

Report of 2015 US-China Climate Roundtable and City Tour for Low-Carbon Practices in China

On June 15-19, 2015, the 2015 US-China Climate Roundtable and City Tour for Low-Carbon Practices in China were held by International Fund for China's Environment (IFCE) and National Center for Climate Strategy and International Cooperation of China (NCSC) in four cities in China - Beijing, Chengdu, Changsha, and Shanghai, with support from Ford Foundation/Beijing office and Institute of International Education.

As the world's two largest carbon emitters, the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) submitted by China and the United States before the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris are very important for reaching the global emission reduction goals. China is actively seeking routes of the low-carbon economic development. However, local governments in the US and even the experts have poor understanding of China's low-carbon activities and achievements at the local levels. Policy makers lack awareness and effective communication channels for the green business cooperation between the two countries. Therefore, the exchanges between China and the United States' local government officials and think tank experts are essential to enhance the collaboration.

The roundtable and low-carbon city tour deepened the dialogue between China and the United States' experts and local officials, The US participants not only understood better about the China's national plan to mitigate the climate change, but learnt much about China's province/city-level best practices and challenges. The event has direct and profound impact on the long-term US-China climate change cooperation and the global climate strategy.

Delegation from the United States include: **Dr. Ping He**, President of International Fund for China's Environment, **Henry Darwin**, Director of Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), **Joanna Lewis**, Associate Professor of Science at Georgetown University; **George Hellwig**, Chief of Air Quality Division of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality; **Michael Tubman**, Director of Outreach for the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions; and **Qi Zhang**, Deputy Program Director of International Fund for China's Environment.

Following is the detailed report for activities conducted in each city.

Beijing

The 2015 China-U.S. Climate Roundtable was held in NCSC Beijing Office on June 15, 2015. Experts discussed about climate policy, emission institutional design, carbon trading market, local low-carbon development, clean energy, and energy saving industry, etc. Around twenty people from NCSC, Beijing Environmental Exchange, Tsinghua University, China's Institute of Standardization, Low-carbon Industrial Association, etc. and the US delegation attended the discussion.



US-China Climate Roundtable in Beijing

Huaqing Xu, Vice General Director of NCSC, introduced China climate policy and its influence on US-China cooperation. He summarized and reflected on China's current efforts and practices in low-carbon development, emission institutional design and carbon trading market. As he mentioned, since 2012, China has launched carbon trade programs in 5 cities and 2 provinces, which explored extensively on carbon cap-and-trade mechanism. The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) issued an interim procedure on voluntary emission reduction in June 2012. It again issued an interim procedure on carbon cap-and-trade management at the end of last year. 14.8 megaton of carbon dioxide and more than 500 million RMB worth of trade have occurred by the end of last year. The national goal of the

carbon cap-and-trade program intends to transform from down to top and to establish nationwide cap-and-trade system in 2016.

Delegation from the United States shared experience on low-carbon development during the roundtable. Joanna Lewis, Associate Professor at Georgetown University, introduced the latest progress of Obama's climate action and its implications on US-China cooperation. Based on a series of agreements on clean energy, on which China and US have reached, Dr. Lewis proposed expectations on carbon consumption, non-fossil energy development, and



other aspects. Michael Tubman, Director of Outreach for the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES), analyzed and predicted the implementation barriers of US climate policies on both national and local levels. Henry Darwin, Director of Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), demonstrated local implementation of Arizona climate policies, as well as the latest progress on environmental economics in renewable energy and energy efficiency fields. US delegation indicated that the successful development of the carbon market depends on effective law/regulations implementation and checking system.

After the roundtable, US delegation visited the 6th China Carbon Cap-and-trade Ditan Forum, a part of 2015 National Low-carbon Day events. Also, U.S. experts participated in dinner with members from the National Committee of Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan and Population Resources and Environment Committee. Their conversation helped U.S. experts to further understand China's efforts in democratic consultation and environmental protection.



