, Assistant Dean, Institute for Carbon Neutrality, Tsinghua University, referred to opportunities in the waste incineration sector.

A second session, on **Innovative Technologies and Policies of Constructing a Zero-Carbon Energy System**, was moderated by Anand Gopal, Executive Director, Policy Research, Energy Innovation.

Sun Ying, Deputy Director General, Energy Research Institute, National Development and Reform Commission, China, recalled policy recommendations from the Collaborative Mechanism for Carbon Reduction, Pollution Reduction, Green Expansion and Growth and relevant SPS, including on the need to: maintain renewable energy targets; avoid double counting through ensuring good coordination; advance CCS to decarbonize the coal sector; enhance energy storage; and reduce loads through demand-side management.

Zou Ji underscored market logic and called for, *inter alia*: avoiding fragmentation of governance and the administrative selection of technologies; adding incentives; and improving carbon market mechanisms and institutional arrangements.

Saying “speed and scale are the watchwords,” Hal Harvey, Founder, Energy Innovation, called for attention to decarbonization in the industrial sector, including through the deployment of heat pumps for industrial use, and a focus on hard-to-abate sectors such as cement and steel production.

Christie Ulman referred to innovations in integrating circular economy measures, energy storage, and renewables in inner Mongolia. She called for continued cooperation on offshore wind and energy storage.

Hideki Minamikawa, former President, Japan Environmental Sanitation Center, noted China’s global leadership in international climate governance and emphasized the need for circular economy measures and nature-based solutions.



Anand Gopal, Executive Director, Policy Research of Energy Innovation

During the panel discussion, Ding Ding, National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation, referred to work done by her center, including on green demand analyses, GHG emission factors, voluntary trading, and carbon budget mechanisms. Zhang Xiaohua, Senior Director, Climate Works Foundation, emphasized the importance of demonstration projects in scaling up, industrial chain development, and enabling institutional mechanisms.

A third session, moderated by Dimitri de Boer, focused on **Major Legislative and Judicial Progress Guarantees for Carbon Reduction, Pollution Reduction, and Green Growth**. Zhang Hongjun, Energy Foundation, China, presented on the Chinese environmental public litigation process, noting the need to improve precautionary and preventive litigation, since most cases are brought to court after the damage has been done, at which point the damage is very costly to reverse. He suggested that harm caused by climate change should be treated as being on par with harm from pollution.

On China's efforts to develop a legal code on environmental and ecological matters, Lv Zhongmei, Vice Chairperson of the Environmental Protection and Resources Conservation Committee of the National People's Congress of China, described progress made by the research group in investigating green and low-carbon development. She emphasized the need for litigators to familiarize themselves with recent developments, such as how circular economy and integrated low-carbon and pollution standards can be harmonized.

Ye Yanfei addressed elements of a legal foundation for carbon and pollution reductions, including disclosure requirements, clarity on the legal status of GHGs in relation to pollution control, and greater awareness by society.

Bie Tao, MEE Chief Legal Advisor and Vice President, Environmental Resources Law Society of the China Law Society, called for developing a dedicated climate change response law to complement China's current environmental protection law. He said such legislation can be based on current laws or independently developed, and should include carbon neutrality goals, as well as adaptation.

Wu Zhaoxiang, Director General, Adjudication Tribunal for Environment and Resources, Supreme People's Court of China, noted remarkable results in environmental protection law cases and emphasized the importance of strengthened cross-district regional collaboration and mechanisms for joint governance.

Xu Xiangchun, Director General, Public Interest Litigation Department, Supreme People's Procuratorate, China, referred to the handling of thousands of environmental cases dealing with river and agricultural pollution control across jurisdictions, highlighting work with the MEE to deepen information sharing and central government inspection. He highlighted the creation of a volunteer platform to allow for public participation, called for furthering experience on environmental disclosure, and underscored the need for public-interest procurator to improve stand-alone legislation.



Gim Huay Neo, Managing Director, Centre for Nature and Climate, World Economic Forum

Dimitri de Boer explained the important role played by the Supreme People's Procuratorate in China in overseeing local government compliance and enforcement. Achim Steiner hailed the speed at which China has developed a system of tribunals to hold government accountable and drew attention to work by UNDP and UNEP on environmental justice and capacity building.

Offering relevant perspectives was a panel comprising: Juergen Voegele, Vice President for Sustainable Development, World Bank; Neo Gim Huay; Wang Jin, Peking University; and Thom Wetzer, Sustainable Development Law Program, University of Oxford. Among other issues, they highlighted the importance of:

- repurposing subsidies;
- a working, high-priced carbon market;
- dedicated climate change legislation and the rule of law;
- multi-stakeholder dialogues;
- climate and environmental public interest litigation systems; and
- capacity building for judges and prosecutors on climate science and policy.

In closing remarks, Anand Gopal emphasized China's potential to lead on the world's green transformation not only through renewable technologies but also through grid enhancement, battery storage, virtual power plants, and industrial process emission reductions. He Kebin referred to diversified technologies and sources, synergies between carbon and pollution reductions, and improved legislation.

Digitalization – Greening for Urban Climate Adaptation and Sustainability: This Forum on Friday morning was moderated by Neo Gim Huay and co-organized by the China Urban Planning and Design Institute, Nankai University, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, and the German Corporation for International Cooperation. She drew attention to two SPS on: Digitalization and Green Technologies for Sustainable Development; and Green Development and Climate Adaptation for Urban and Rural Areas.

In opening remarks, Liu Shijin explained how urbanization has occurred in parallel with industrialization, driving an increase in housing prices. He explained that migration occurs in stages as many people in China migrate from small to regional cities, then to the larger “Tier 1” cities. He noted the challenges of extreme weather events and the need for the long-term greening of cities.

