

# **The Belt and Road Ecological and Environmental Cooperation Plan**

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# Contents

<b>I. Significance</b> .....	3
<b>(I) A fundamental requirement of environment-friendly Belt and Road</b> .....	3
<b>(II) An important way to realize green transformation of regional economy</b> .....	3
<b>(III) An important measure to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</b> .....	4
<b>II. Overarching Requirements</b> .....	4
<b>(I) Guiding ideology</b> .....	4
<b>(II) Underlying principles</b> .....	4
<b>(III) Development goals</b> .....	5
<b>III. Highlight the Concept of Ecological Civilization and Strengthen Policy Coordination</b> .....	5
<b>(I) Share the concept and practice of ecological civilization and green development</b> .....	5
<b>(II) Build platforms for eco-environmental protection cooperation</b> .....	5
<b>(III) Fuel exchange and cooperation of social organizations and think tanks</b> .....	6
<b>IV. Respect Laws and Regulations to Promote International Production Capacity Cooperation and Eco-friendly Infrastructure Construction</b> .....	6
<b>(I) Enable enterprises to play the major role in environmental governance</b> .....	6
<b>(II) Advance infrastructure construction in an eco-friendly way</b> .....	7
<b>V. Promote Sustainable Production and Consumption and Boost Green Trade</b> .....	7
<b>(I) Facilitate trade of environmental products and services</b> .....	7
<b>(II) Enhance green supply chain management</b> .....	8
<b>VI. Increase Support for Green Financing to Boost Financial Integration</b> .....	8
<b>VII. Carry out Eco-Environmental Protection Projects and Activities to Enhance People-to-People Bonds</b> .....	8
<b>(I) Strengthen cooperation in key areas of eco-environmental protection</b> .....	9
<b>(II) Provide more support to green demonstration projects</b> .....	9
<b>VIII. Step up Capacity Building and Make Use of Local Advantages</b> .....	10
<b>IX. Major Projects</b> .....	10
<b>X. Safeguard Measures</b> .....	12

The Initiative of Jointly Building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road (hereinafter referred to as the Belt and Road) aims to promote economic prosperity of countries along the routes and regional economic cooperation, strengthen exchange and mutual learning among different civilizations, and contribute to world peace and development. Since its inception, the Belt and Road Initiative has proceeded rapidly with the implementation of a number of major programs and international production capacity cooperation projects. In the field of eco-environmental cooperation, China has achieved positive progress and promising results by actively deepening bilateral dialogue, exchange and cooperation with countries along the Belt and Road, reinforcing eco-environmental information support services and advancing cooperation on environmental standards, technologies and industries.

To strengthen cooperation on eco-environmental protection and enable eco-environmental protection to serve, support and guarantee the Belt and Road construction towards environment-friendly routes, the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) hereby formulates ***The Belt and Road Ecological and Environmental Cooperation Plan***, pursuant to the *Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Maritime Silk Road* (hereinafter referred to as the Vision and Actions), *13<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan for Protecting the Ecological Environment*, and *Guidance on Promoting Green Belt and Road*.

## **I. Significance**

### **(I) A fundamental requirement of environment-friendly Belt and Road**

China attaches high importance to eco-friendly Belt and Road. Chinese President Xi Jinping stressed the concept of green development in many occasions, calling for in-depth eco-environmental cooperation and intense eco-environmental protection in a joint effort to build green Silk Roads. The *Vision and Actions* made it clear to promote ecological progress in conducting investment and trade and increase cooperation in conserving eco-environment, protecting biodiversity and tackling climate change. The cooperation on eco-environmental protection meets the fundamental requirement of reinforcing eco-friendly Belt and Road construction with a view to sustainable development and common prosperity while practicing the concepts of ecological civilization and green development.

### **(II) An important way to realize green transformation of regional economy**

A majority of countries along the Belt and Road are developing countries and emerging economies. They are faced with multiple challenges brought about by industrialization and urbanization, such as environmental pollution and ecological degradation, and have growing expectations for accelerated transition to green development. China and a number of countries along the routes have met with success in actively exploring the model of coordinated environmental and economic development and vigorously boosting the green economy. The cooperation on eco-environmental protection is conducive to capacity building of countries along the routes. It provides an important way to achieve green transformation of regional economy by facilitating bypass that harmonizes economic development and environmental protection with minimum impact on the ecological environment.

