

Minutes of the Fifth EU-China Environmental Policy Dialogue

Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for Environment, and Zhou Shengxian, Minister of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China met in Beijing on 19 July 2013 for the Fifth EU-China Ministerial Environmental Policy Dialogue.

They exchanged views on the latest progress in the field of environmental protection in the EU and China, shared insights on the environmental issues with strategic and global nature, which were of interest to both sides, and acknowledged respective efforts by both sides to address key global environmental challenges.

They discussed how to properly handle the relationship between economic growth and environmental protection. Minister Zhou outlined how the concept of ecological civilisation would guide the work in China in the new era, and shared three major priorities for Chinese environmental protection, namely air pollution prevention and control with a specific focus on PM2.5, water pollution prevention and control prioritizing drinking water safety, and rural environmental protection. Extending gratitude to the EU counterpart for the efficient and constructive discussions with the MEP delegation visiting Brussels for exchanging views on PM2.5 abatement in response to haze episodes in China in early 2013, he also briefed on the updated policy development in addressing emerging environmental problems in China. Commissioner Potočnik described the progress in Europe towards a resource efficient economy. He said that business and industry would largely be in the forefront in bringing about Green Growth through a resource efficient, circular economy. He noted that the European Union had clear strengths in eco-industries and this too could be an opening for further co-operation with China.

Recognising the importance of maintaining a regular policy dialogue at ministerial, coordinator, and other levels, and noting the role played by bilateral co-operation on environment in advancing the EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, they agreed to strengthen the policy dialogue and to make bilateral co-operation more pragmatic and effective by engaging and mobilising businesses to also contribute, in addition to improved implementation of existing programmes, such as the

Environmental Governance Programme, and exploring and inaugurating new programmes, such as the Environmental Sustainability Programme.

Commissioner Potočník suggested that an Environmental Forum could be established to address specific topics of mutual interest, involving stakeholders and business, so that a new dimension could be brought to the partnership. Green Growth could be considered a suitable theme for the first Forum. The Forum's findings/outcome will be presented to the Ministerial Environmental Policy Dialogue. Mr. Zhou welcomed the proposal and encouraged working level officials on both sides to further the consultation on the feasibilities of this Forum.

Both sides:

- Reviewed bilateral co-operation since the dialogue was launched in 2003, welcomed the progress to date, and acknowledged the 2012 EU-China Summit commitment that *the EU and China would redouble their joint efforts to tackle global challenges including sustainable development and environmental protection.*

- Undertook to strengthen co-operation in the framework of multilateral environmental agreements with a view to achieving global environment goals on biodiversity, chemicals management, particularly mercury, and environmentally sound management of wastes. They also agreed to enhance bilateral dialogue and co-operation on biodiversity and ecosystems conservation, in particular on the valuation of ecosystem services, natural capital accounting and innovative financing mechanisms.

- Recognised the need for continual and dedicated efforts to boost sustainable resource productivity and efficiency as ways of safeguarding the environment.

- Agreed to work together towards the promotion of more sustainable consumption and production patterns both in the context the bilateral relations and globally.

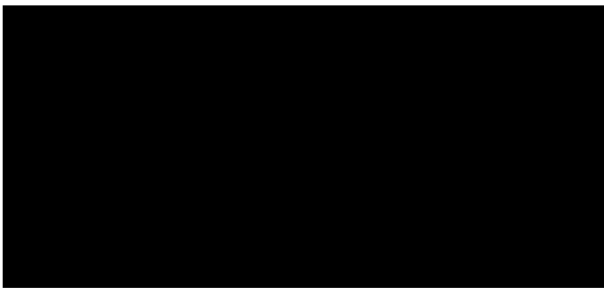
- Reaffirmed the commitment to promote cooperation on the flagship initiatives on environment developed respectively by the EU and China, with a view to maximizing the mutual synergies between the China's ecological civilization construction and the European Union's resource efficiency agenda and with a view to supporting global sustainable development.

-Recognised the urgent need for concrete solutions to address the pressing challenge of air pollution in urban areas, and agreed to continue the exchange of experiences with a view to identifying and adopting efficient policy responses.

-Agreed to officially launch the EU-China Environmental Sustainability Programme after the Dialogue as one of the fruitful follow-ups to the Fourth EU-China Environmental Policy Dialogue, with commendations on efficient efforts by both sides.

Done at Beijing, on 19 July 2013, in duplicate, in the English and Chinese languages, both versions being equally authentic.

For the European Commission



For the Ministry of Environmental
Protection of the People's Republic of
China