In the first keynote address, Luo Hui, International Cooperation Department of the China Association for Science and Technology, presented actions taken by her government, including establishing a Carbon Neutrality Association to facilitate international cooperation and help implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the second keynote, Kevin Austin, Deputy Executive Director, C40 Cities, highlighted the possibilities of digital technologies for modelling climate risk, managing early warning systems, and planning adaptation measures. He mentioned examples such as Shenzhen’s use of meteorological data and cloud computing in its ‘Sponge City’ approach to water management, and the Freetown Treetown project in Sierra Leone, which is using carbon credits to fund tree planting by local residents. He emphasized the need for cities to develop high-

quality data, and urged Chinese cities to share examples of best practices in harnessing digital technologies.

Introducing the first panel session on **Promoting Climate Adaptation and Resilience of Cities**, moderator Ben Geurts, Director of Strategy, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands, noted that China and Europe face similar climate challenges.

Li Xiaojiang, former President, China Urban Planning and Design Research Institute, and Dean, China Academy of Urban Planning and Design (CAUPD), presented the SPS on Green Development and Climate Adaptation for Urban and Rural Areas. He noted that a key contribution of this SPS was its conceptual assessment framework for adaptation to climate change, which proposes five “capacities” that are needed for adaptation, namely: threshold capacity (the ability to determine relevant thresholds for damage prevention); coping capacity; recovery capacity; adaptive capacity; and transformative capacity. He called on national, regional, and local governments to place greater political importance on adaptation at every level. He proposed that future CCICED research should address: urban infrastructure



(L-R): **Liu Gang**, Chief Economist, Chinese Institute of New Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Strategies; **Liu Shijin**, CCICED Chinese Chief Adviser and former Deputy President, Development Research Center of the State Council, China; **Ben Geurts**, Director, Strategy, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands; and **Li Xiaojiang**, former President of the China Urban Planning and Design Research Institute

development and renewal to meet climate adaptation goals; and improvements to climate resilience in rural areas.

Dominic Waughray, Executive Vice President, WBCSD, drew attention to WBCSD's publication of [The Business Leader's Guide to Adaptation and Climate Resilience](#), which draws on 25 case studies from around the world to show that adaptation actions are not only about infrastructure, but also about global supply chains. He suggested creating opportunities for the secondment of experts in complex environmental modelling to work in financial modelling of capital markets, and vice versa, in order to promote cross-fertilization of expertise. He further proposed that future CCICED work should engage with upstream suppliers in China.

In a panel discussion, Xiao Lijun, Vice President, Western Branch, CAUPD, elaborated on the climate adaptation study in the Chengdu-Chongqing area that formed part of the SPS. Frans van de Ven, Associate Professor (emeritus), Delft University of Technology, urged greater efforts to increase public awareness of adaptation solutions that are already available. Jan Bakkes, Vice President, Integrated Assessment Society, proposed comparing Chinese and European experiences of pressures experienced by governments in seeking public acceptance of such large infrastructure spending. He noted that such decision making should not only be located within national ministries, and that local or regional fora are also relevant venues.

Commenting from the floor, Xu Huaqing, National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation, MEE, called for greater attention to planning and efficient monitoring, supported by high-quality 'big data.'

A second panel session on **Improving the Construction of Digital Ecology and Developing "Sustainable and Smart Cities"** was moderated by Liu Gang, chief economist, Chinese Institute of New Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Strategies, and Director, Nankai Institute of Economics.

Neo Gim Huay presented learnings from the SPS on Digitalization and Green Technologies for Sustainable Development. She noted that creating "sustainable and smart cities" will require waste reduction, better resource management, and ongoing opportunities for enterprise and strengthening of social capital. She cautioned that large technology companies have increased their carbon emissions due to the exponential demand for AI, which causes rising water and energy demands, and that safeguards will be needed.

Liang Guoyong, Senior Economist, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), described China's digitalization achievements, stating that, in terms of e-commerce and mobile payments, China ranks first in the world, and that some major Chinese cities are counted in the top 20 of the world's "smart sustainable cities." He called for helping emerging economies and low-income countries to realize similar achievements.

Tang Jie, Director, Chinese University of Hong Kong (Shenzhen), explained the challenges of maintaining stability and security in China's energy grid due to the location of solar-producing areas in the Western region, far from high energy-

consumption centers in the East. He anticipated that "virtual power grids" in the future could distribute energy where it is needed, noting the possibilities for EVs to provide energy storage and distribution.

Panelists, including Hu Qing, Professor, School of Environment, Southern University of Science and Technology, Liu Shijin, Ben Geurts, and Liu Gang, offered further perspectives on the two reports. Among other points, they noted:

- how digital technologies are enabling individuals to become energy traders, overcoming the market inefficiency of monopolies;
- the challenge of raising finance for adaptation, when investors view it as a cost, not as an investment;
- the need for giving greater priority to disaster risk reduction, since many people in the world already face the consequences of climate change; and
- the need for building a digital economy to address not only environmental problems but social and economic ones as well.

Promoting Green Transformation and Contributing to the Global Climate Agenda: This Friday afternoon Forum, which was co-supported by Energy Foundation China, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, and Institutes of Science and Development, Chinese Academy of Sciences, was moderated by Zhang Hongjun.

Noting a slowdown in the energy transition due to geopolitical tensions and drawing attention to UNFCCC COP 29's focus on climate finance and the carbon market, Xie Zhenhua stressed the need to maintain the commitment to green development and accelerating innovation, and creating new economies and jobs. He called for technology transfer and investment cooperation, eliminating barriers since "competition is healthy," and increased attention to adaptation.