### **(III) An important measure to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Green development has been recognized by the world community. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations aims to jointly improve the welfare of all mankind and clearly specifies the targets of green development and environmental protection, mapping the road to sustainable development and international development cooperation in the next decades. The cooperation on eco-environmental protection under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative will inject an effective impetus to accomplishment of environmental targets in the Agenda in countries along the routes.

## **II. Overarching Requirements**

### **(I) Guiding ideology**

In the Silk Road Spirit which advocates peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit, we will persist in jointly building the Belt and Road through consultation to meet the interests of all, with a view to common development and prosperity. Firmly upholding the philosophy of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development, we will integrate green development vigorously, orderly and effectively into policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds. A new pattern of higher-level cooperation on eco-environmental protection among diverse stakeholders will be created in the Belt and Road, thus contributing to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals.

### **(II) Underlying principles**

**Green-oriented philosophy.** Guided by the philosophies of ecological civilization and green development, the Belt and Road Initiative will be advanced in an environment-friendly way to improve green competitiveness, covering policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds.

**Joint construction through consultation to create mutual benefit and win-win situation.** With full respect for the development needs of countries along the Belt and Road, we will strengthen strategic alignment and policy communication and cooperate on eco-environmental protection based on consensus, to build a community of shared interests, responsibility and future and create a win-win situation for economic development and environmental protection.

**Government guidance and diverse participation.** We will provide better policy support and cooperation platforms and construct a network for eco-environmental protection cooperation characterized by government guidance, business commitment and social participation. The whole society will be mobilized to actively participate in environmental governance with the business sector bearing the main responsibility and the market playing the due role.

**Coordinated advancement and demonstration.** In accordance with unified deployment with priority areas and industries, we will make steady and orderly progress and timely summarize lessons and results to form radiation effects and cooperate at higher standards.

### **(III) Development goals**

**To 2025, we will integrate the concepts of ecological civilization and green development into Belt and Road Initiative and create a favorable pattern of well-grounded cooperation on eco-environmental protection.** Focusing on six economic corridors, we will beef up cooperation platforms and personnel exchanges; formulate and implement a series of support policies and strengthen information support; foster a cluster of high-quality green brands in railway, electric power and other key areas; apply a set of green financial instruments into investment and trade projects and lead capital flow to socio-environmentally friendly industries; and establish a group of international platforms for environmental business cooperation, including industrial cooperation demonstration bases, environmental technology exchange and transfer bases, technical demonstration and promotion bases, and science and technology parks.

**To 2030, we will promote cooperation on eco-environmental protection with higher standards and at deeper levels to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals.** We will deepen cooperation in key fields such as environmental pollution control, ecological protection, nuclear and radiation safety, and technological innovation in environmental protection; improve the comprehensive capacity in serving, supporting and guaranteeing eco-environmental protection, and build green, prosperous and friendly Belt and Road that benefit countries along the routes.

## **III. Highlight the Concept of Ecological Civilization and Strengthen Policy Coordination**

### **(I) Share the concept and practice of ecological civilization and green development**

**Share the concept of ecological civilization.** Bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms will be fully used to deepen dialogue and exchange on concepts, laws and regulations, policies, standards and technologies for ecological progress and green development and facilitate the joint development of bilateral, multilateral, sub-regional and regional strategies and action plans for eco-environmental protection.

**Share experience in green development.** The practical experience of green development will be summarized and environment-friendly technologies and products advocated to meet green development needs. Eco-environmental protection will be cultivated as a new engine of green transformation in countries and regions along the routes.

### **(II) Build platforms for eco-environmental protection cooperation**

**Step up the improvement of cooperation mechanisms and platforms.** High-level governmental dialogue will be conducted based on such cooperation mechanisms as China-ASEAN Summit, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Lancang-Mekong River Cooperation Mechanism, Euro-Asia Economic Forum, China-Africa Cooperation Forum, China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, and Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia. We will strengthen regional exchanges on eco-environmental protection, expand cooperation with relevant international organizations and agencies, initiate the International Union for Green Belt and Road Development, and establish cooperation

platforms with multiple participation that include governments, enterprises, think tanks, social organizations and the public.

**Advance the construction of environmental information sharing platforms.** A big data service platform for eco-environmental protection will be put in place through cooperation to provide comprehensive information support and guarantee for eco-friendly Belt and Road. While strengthening information sharing, the platform will enhance advisory services for environmental risk assessment and prevention and stimulate cooperation on information products, technologies and services.

