

# Promoting modernization of harmony between humanity and nature

## EDITOR'S NOTE

A green and low-carbon economy and society are crucial to high-quality development, the 20th CPC National Congress report pointed out. This page sheds light on green development. The first article describes the Chinese path to the modernization of harmony between humanity and nature. The second article explains the transition to a green development model.

By BAO XIAOBIN

The 20th CPC National Congress report highlighted that, “respecting, adapting to, and protecting nature is essential for building China into a modern socialist country in all respects. We must uphold and act on the principle that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, and we must remember to maintain harmony between humanity and nature when planning our development.”

The ecological environment provides the basic conditions for human survival and development. A civilization may thrive if its eco-environment thrives. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, China has witnessed historic, transformative, and comprehensive changes in ecological and environmental protection.

In the new journey of building a modern socialist country in all respects, it is absolutely necessary to pursue the path of development that



Workers keep the lake clean in Chongqing Municipality, Aug. 12. Photo: CFP

puts ecosystems first and features green, low-carbon development. Institutions and systems should be improved to support ecological progress and promote modernization with harmony between humanity and nature.

The rational development and utilization of natural resources requires careful coordination. First, the relationship between economic development and environmental protection should be properly managed, and the reformation of resource allocation should be accelerated. Second, usage regulation of natural resources should be strengthened, and paid use of natural resources should be implemented. Third, development of main functional zones should be accelerated, ecosystem functions should be improved, and the value of ecosystem services should be enhanced.

In the effort to prevent and control pollution, we must first control both the total amount and intensity of carbon emissions as an active response to climate change. Second, we should improve fiscal, taxation, investment, and financial policies, establish an integrated market for trading ecological and environmental rights, and strive to achieve the goal of carbon peaking and carbon neutrality. Third, we should focus on the comprehensive improvement of rural environments, and build an ecologically livable and beautiful countryside.

It will be essential to promote the transformation of green production and the development of green industries. First, we will shift green production from being driven by factors of production to being innovation-driven, moving from scale expansion to a structural upgrade.

This will create a model of production that conserves resources and protects the environment. Second, we need to further adjust the industrial structure, strengthen strategic emerging pillar industries (such as energy conservation and environmental protection), increase the proportion of green and low-carbon industries within the total economy, and coordinate the development of a low-carbon transport system. Third, we need to improve the energy structure, properly control consumption of energy from fossil fuels, promote the use of new, clean, and low-carbon energy, improve energy efficiency, and work together to reduce pollution and cut carbon emissions.

We should establish a modern environmental governance system under the leadership of Party committees, government leadership and the participation of enterprises, social organizations and the public. We should also clarify the responsibilities of all parties for improving ecological and environmental quality. Second, we should improve the assessment and evaluation systems for green government performance and incorporate indicators such as ecological benefits, resource consumption and environmental damage into the evaluation systems for socioeconomic development. Third, we should improve the property rights and usage control systems for natural resource assets. Fourth, we should implement strict protection policies for key ecological function zones, nature

reserves, fresh water reserves and other environmentally sensitive and vulnerable areas. Fifth, we need to continue to develop price reforms for natural resources and ecological products, introduce a compensation system for ecological public goods, and improve market-based and diversified compensation mechanisms for ecological products.

Ecological progress is a major project to improve people's wellbeing. Creating a sound ecological environment should become the most inclusive way to improve people's wellbeing and meet people's aspirations for a better life. Continuous efforts must be undertaken. First, we should promote green, low-carbon, civilized and healthy lifestyles. Second, we should popularize standards of energy conservation and labeling, promote advanced and applicable energy-saving technologies and products, and enhance our energy-saving capacities. Third, we should cultivate the public's awareness of a green ecology, advocate for green consumption, and better regulate ecological and environmental protection behaviors in daily life. Fourth, a new social trend of advocating for a frugal, green and low-carbon lifestyle should be cultivated, so that every citizen can truly become an advocate and practitioner of living a green and low-carbon life.