Cautioning that the climate agenda is being "hijacked by a domestic agenda" leading to "two steps back to take one step forward," Achim Steiner emphasized, *inter alia*: a sense of fairness; the need to de-risk regions where public finance is not



Liang Guoyong, Senior Economist, UNCTAD

available; and NDCs as tools of trust and confidence but also as the means to articulate policy responses.

Liu Zhenmin, China Special Envoy for Climate Change, recalled that China is still a developing, middle-income country, and spoke about challenges to the energy transition, including extreme weather events and global geopolitical tension. He underscored: the importance of multilateralism; South-South cooperation; technical support and capacity building; adequate, predictable funds; and a fair and equitable climate governance system.

Scott Vaughan noted progress on the carbon market, including on the definition of carbon removals, but highlighted much work remains to address fragmentation and inequivalence. He said China's advances towards auctioning, increasing sector coverage, and absolute caps was "immensely important," and stressed that public support for mitigation and markets hinges on a question of perceived equity.

In a keynote speech, Mary Burce Warlick, Deputy Executive Director, International Energy Agency, called for a people-centered transition. She emphasized the need for: breakthroughs in CCS, grid upgrades, and energy storage; a global electrification challenge; clean cooking goals; methane emission cuts; repurposed subsidies; and a scale-up of clean energy investment.

A first session on **Building a Global Climate Governance System for Win-Win Cooperation** was moderated by Kate Hampton, CEO, Children's Investment Fund Foundation.

In an online guiding intervention, Laurence Tubiana, CEO, European Climate Foundation, spoke of the "huge positive impact" on the world economy if China takes up improvements in cleaner cement and steel production, and adopts economy-wide targets. She underscored the importance of climate justice both internally in every country and internationally.

Further remarks were provided by Lu Xinming, Deputy Director General, Department of Climate Change, MEE; Simon Black, Fiscal Affairs Department, International Monetary Fund; Cao Li, Vice-President, Boao Forum for Asia Academy; Mafalda Sofia Madeira Nunes Duarte, Executive Director, Green Climate



Kate Hampton, CEO, Children's Investment Fund Foundation

Fund (GCF); Lin Shan, Deputy Director General, International Economics and Finance Institute, Ministry of Finance; Nick Mabey, CEO and Founder, E3G; Larissa Wachholz, Senior Fellow, Brazilian Center for International Relations; and David Sandalow, Inaugural Fellow, Center on Global Energy Policy, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University. They included references to the importance of:

- matching work on adaptation and mitigation;
- enhancing 2030 targets while setting new targets for 2035;
- improving transparency and accountability;
- China's leadership role in the G-20;
- new financial instruments to ensure private funds flow and increased concessional finance;
- the potential for Brazil-China collaboration; and
- using AI in mitigation efforts.

A second session on **Challenges and Opportunities in the Global Green Transition** was moderated by Zou Ji. In an online guiding intervention, Jos Delbeke, Chair, Climate Policy and International Carbon Markets, European Investment Bank, stressed, *inter alia*, the need to: get incentives right and remove hidden subsidies, combined with carbon markets based on cap setting and covering more economic activities; provide incentives on removals; trade in clean technology; and undertake rigorous technical analysis of international spillover effects, both positive and negative, of mitigation policies.

Peter Bakker underscored the importance of creating platforms and addressing transparency, resilience and innovation of supply chains.

Erik Berglöf, Chief Economist, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, emphasized the role of domestic governance in drawing financial support, country ownership, and capacity building amongst ministry officials.

Drawing attention to bilateral relations as a powerful knowledge transfer tool, Ani Dasgupta, President and CEO, WRI, called for "massive collaboration" across countries and sectoral platforms.



Scott Vaughan, CCICED International Chief Adviser



A view of the room during the afternoon Open Forum on “Promoting Green Transformation and Contributing to the Global Climate Agenda.”

Ju Jiandong, Unigroup Chair Professor, PBC School of Finance, Tsinghua University, pointed to opportunities for investment in the electricity sector in Mali.

Speaking of technology transfer and South-South and South-North cooperation, Liu Hongpeng, Director, Energy Division, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, highlighted work on a clean cooking initiative, noting the great potential for engagement from the private sector.

In an online intervention, Beni Suryadi, Deputy Executive Director, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Centre for Energy, emphasized challenges in the ASEAN region to secure the energy supply while addressing climate commitments, and called for global partnerships.

Fabby Tumiwa, Executive Director, Institute for Essential Services Reform, Indonesia, stressed the need for: capacity building; strong partnership among institutions; finance for renewable energy projects; reduction in tariffs; investment in manufacturing; equitable sharing of investment benefits; China’s catalytic role; and strengthening regional cooperation.

Underscoring the role of the NDC process, Jo Tyndall referred to OECD’s “three Us”: unlocking ambition, unleashing finance, and unlocking barriers. She also highlighted OECD’s report on carbon intensity metrics.

A third session on **Practical Solutions for China’s Low-Carbon Transition** was moderated by Wang Yi, Permanent Committee, China National People’s Congress, and Deputy Director, National Committee of Experts on Climate Change.

In a guiding intervention, Zou Ji shared the positive experience of increased energy storage and virtual power plants in Suzhou, where energy storage has replaced coal power to meet historically high demand, and there has been no need to restrict supply despite extreme heat conditions.

Saying that “we’ve underestimated what the clean energy economy can bring,” Christie Ulman stressed having all sectors working towards a goal, championed China’s leadership in manufacturing and renewable energy penetration, and offered her organization’s technical support on establishing ambitious targets on super pollutants.