### **(III) Fuel exchange and cooperation of social organizations and think tanks**

**Encourage exchange and cooperation of non-governmental environmental organizations.** We will actively provide platform and policy guidance for international exchange and cooperation of social organizations in the field of environmental protection. We will support non-governmental environmental organizations to forge cooperative partnerships with relevant institutions of countries along the Belt and Road and maintain contact in various forms, such as public service, joint research, exchange visits, scientific and technological cooperation, forums and exhibitions.

**Strengthen exchange and cooperation of eco-environmental think tanks.** We will build an intelligence support system for cooperation on eco-environmental protection by increasing the involvement of think tanks in strategic development, policy alignment, and investment advisory services. Think tanks are encouraged to cooperate with domestic and international counterparts, government departments, enterprises and social organizations, and work with research institutions to create platforms for scientific research and technology research and development.

## **IV. Respect Laws and Regulations to Promote International Production Capacity Cooperation and Eco-friendly Infrastructure Construction**

### **(1) Enable enterprises to play the major role in environmental governance**

**Strengthen guide to green corporate behavior.** We will implement the *Guidance on Promoting Green Belt and Road* jointly issued by MEP, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), the *Guidelines for Environmental Protection in Foreign Investment and Cooperation* jointly released by MOFCOM and MEP, and the *Initiative on Corporate Environmental Responsibility Fulfillment for Building the Green “Belt and Road”* announced by 19 key enterprises. Enterprises will be required to consciously abide by local environmental regulations and standards and fulfill respective environmental responsibility. Industry associations and chambers of commerce will be recommended to introduce code of conduct on eco-environmental behaviors for overseas investment.

**Encourage enterprises to strengthen environmental management.** Enterprises will be directed to develop low-carbon, energy-saving, environment-friendly materials, techniques and processes, increase reuse and reduce pollutant generation and discharge from production,

service provision and product use. Green brands of high-quality production capacity will be nurtured in such industries as railway, electricity, automotive, communications, new energy, and iron and steel. Guidance will be provided on environmental impact assessment and environmental risk prevention by enterprises according to local requirements. Biodiversity conservation and ecological restoration will be enhanced, with priority given to in-situ conservation.

**Facilitate the disclosure of corporate environmental information.** We will enable enterprises to publish annual environmental reports on a regular basis, and release plans, measures and environmental performance in implementing environmental laws and regulations via the mobile Internet and the Internet of Things. We will advocate that enterprises communicate with stakeholders on environmental protection matters in a timely manner, so as to form a harmonious social atmosphere.

## **(II) Advance infrastructure construction in an eco-friendly way**

**Promote green low-carbon construction, operation and management of infrastructure.** We will improve green and low-carbon operation, management and maintenance of facilities by clarifying environmental protection requirements in infrastructure construction standards and enforcing environmental standards and practices in such sectors as green transportation, green building and green energy.

**Upgrade environmental management of industrial parks.** We will jointly create eco-industrial parks with focus on enterprise agglomerations, eco-industrial chains and service platforms. Environmental protection facilities will be constructed, centralized sewage treatment and recycling and corresponding demonstration be promoted, and public service platforms on eco-environmental information, technology and business put in place in industrial parks.

## **V. Promote Sustainable Production and Consumption and Boost Green Trade**

### **(I) Facilitate trade of environmental products and services**

**Escalate environmental management of import and export trade.** We will conduct researches on environmental protection's role in optimizing trade and investment and explore the feasibility of including environmental considerations into free trade agreements with major countries along the Belt and Road. Joint efforts will be made to crack down upon illegal trans-boundary movement of solid waste. Reduction or cancellation of export tax rebates will be sought with regard to heavy pollution industries and environmental standards moderately raised for active polluting industries, energy-consuming industries and resource-intensive industries.

**Expand import and export of environmental products and services.** We will share the successful practice in cooperation on environmental products and services, further open the market of environmental services, and expand the import and export of environmental products and services, covering air pollution treatment, water pollution control and treatment, as well as hazardous waste management and disposal. Exploration of ways to

facilitate trade of environmental products and services will be made.

**Include eco-labeled products into government procurement.** We will carry out eco-label exchange and cooperation projects and share experience in eco-label certification system. Countries along the Belt and Road will be recommended to include more eco-labeled products into government procurement. Efforts will be made to explore establishing mutual recognition mechanisms and encourage eco-labeling agencies to enter into mutual recognition agreements for eco-labeled products.