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# Fostering harmony between humanity and nature

By QUAN LINCHUN

A modern approach to harmonizing humanity and nature is a significant feature of China's socialist modernization and is a fundamental requirement for Chinese modernization. A comprehensive path forward must include the implementation of a green development philosophy, and the establishment and preservation of a green “bottom line.” In addition, we must focus on tackling prominent ecological and environmental issues in order to foster a paradigm of harmony between humanity and nature.

## Green development model

The green development philosophy emphasizes addressing the issue of harmony between humanity and nature. It is an organic part of the new development philosophy. Standing at a new historical starting point, although we face many tests and challenges in the protection and restoration of the ecological environment, we must unswervingly implement the green development philosophy and uphold harmony between humanity and nature, as this is the

fundamental premise of harmonious interpersonal relationships.

The pursuit of green development represents a major decision in line with China's broader national conditions, and it also presents significant developmental and competitive advantages. When the ecology prospers, civilization prospers. As with all creatures in nature, people are born equal. Therefore, people must unchain themselves from “anthropocentrism,” consciously embrace and integrate into nature, become guardians of nature, and maintain safe boundaries and the bottom line for our natural environment.

Humanity and nature not only coexist in a community of harmony, but also a community with a shared future. We must diligently follow a path of sustainable development featuring advanced production, higher living standards and healthy ecosystems. We need to endeavor to translate the building of a beautiful China into conscious collective actions, and strive to leave our children and grandchildren a work-life environment with blue skies, green land, and clean water.

## Ecological bottom line

Upholding the bottom line of the ecological environment and promoting ecological progress concerns the wellbeing of the people and the future of the nation. We should continue to promote green, circular, and low-carbon development and strike a balance between economic development and ecological and environmental protection. We should pursue a green development path that integrates economic growth with ecological and environmental protection, and promote civilized development that is of higher quality, efficiency, fairness, safety, and sustainability.

Protecting the ecological environment is protecting productivity and improving the ecological environment is developing productivity. Respecting nature requires people to have reverence, gratitude and reciprocity towards nature. The value of other creatures and the sanctity of life should be held in reverence, as each species only has one life, and each life has a unique value. The natural world, including human beings, is a complete organic ecosystem. Human activities should conform to the in-

ternal laws of their own movements. Legal systems and moral norms can be used to restrain human behaviors and control activities within the capacity of nature, so as to protect the balance of the natural ecosystem while meeting the growing needs of human beings.

Guarding the boundaries of ecosystem stability is the baseline requirement for maintaining the ecological system's balance. This ecological stability boundary also represents the boundaries for realizing human society's sustainable development. Observing the inherent laws of nature, maintaining equilibrium in the natural ecosystem, and promoting China's high-quality socioeconomic development are natural prerequisites for Chinese modernization.

## Ecological progress

Ecological progress plays a very important strategic role in the overall development of the cause of the Party and the state, and is related to the sustainable development of the Chinese nation. Achieving the goal of “carbon peaking and carbon neutrality” represents an extensive

and profound change. Ecological progress presupposes subversive changes in our ways of thinking, values, modes of production, and ways of life, which will require radical changes in both conception and action. Society as a whole should make great efforts to conserve and make rational use of resources. We will vigorously develop a green and circular economy through the promotion and development of energy-saving and low-carbon industries.

The construction of an ecologically progressive civilization is an ongoing process. China has now entered a critical period. We need to take a problem-oriented approach and work diligently to solve prominent problems in environmental protection in the Yangtze Economic Belt and the Yellow River Basin.

To meet growing demands for a beautiful, sustainable ecological environment, we need to consolidate, enhance and make good use of our ecological advantages, so that lucid waters and lush mountains will forever become the “immovable property of happiness” for all the Chinese people and the “green cash machine” for sustainable development.

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