Further remarks were provided by: Corinna Enders, Chair, Executive Board, German Energy Agency; He Kebin; Bernice Lee; Lyu Wenbin, Director-General, Energy Research Institute, National Development and Reform Commission; Neo Gim Huay; and Xie Qiuye, former President, Electric Power Planning and Engineering Institute. Interventions referred to the importance of:

- an integrated planning process and flexibility;
- improvements in predictability of demand, including through advances in digitalization;
- awareness of technical and other challenges in the increase of renewables, including sustainably sourcing minerals and climate change impacts;
- improving the capability of energy grids to balance and schedule electricity supply; and
- creating jobs and growth while advancing the green transition and addressing waste.

In the ensuing discussion, participants, *inter alia*: welcomed the SPS on gender; drew attention to methane; highlighted the needs for quick turn-around and cost-effective actions, for example related to landfills, agriculture, and gas; and addressed work ahead under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement, including on the transparency framework, how to define global investment, sectoral pathways, and non-CO2 gases.

In concluding remarks, Wang Yi reaffirmed that, while there are challenges, “the direction is clear.” He referred to collective learning sessions organized by the Politburo. He also elaborated on the development of China’s low-carbon economy as a strong driver of economic growth, which he said resulted from the decision to comprehensively promote ecological civilization, improving both the macro-economic structure and ecological reform.

Building a Green BRI to Advance Global South-South Cooperation: This Forum, held on Friday afternoon and moderated by Guo Jing, President, BRI International Green Development Coalition (BRIGC), was organized by BRIGC and supported by the Sequoia Climate Foundation and WRI.

Minister Huang Runqiu celebrated the 10th anniversary of the BRI, emphasizing its success as “not only a pathway to economic prosperity but also a road to green development.” He noted BRI’s evolution towards green development, particularly highlighting the importance of the Green Investment and Finance Partnership. He stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation with developing countries for low-carbon transitions and the critical role of the BRI in bringing green infrastructure and physically connecting people. He mentioned that the green BRI facilitates South-South cooperation, underscoring the need to strengthen coordination efforts, focus on innovative financial and technological pathways, and share mutual benefits to enhance conservation.

Kate Hampton stressed the impact of climate change on children and the financial challenges hindering adaptation efforts, noting that over three billion people live in countries that prioritize debt payments over conservation. She highlighted China’s significant role in poverty alleviation and green energy, advocating for green finance to be central in global finance

while addressing debt crises. She called for: greater awareness of China's initiatives; more investments and opportunity for collaboration in risk sharing; and supply chain diversification for enhanced South-South cooperation.

Carlos Augustin, Special Adviser to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Brazil, emphasized the importance of Brazil-China collaboration for a "just ecological transition." He highlighted Brazil's project to recover 40 million hectares for carbon sequestration, focusing on low-carbon agriculture, sustainable practices, food security, and biofuels. Augustin called for close collaboration with China and global partners, particularly to secure large-scale and low-cost capital, stating this initiative "benefits Brazil, the planet, and China."

Marco Lambertini underlined the green BRI's potential to support all of the SDGs. Noting that over USD 5 trillion are still going toward harmful activities, he underlined the importance of greening cooperation schemes to help developing economies reduce carbon impacts and redirect financial flows to achieve net-zero emissions. Lambertini stressed developing low-carbon, low-impact infrastructure that benefits local economies, offering multiple societal, economic, and environmental benefits, and showcasing the green BRI as a positive example.

Invited speakers provided further reflections. Zhang Ming, Deputy Director General, Department of Regional Opening-up, National Development and Reform Commission, China, highlighted the BRI's progress, emphasizing green development as a key pillar. He suggested: enhancing alignment of BRI projects with the SDGs; extending programmatic cooperation; and promoting green, low-carbon transitions in project implementation.

Erik Solheim highlighted lessons learned from China, including: exchanging ideas on development; embracing the "green is gold" idea by integrating economy and ecology; investing in technology and finance, especially with private sector involvement; and promoting free trade for a competitive "open green economy."

Christie Ulman, President, Sequoia Climate Foundation, emphasized that climate change remains a top priority despite



Marco Lambertini, International Leader of the Biodiversity SPS and Convener of the Nature Positive Initiative

other ongoing crises. She highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation for economic and sustainable development, and energy transition acceleration, citing partnerships in Africa, Asia, and Brazil as key examples.

Via video, Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Center for Sustainable Development, Columbia University, highlighted China's ability to produce cost-effective and high-quality green technology. He urged leveraging China's "not over-capacity but great capacity" in green technology to meet the world's needs, and enabling long-term financing solutions for global energy and agricultural transformations.

Opening the first session on **New Paradigm and Path for South-South Cooperation**, moderator Zhang Jianyu, Chief Development Officer, BRIGC, introduced the Green Opening-up and South-South Cooperation SPS, explaining its research framework, key research areas and findings, and policy recommendations. Regarding next steps, he highlighted CCICED's goal in continuing research and cooperation, particularly focusing on how China can help promote the green transformation of developing countries in Africa and Latin America.

Invited speakers provided further reflections. Galit Cohen, Director, Program on Climate Change and National Security, Institute for National Security Studies (an Israeli think tank), called for "building a resilient future together," and shared examples of how her country is using technology and AI to manage risks and build collective resilience. She highlighted the importance of these tools for South-South cooperation, emphasizing the need to: share integrated and tailored solutions to build local capacity; ensure food security; and secure safe access to global markets.

Hideki Minamikawa, President, Japan Environmental Sanitation Center, highlighted Japan's efforts in supporting the green transformation. He emphasized the need for due diligence in project implementation and the crucial role of international organizations, noting that the BRI could send a "significant message to the world about environmental conservation" and inspire other countries.



Erik Solheim, Senior Adviser, WRI

Wang Silian, China Everbright Environment Group Limited, shared his group's experiences as investors and operators in the green energy sector and as strategic partners of the BRI. Emphasizing "soft connectivity," he highlighted the need for green cooperation among Global South countries, with unified standards and regulations. He stressed enhancing risk management and ensuring company compliance with disclosure obligations, and called for, *inter alia*: the application of other kinds of renewables, such as biomass energy; the development of green industrial parks; and fostering mutual trust to promote economic and environmental development through efficient green projects.