## **(II) Enhance green supply chain management**

**Establish a green supply chain management system.** We will develop pilot projects and policy instruments for green supply chain management to promote green development from the perspective of the whole industrial chain ranging from production, circulation to consumption. We will carry out certification of standards and performance appraisal for green supply chain and try to establish green supply chain performance evaluation systems.

**Enhance international cooperation on green supply chain.** Positive efforts will be made to develop the green supply chain cooperation network, support green production, procurement and consumption, and promote green supply chain management in international trade. Demonstration bases for green supply chain cooperation will be established. Strengthened exchange and visibility activities will be carried out to facilitate green supply chain management in countries along the Belt and Road, and inter-governmental initiatives on green supply chain cooperation be encouraged. Encouragement will be also given to publicity and promotion efforts made by such organizations as industry associations and international chambers of commerce.

## **VI. Increase Support for Green Financing to Boost Financial Integration**

**Formulate green financial policy.** We will study and develop green investment and financing guidelines, identify green investment and financing needs of countries along the Belt and Road, and introduce administrative standards for green investment and financing that highlight green project scoping and screening and environmental and social risk management.

**Establish green development fund.** A dedicated fund for resource development and environmental protection will be set up to support eco-environmental infrastructure construction, capacity building and development projects of green industries in countries along the Belt and Road.

**Guide green-oriented investment decisions.** We will share the experience of green finance and strengthen environmental risk management in the Belt and Road Initiative and other overseas investment projects by raising the level of environmental information disclosure, applying such green financing tools as green bonds, and introducing mandatory environmental pollution liability insurance in fields prone to environmental risk.

## **VII. Carry out Eco-Environmental Protection Projects and Activities to Enhance**

## **People-to-People Bonds**

### **(I) Strengthen cooperation in key areas of eco-environmental protection**

**Deepen cooperation on environmental pollution control and treatment.** The cooperation will be strengthened in air, water and soil pollution prevention and control, solid waste management and comprehensive rural environmental improvement. A number of environmental pollution control projects that benefit all participating parties will be implemented.

**Push forward ecological protection cooperation.** We will establish biodiversity database and information sharing platform, launch demonstration projects for biodiversity conservation corridors in the Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Tibetan Plateau, and further develop the China-ASEAN partnership on eco-friendly cities.

**Strengthen nuclear and radiation safety cooperation.** We will take active part in the development of international nuclear safety system and share good practice of nuclear and radiation safety supervision. We will get deeply involved in the various activities of international organizations, such as International Atomic Energy Agency and OECD Nuclear Energy Agency. We will promote the establishment of international cooperation and exchange platforms to help countries in need to enhance regulatory capacity for nuclear and radiation safety.

**Enhance cooperation on scientific and technological innovation.** We will actively participate in scientific and technological cooperation and exchange in the field of eco-environmental protection to improve the capability of scientific and technological support. Environmental organizations will be fully mobilized in the research and development of environmental technologies and transfer, extension and application of scientific and technological achievements.

**Promote cooperation for compliance with environmental conventions.** We will help relevant countries along the Belt and Road to fulfill commitments under multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), such as *Convention on Biological Diversity* and *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*, by building up cooperation mechanisms for MEA implementation and enabling technological exchange and South-South cooperation.

### **(II) Provide more support to green demonstration projects**

**Promote green foreign aid.** We will develop strategies and action plans for green foreign aid which focuses on the fields of pollution control, ecological conservation, environmental protection technologies and industries, as well as sustainable production and consumption. Efforts will be made to incorporate eco-environmental cooperation in the scope of support by financial mechanisms such as the South-South Cooperation Fund. Foreign aid in the field of environmental protection will be upgraded in both scale and level, with priority given to environmental policy and legislation, personnel exchanges and demonstration projects.

**Implement Green Silk Road Envoys Program.** We will further improve the implementation plan of Green Silk Road Envoys Program. Focusing on policy communication, capacity

building, technical exchange, and industrial cooperation, the program aims to strengthen the interaction and exchange of environmental management personnel and professional technical personnel, build up environmental protection capacity, and improve environmental awareness and management in countries along the Belt and Road.

**Establish technical cooperation parks and demonstration bases for environmental protection industries.** We will promote enterprise-centered technological and industrial cooperation on environmental protection and carry out pilots for the construction of environmental protection facilities and application of environmental pollution control and ecological restoration technologies. We will guide the cluster development of advantageous environmental protection industries, and explore the innovative model of cooperation in setting up technical parks and demonstration bases for environmental protection industries.