Chengdu climate meeting

Chengdu

Chengdu climate meeting was held in Sichuan United Environment Exchange on June 16, 2015. Speakers from Sichuan province and Chengdu city introduced the achievement of Sichuan's environmental protection industry and Chengdu's efforts for becoming a national ecological demonstration zone. The environmental protection industry in Sichuan Province has formed five major sectors: environmental equipment manufacturing, environmental engineering, resource utilization, environmental protection products, and environmental services. Chengdu has taken actions for low-carbon development since 2010. Particularly in low-carbon capacity building, Chengdu led the preparation of greenhouse gas emission inventory, the investigation of key enterprises' carbon emissions, and international cooperation. George Hellwig, Chief of Air Quality Division of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, introduced Michigan's practices and experience on energy saving and emission reduction. He indicated that the low-carbon

development requires not only national macro-control policies, but also participation of the multiple parties, including enterprises and communities. After the meeting, US delegation visited enterprises in Jintang Industrial Zone and Sichuan University. US delegation was impressed by the world's first carbon mineralization generation technology that Sichuan University is conducting research and development. The commercialization of this technology would provide a revolutionary solution to address climate change issues.



Visiting Broad Group, Changsha

Changsha

Changsha climate dialogue was held in Hunan Lianchuang Low-carbon

Economic Development Center on June 18, 2015. Speakers introduced the current situation and plans of the low-carbon development in Hunan province and Changsha city, as well as the main efforts of Green Hunan, a local non-profit organization. By regulating government procurements, building international cooperation platform, and providing incentives to key enterprises, Hunan has achieved the breakthrough of key technologies, expanded low-carbon technologies applications, and made its environmental protection industry exceed 100 billion RMB. Changsha has built strong low-carbon capacity including policy guidance, transformation, upgrading, and structuring modern industry system. Also, Changsha put emphasis on reducing emission in important energy efficiency areas, building carbon emission calculation management platform and developing forest carbon sequestration. Green Hunan is a local non-profit environmental organization founded by volunteers in 2007. They have set several monitoring stations along Xiang River, and periodically organize volunteers to monitor water quality and pollution discharge. They help

governments close a group of heavy-polluting enterprises, evaluate environmental information released by different city governments in Hunan Province, and put pressures on governments to release more environmental information to the public. After the meeting, US delegation visited the Broad Group and Hunan Yang Lake Wetland.



Visit Yang Lake Wetland, Changsha



Visit energy-saving demonstration building, Shanghai

Shanghai

Shanghai meeting was held in China Pudong Executive Leadership Academy on June 19, 2015. Experts from China introduced Shanghai's strategy of carbon emission reduction in response to climate change, Shanghai's energy development plan, industry planning from a low-carbon perspective, Shanghai's efforts on carbon emission data collection and evaluation, Shanghai's carbon trading market, and Shanghai's challenges and opportunities of low-carbon development. Yun Ling, an expert from Shanghai Municipal Development and Reform Commission, indicated that Shanghai has made significant efforts for low-carbon development by optimizing the industrial and energy structure, improving key areas of energy efficiency, strengthening policy and market mechanisms, and strengthening supervision and management measures. Shanghai's total energy consumption per unit GDP dropped over 20% from 2011 to 2014, accomplished the goal of the 12th five-year plan in advance. The energy consumption has entered a slowly increasing phase with 1.5% annual growth rate compared with 7.4% ten years ago. After the meeting, US delegation visited the energy-saving demonstration building in Shanghai Jiao Tong University.



Conclusion

The 2015 US-China Climate Roundtable and City Tour for Low-Carbon Practices played a significant role in promoting the exchanges of climate change between US and China. Participants highly praised this activity. Huaqing Xu, Vice Director of NCSC said: "US-China climate cooperation is very significant in shaping relationship for the two great power states. It is also a very special element." Joanna Lewis, associate professor of science at Georgetown University told to China Daily: "I'm just back from a trip to several provinces in China and was amazed at the real actions being taken at the local level." George Hellwig, Chief of Air Quality Division of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality said: "This tour made me shocked to realize that China's innovation and green industry has developed so fast. After exchange of ideas, I am confident in the climate cooperation between the US and China as well as the global cooperation." Michael Tubman, Director of Outreach for the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions said: "This event allows US state officials to understand the efforts to address climate change that Chinese local governments have done. I hope there will be more such opportunities in the future."