Fabby Tumiwa, Executive Director, Institute for Essential Services Reform, called for strengthening collaboration among Global South countries, focusing on three areas: sharing clean technology and best practices; regional collaborations for sustainable and affordable energy access; and financial mechanisms tailored to developing countries. He urged centering the transition on people to ensure concrete benefits, highlighting that South-South cooperation can help achieve a just transition, and address challenges collectively.

Hannah Ryder, CEO, Development Reimagined, elaborated on the progress and opportunities in Sino-Africa cooperation on green development, highlighting Africa's ambitious climate commitments and its internationally recognized potential for clean energy. She proposed three new cooperation models: targeting green infrastructure with concessional finance; promoting green industrialization linked to environmental goods and critical minerals; and piloting innovative public-private partnership models in Africa for solar and wind energy deployment.

Moderator Zhang Jianyu opened the second session on **South-South Cooperation Supporting the Achievement of the SDGs**, inviting speakers to provide further views.

Adriana Lobo, Managing Director, Global Presence and National Action, WRI, emphasized a systems approach, integrating climate and livelihood goals. She outlined WRI's three-way approach for South-South cooperation, especially in China-Africa renewable energy cooperation, which comprises: providing technical support for small-scale projects; facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues; and identifying and incubating renewable energy investments. She called for stable policies, incentive mechanisms, and innovative financial models to encourage inclusive solutions.

Hu Qing, Director, Engineering Innovation Center (Beijing), Southern University of Science and Technology, noted the benefits of integrating AI and big data with the green economy. Bringing attention to the meaning of "ecological civilization," she shared China's practical projects that apply digital technologies, for example, in biodiversity conservation and pollution reduction efforts, underscoring how society can truly benefit from these initiatives.

Zafar Makhmudov, Executive Director, Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia, noted the complex



A view of the room during one of the afternoon's Open Forums

challenges of climate change and emphasized the critical role of South-South cooperation. He called for, *inter alia*: strengthening regional cooperation with Central Asian countries through sharing best practices and mobilizing resources; expanding green financial instruments; and enhancing policy coherence to support these initiatives effectively.

Yu Ping, former President of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, explained how trade can promote green development through, *inter alia*, trade platforms, green standards and certification, business associations, training, and international cooperation.

Oyun Sanjaasuren, Director of External Affairs, GCF, shared the GCF's experiences, highlighting synergies and opportunities. She emphasized innovation and discussed developing new financial instruments to increase investments and leverage new kinds of investments, focusing on both the adoption of new technologies and financial innovation.

Olga Dzhumaeva, Head of Delegation, East Asia, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), presented the IFRC's Global Climate Resilience Platform that supports resilience through nature-based solutions, health, and climate initiatives. She called for: scaling up adaptation actions and financing; investing in local communities; and enhancing climate finance quality, quantity, and accessibility, emphasizing the value of small projects.

Kevin Austin highlighted the critical role of cities in South-South cooperation as a powerful tool to deliver transformation.

Larissa Wachholz, Senior Fellow, Brazilian Center of International Relations, encouraged China-Brazil cooperation by recommending the "creation of a task force or working group with a high-level framework" to discuss just transition topics like finance and sustainable agriculture. She highlighted concerns about, *inter alia*: value chain enhancement; competitive finance and costs for developing countries; and farmer engagement.

Closing the forum, Erik Solheim emphasized the significance of South-South cooperation and the rapid expansion of the BRI, highlighting it as a unique opportunity for other countries to learn

from. He underscored the importance of AI and big data in the green transition.

Promoting Green Finance to Guide the Development of New Quality Productive Forces: Wu Huimin, Executive Dean, China International Capital Corporation (CICC) Global Institute, introduced the session, which was co-organized by CICC and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

In opening remarks, Liu Shijin noted that low-carbon green industries in China have been strongly supported by financiers, and emerged based on China's "clear and credible" policy targets. He cautioned against slackening efforts toward carbon neutrality, stating that in the long term, industries must become "intrinsically green" rather than relying on clean-up efforts, and that long-term "patient capital" from within China must be cultivated.

Nan Sun, Chair, Supervisory Committee, Wealth Management Securities, CICC, highlighted that Beijing's blue skies are a testament to the green transition. He noted that renewable energy technologies and other green industries have become "the new drivers of economic growth," but that globally about 35% of the green technology needed is still not commercially mature, requiring investments from government and businesses.

Michael Starbaek Christensen urged turning away from investments in fossil fuels, warning that even "green coal" emits CO₂, and that current fossil fuel investments, if redirected, could greatly benefit decarbonization efforts.

Wensheng Peng, Dean, CICC Global Institute, gave an overview of the SPS on 'New Paradigm of Green Finance: Unlocking the Potential of Capital Markets.' He gave reasons for China's rapid uptake of renewables, noting that, besides policy support, energy generation costs in renewables are lower than for crude oil. In addition, he said renewables are manufacturing sectors that can achieve economies of scale and market competitiveness, comparing favorably with fossil fuels, which must be taken from the ground. He cautioned that China has reached a new stage in which availability of land for installing wind and solar generation may be a limiting factor, and that energy conversion ratios must therefore increase. He noted that government-backed capital has a low appetite for risk, and therefore "patient capital" from diverse investors will be needed to support green innovations. He recommended establishing a "green performance" auction fund to reward technologies that achieve emission reductions, rather than requiring governments to favor a particular technological pathway.