### **VIII. Step up Capacity Building and Make Use of Local Advantages**

**Strengthen environmental protection capacity building.** We will formulate local plans and corresponding implementation programs for cooperation on eco-environmental protection that give full play to the geographical advantages of domestic provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) along the Belt and Road. Environmental regulation and governance capacity building will be strengthened in border provinces (autonomous regions) such as Heilongjiang, Inner Mongolia, Jilin, Xinjiang, Yunnan and Guangxi, while green development will be upgraded in Jiangsu, Guangdong, Shaanxi and Fujian. Local governments are encouraged to actively participate in bilateral and multilateral cooperation on environmental protection, establish international partnerships at provincial and municipal levels, and enable innovative cooperation models, so as to create a sound situation where governments at all levels have joint efforts, government and private sector have coordinated action, and think tanks can provide support.

**Establish environmental technological and industrial cooperation bases.** Environmental technology innovation and transfer bases will be developed where conditions permit. Demonstration bases for environmental technology and industrial cooperation will be set up for and with states from ASEAN, Central Asia, South Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Arab World, and Africa. Support will be provided to raise the international level of environmental protection industrial parks, circular economy industrial parks, main industrial sectors, and environmental protection enterprises. Efforts to facilitate and implement environmental technology and industrial projects will be carried out in the Yangtze River Economic Belt, Bohai Economic Rim, Pearl River Delta, and Central Plains Urban Agglomeration as underpinning for green Belt and Road.

### **IX. Major Projects**

A total of 25 key projects are designed under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, including 6 projects for policy coordination, 4 for facilities connectivity, 3 for unimpeded trade, 2 for financial integration, 4 for people-to-people bonds and 6 for capacity building.

<b>Category</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Project</b>
Policy coordination	1	International High-level Dialogue on Ecological and Environmental Cooperation under the Framework of the Belt and Road
	2	International Union for Green Belt and Road Development
	3	Environmental Policy and Standard Coordination and Convergence
	4	Nuclear and Radiation Safety Management Exchanges
	5	China-ASEAN Partnership on Eco-friendly Cities
	6	Exchange and Cooperation for Compliance with Environmental Conventions
Facilities connectivity	7	Study on Green Interconnection
	8	Industrial Park Sewage Treatment Demonstration
	9	Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment in Key Areas under the Framework of the Belt and Road
	10	Biodiversity Conservation Corridor Demonstration
Unimpeded trade	11	Hazardous Waste Management and Import and Export Regulation Cooperation
	12	Eco-Label Mutual Recognition
	13	Green Supply Chain Management Pilot
Financial integration	14	Study on Green Investment and Financing
	15	Study on Green Belt and Road Fund
People-to-people	16	Green Silk Road Envoys Program

bonds	17	Lancang-Mekong River Environmental Cooperation Platform
	18	China-Cambodia Environmental Cooperation Base
	19	Exchange and Cooperation of Non-governmental Environmental Organizations
Capacity building	20	Platform for Belt and Road Environmental Big Data Services
	21	Eco-Environmental Monitoring and Early Warning System Development
	22	Local Cooperation on Eco-Environmental Protection
	23	Industrial and Technological Cooperation Platform for Environmental Protection
	24	The Belt and Road Environmental Technology Exchange and Transfer Center (Shenzhen)
25	China-ASEAN Environmental Technology and Industrial Cooperation Demonstration Bases	

## X. Safeguard Measures

**Strengthen organization and coordination.** A sound comprehensive coordination mechanism will be established to strengthen multi-level and multi-channel communication and benign interaction, including between government departments, between central and local governments, and between governments and enterprises and the public. It will contribute to coordinated progress according to the division of labor.

**Improve policy support.** A number of targeted policies and measures that reflect both needs and objectives will be studied and introduced. They are expected to improve the support for eco-environmental protection cooperation through innovative practices and better services.

**Ensure financial input.** More funds will be put in place to ensure implementation of this Plan, focusing on cooperation bases and demonstration programs and projects.

**Conduct monitoring and assessment.** To earnestly advance plan implementation, we will monitor and analyze the progress in implementing key measures and projects, strengthen supervision and inspection, and timely conduct mid-term assessment and make recommendations for adjustment and improvement.