In a keynote speech, Yi Wang, Deputy Director, National Committee of Experts on Climate Change, China, suggested that green technologies may replace real estate as the main driver of the economy. He highlighted the potential of hydrogen-powered vehicles and AI, among others, and China's advantages in infrastructure, human resources, and talent. He warned that tariffs imposed by other countries on China's products and technologies are hindering efforts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C.

In a first session on **Green Momentum: The Capital Market's Role in Advancing Technology Innovation and Industrial Upgrading**, Jieqing Zhang, Country Director, China



Larissa Wachholz, Senior Fellow, Brazilian Center of International Relations

Program, NRDC, moderated this discussion on how capital markets can be further optimized to support green innovation.

Manish Bapna, President and CEO, NRDC, praised China's achievements in guiding green credit and green loans through banks. He noted that work is needed now to bring high net-worth individuals, pension funds, and other sources of capital to support innovation. He called for clear, strong, and durable climate policy settings that will give confidence to investors.

Ye Yanfei noted that green technology development is now at a stage where the early gains of "low-hanging fruit" have already been realized. Noting China's targets for carbon peaking by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060, he called for in-depth research that can be presented to investors to guarantee the profitability of long-term investments. He stated that "clean coal", which contains additives to increase its burning efficiency, could reduce emissions from coal-fired plants by 30% by 2030.

Chao Chen, Head of Research, China Investment Corporation (CIC), gave examples of CIC's investments in green technologies, including investment in a European solar power fund, which has provided solar power to farmers in Qinghai province, while maintaining grasslands and supporting sheep and goat raising. He noted that "poverty alleviation can be a by-product of the green energy transition."

Ani Dasgupta welcomed Chinese stock market guidelines on environmental disclosure and highlighted the importance of carbon accounting, standards, and definitions, adding that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may require assistance to comply with new requirements. He drew attention to WRI's financial tracking of banks' climate commitments, noting that Chinese banks have performed better than those of other countries in this regard.

Joar Lonning Strand, Counsellor of Development, Norwegian Embassy in Beijing, emphasized green taxonomies as crucial for enhancing comparability and transparency. He highlighted possibilities for fintech to democratize access to capital through crowdfunding, peer-to-peer lending, and enabling a broader range of investors to participate in the green economy. He



Participants during one of the Open Forums

called for increasing investor awareness of green investment opportunities through education programmes and conferences, and for policymakers to harmonize taxonomies and promote the recognition of green standards and certifications.

Wei Liu, Deputy General Manager, China Securities Index Company, presented her company's work in developing a green bond index and a technological innovation bond.

Chao Xie, Managing Director, CICC Global Institute, suggested that public funds could be used to provide risk guarantees that will promote the use of patient capital.

In a second session on **Green Future: Innovative Technologies Setting New Trends in the Capital Market**, moderator Ji Chen, Executive Director, CICC Global Institute, invited speakers and participants to consider new technology and investment trends.

Howard Bamsey, Honorary Professor, School of Regulation and Global Governance, Australian National University, noted the crucial role of China's leadership in the global green transition, adding that, while innovation is important, so too are collaboration and coordination. He drew attention to the need for adequate project preparation so that green finance investors can access a pipeline of projects.

Bei Zhang, Deputy Director General, People's Bank of China Research Bureau, called for giving attention to hard-to-abate industries, and for accurate monitoring, reporting, and verification of carbon emissions and abatement measures. She anticipated that "nature financing" could become the new growth pillar for green financing.

Dominic Waughray suggested carbon accounting could be coupled with asset valuation to encourage investment. He emphasized that regulatory certainty can help "crowd in" finance from diverse sources.

Stephan Contius, Special Advisor on SDGs, Foundation 20, introduced his Foundation's mission to promote joint transnational action for climate and sustainable development within G20 processes. He noted that, although local SMEs can be game changers for a fast and fair transition, they are often

unable to access climate finance, which is mainly directed to large technology projects. Thus, he called for exploring the role of philanthropy to address funding disparities between large projects, and small to medium ones.

Rongbao Ma, Head, CICC Shandong Green Development Fund, called for paying attention to the commercialization of green technologies, highlighting the work of his organization in mentoring and supporting green technology companies through, for example, managing intellectual property rights.

Peiyuan Guo, Chair, SynTao Green Finance, described his company's work in providing environmental, social, and governance ratings and evaluating the transition efforts of public-listed companies in China.

Xiaoying Wang, Director, Ant Forest Project, Ant Group, presented the evolution of the Ant Forest Project from a corporate social responsibility initiative to a registered foundation for ecological restoration.

Junwie Liu, Executive Director, Research Department, CICC, cautioned that "no single financial product can always outperform the market" and suggested evaluations should be undertaken based on longer time frames and risk-adjusted returns.

Special Policy Dialogue

This session, held on Saturday morning, was chaired by Liu Shijin. Kristin Halvorsen introduced the Open Forum outcomes, highlighting interlinkages and the importance of joint action.

Chair Liu Shijin invited Open Forum moderators to provide an overview and recommendations from the discussions.

Reporting back from the Forum on Promoting Harmony with Nature to Implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, Marco Lambertini mentioned three main areas that were highlighted: implementation of 30x30 conservation targets; promotion of sustainable agriculture; and mobilization of resources. He noted that the GBF is both "very ambitious and extremely necessary."

Presenting on the Forum on Technical Support and Rule of Law for Enhancing Co-Control of Carbon Emissions, Pollution Reduction, and Green Growth, Anand Gopal highlighted the importance of: tightening ambient air quality standards; deepening coordinated governance of carbon and pollution reduction; and aligning legal regimes. He underscored China's potential in furthering clean electricity and developing industrial heating and energy storage, calling for more policy support for thermal batteries and heat pumps.

From the Forum on Digitalization – Greening for Urban Climate Adaptation and Sustainability, Ben Geurts noted the important role of cities as focal points for adaptation. He highlighted needs for long-term adaptation planning at all levels, and the possibilities for digitalization to shape the energy transition and optimize sustainability capabilities.

Presenting on the Forum on Promoting Green Transformation and Contributing to the Global Climate Agenda, Kate Hampton noted we are "nowhere near the scale and speed needed"



Neo Gim Huay, Managing Director, Centre for Nature and Climate, World Economic Forum

on climate action, including regarding finance support. She highlighted the leading role played by China in the green transition, the importance of carbon markets, robust caps, energy storage, demand-side management, and standardization and interoperability.

From the Forum on Building a Green BRI to Advance Global South-South Cooperation, Christie Ulman emphasized the spirit of “global south solidarity,” underscoring China’s unique role and the need for partnerships to support decarbonization. She highlighted Chinese coordination with the rest of Asia and Africa and called for leveraging it more broadly, noting the importance of digitalization for green development.

Jan Gunnar-Winther, Specialist Director, Norwegian Polar Institute, provided recommendations from the Forum on We Share One Ocean: Accelerating the Blue Transition and Carbon Neutrality. These included: accelerating the marine industry’s transformation; strengthening top-level design of the ocean renewable energy industry, including through national strategic plans; developing an integral governance strategy for deep-sea mining and formulating supporting policies; and linking GBF targets with ocean policy studies and global climate targets.

Manish Bapna reported on the Forum on Promoting Green Finance to Guide the Development of New Quality Productive Forces. He highlighted the need for government to set quantitative climate targets, public funding of innovation to encourage mobilization of private finance, and favorable environments for venture capital.

SPS Leads’ Remarks: On the Collaborative Mechanism for Carbon Reduction, Pollution Reduction, Green Expansion and Growth SPS, Wang Yi highlighted China’s new policies and economic incentives affecting energy consumption. He stressed the need for better data to measure carbon reduction and emphasized the importance of coordination with government agencies and research for achieving climate goals.

On the SPS on China’s Pathways for Achieving Carbon Neutrality and Global Climate Governance, Zou Ji emphasized

the need for a strategy to expand clean energy demand while addressing bottlenecks at the micro-level. He also called for improvements in energy storage, heat pumps, rural housing electrification, and agriculture machinery, noting “there is no need for subsidies but for market demand.”

On the Sustainable Oceans Management Under the Vision of Carbon Neutrality SPS, Dai Minhan, Xiamen University, emphasized, *inter alia*, updating NDCs by incorporating sustainable blue economy and the green transition of the marine industry. He urged collaboration with government agencies to create an “ocean and coast belt agenda,” calling on everyone to think about how China can contribute to SDG 14 (life below water) to build a comprehensive and more sustainable ocean agenda.

On the Green Development and Climate Adaptation for Urban and Rural Areas SPS, Li Xiaojiang stressed the urgency of increasing adaptive capacity, including through lifting the adaptation strategy to the same national level as the dual carbon goals, and conducting stress tests in all cities.

On the Digitalization and Green Technologies for Sustainable Development SPS, Neo Gim Huay emphasized the need to leverage technology as a key enabler and to close the nexus between economic growth, jobs creation, and environmental outcomes, allowing for scale and replicability.

On the Biodiversity Conservation and Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal GBF SPS, Linda Krueger highlighted China’s potential to guide others in achieving the 30x30 goal and the importance of green agriculture and traceability to prevent deforestation. She urged China to share its expertise in funding mechanisms.

On the New Paradigm of Green Finance: Great Potential in Capital Markets SPS, Peng Wensheng, Executive Dean, CICC Global Institute, and Head of Research, CICC, noted that China’s green industries face obstacles from protectionism by other countries in the form of tariffs, and highlighted possibilities for China to contribute to green industrial investment in other countries.

On the Sustainable Trade and Sustainable Supply Chains SPS, Yu Miaojie, President, Liaoning University, stated that importing low-carbon technology from China can help countries reduce their carbon emissions, and that impacts are amplified if the country has political stability, inflow of foreign direct investment, and high human resource capabilities.

On the Green Opening-Up and South-South Cooperation SPS, Zhang Jianyu called for, *inter alia*: a holistic approach, emphasizing China’s role in South-South cooperation; building manufacturing capacity to reduce green solution costs; enhancing trade integration and financial support; and supporting carbon markets with technical and financial aid.

Scott Vaughan then invited participants to comment on the draft policy recommendations. Speakers from the floor suggested:



Patricia Fuller, President and CEO, IISD

- recognizing the value of China’s integrated approach to environmental protection through its work on compiling an environmental code, its provisions for public litigation on environmental issues, and the availability of around 10,000 environmental judges;
- recommending other countries to allow entry of China’s green technology products in order to meet global demand for such products and help meet countries’ own climate policy targets;
- inviting China to play a key role in concluding negotiations toward a global, legally-binding instrument on plastics;
- encouraging quantifiable targets for uptake of renewable energy, not only green procurement targets;
- adopting stringent energy efficiency standards and timetables for phaseout of inefficient appliances;
- taking into account the role of large-scale energy storage and energy grids in transitioning from coal-based to renewables-based energy;
- maintaining openness to the role of border carbon adjustments as a necessary tool in driving the role of trade in the transition toward a low-carbon economy; and
- deploying thermal batteries and industrial heat pumps in the industrial sector, which would help reduce the price differential between electricity from fossil fuels versus renewable sources.

Mark Halle noted the valuable shift in CCICED’s work towards being more practical and targeted but highlighted the risk of losing its primary function of identifying new issues for dialogue. He suggested creating an annual “heatmapping” of emerging topics to ensure alignment with CCICED’s mission for long-term strategic planning.

Mentioning the concept of “ecological civilization” and recognizing China’s leadership in embracing a comprehensive green transition agenda supported by CCICED’s work, Sze Ping Lo highlighted the existing range of synergies among working groups. He recommended strengthening integration between working groups, proactive thinking, and increasing international collaboration and discussions.

Galit Cohen emphasized China’s strong leadership in biodiversity efforts globally, suggesting, *inter alia*: putting forward recommendations for other countries, drawing on lessons from the China context; adopting a precautionary approach to deep-sea mining; inviting China’s leadership or moderation role in negotiations toward a plastics treaty; and developing circular economy policies and research.

Other speakers noted:

- interconnectedness among the recommendations;
- the importance of public understanding that economic growth can be compatible with environmental protection and climate change mitigation;
- the risk of disinformation and misinformation, and the need for data collaboration;
- declaring the intention to “grow the pie,” whereby China can help with greening supply chains;
- the need for convergence or, at least, interoperability;
- tools for adaptation, including vulnerability mapping and capacity building for local authorities; and
- China’s potential as “a force for good,” for example in supply chains related to meat and soy products given their impacts on deforestation.

At the end of the morning, participants adjourned to a buffet lunch at the conference venue. Council members attended a closed plenary session in the afternoon to discuss outcomes of the AGM and consider the work ahead.

Upcoming Meetings

CBD COP 16: This event’s objective is to establish agendas, commitments, and frameworks for action to conserve biological diversity and put it to sustainable use, as well as to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. Its slogan, “Peace with Nature,” is a call for reflection on how to improve our relationship with the environment, and to rethink an economic model that does not prioritize the extraction, overexploitation, and pollution of nature.

dates: 21 October - 1 November 2024 **location:** Cali, Colombia **www:** cop16colombia.com/es/en/

2024 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 29): This event will include COP 29, the 19th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 19), and the sixth meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 6). The Conference is expected to agree on a new collective quantified goal on climate finance and complete the first enhanced transparency framework, among other matters. The 61st sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation will also meet. **dates:** 11-22 November 2024 **location:** Baku, Azerbaijan **www:** unfccc.int/cop29

Fifth UN World Data Forum 2024: The aim of the Forum is to spur data innovation, nurture partnerships, mobilize high-level

political and financial support for data, and build a pathway to better data for sustainable development. The event is organized with support from the Statistics Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. **dates:** 12-15 November 2024 **location:** Medellín, Colombia **www:** unstats.un.org/unsd/undataforum/

20th AGM of the Intergovernmental Forum (IGF) on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development: The IGF supports more than 75 countries committed to leveraging mining for sustainable development to ensure negative impacts are limited and financial benefits are shared. This meeting will, among other topics, include sessions on the use of non-metallic minerals for, and the protection of nature during, the energy transition, disruptive technologies, and standards in the sector. **date:** 18-21 November 2024 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** igfmining.org/annual-general-meeting/

Plastic Pollution INC-5 Conference: This is the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. **dates:** 25 November - 1 December 2024 **location:** Busan, Republic of Korea **www:** unep.org/inc-plastic-pollution/session-5

Asia Pacific Wind Energy Summit 2024: This event will bring together industry leaders, policymakers, and institutions to develop innovative and collaborative solutions targeted at growing the wind energy sector and working towards the triple energy renewable pledge made at COP 28. **dates:** 26-28 November 2024 **location:** Icheon, Republic of Korea **www:** gwec.net/apac-wind-energy-summit-2024/

UNCCD COP 16: COP 16 to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will take place under the theme “Our Land. Our Future.” Coinciding with the [30th anniversary of the UNCCD](#), COP 16 will be the largest UN land conference to date. It will also be the first UNCCD COP held in the Middle East and North Africa region, which knows first-hand the impacts of desertification, land degradation, and drought. COP 16 is poised to be a game-changer, marking a renewed global commitment to accelerate investment and action to restore land and boost drought resilience for the benefit of people and the planet. **dates:** 2-13 December 2024 **location:** Riyadh, Saudi Arabia **www:** www.unccd.int/cop16

Sustainable Energy for All Global Forum: This event, themed “Sustainable Energy for Equity, Security, and Prosperity,” will focus on driving the actions and investments necessary for countries to meet their energy access, climate, and development objectives. **dates:** 12-13 March 2025 **location:** Bridgetown, Barbados **www:** seforall.org/forum

Second Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health: This conference will focus on the theme “Accelerating Action for Clean Air, Clean Energy Access, and Climate Mitigation.” The event will highlight policy solutions for air pollution and

lack of energy access and catalyze evidence-based, multi-sectoral actions in cities, countries, and regions. **date:** 25-27 March 2025 **location:** Cartagena de Indias, Colombia **www:** who.int/news-room/events/detail/2025/03/25/default-calendar/second-global-conference-on-air-pollution-and-health

HLPF 2025: The 2025 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) will address the theme of “Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs for leaving no one behind.” The SDGs to be reviewed in-depth are SDGs 3 (good health and well-being), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 14 (life below water), and 17 (partnerships for the Goals). **dates:** 14-23 July 2025 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** hlpf.un.org

2025 CCICED AGM : Details to be confirmed on the [CCICED website](#).

For additional upcoming events, see sdg.iisd.org

Glossary

AGM	Annual General Meeting
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRIGC	BRI International Green Development Coalition
CAUPD	China Academy of Urban Planning and Design
CCICED	China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development
CIC	China Investment Corporation
CICC	China International Capital Corporation
COP	Conference of the Parties
ECR	Ecological Conservation Redlines
GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
GCF	Green Climate Fund
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
MEE	Ministry of Ecology and Environment
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
PV	Photovoltaic
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPS	Special Policy Study
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature