

**The National Development
and Reform Commission
of China**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



**Department
of Energy &
Climate Change**



CONFERENCE REPORT

"Although the impacts of climate change are local and varied, there is much we can learn from each other about how to approach our response. That is why we have developed a set of Guiding Principles that will help legislators and policymakers to ensure that the response is as effective as possible and learns the lessons from others' experience."

- Hon. C.T. Frolick, MP, National Assembly of South Africa



A milestone climate change conference took place last week in Beijing with participants endorsing the new *Guiding Principles for Climate Change Adaptation: South-South Cooperation, Practice, and Legislation*, a landmark guide for future policy, legislation, implementation and cooperation on climate change adaptation in the global South.

"These Guiding Principles will assist China to develop the adaptation elements of its climate change legislation." -- Dr Ma Aimin of China's NDRC*

The three-day *International Conference on Climate Change Adaptation: Policy, Practice and*

Legislation drew 150 leading policymakers, legislators, experts and representatives of multilateral agencies from China and 35 developing countries to Beijing to explore major opportunities for China and developing countries to work together to make their countries and communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change. Conference participants also had the opportunity to learn of China's achievements in planning for and responding to climate impacts.

The conference was organised by the [Adapting to Climate Change in China \(ACCC\)](#) project in partnership with [The Global Legislators' Organisation \(GLOBE International\)](#) and [The INTASAVE Partnership & CARIBSAVE](#). ACCC is a joint project between China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC) and the UK Department for International Development and Department for Energy and Climate Change (UK DFID & DECC)

"[We] wish for a continuing successful relationship through triangular cooperation as China meets its South-South Cooperation commitments and international commitments on climate change."

– Madam Huang, Director of the International Cooperation Division of the Climate Change Department of China's NDRC*

Conference Outcomes

- Every participant gave their unqualified support to the conference's landmark document, *Guiding Principles for Climate Change Adaptation; South-South Cooperation, Practice and Legislation* and their support for another conference in 2014.
- GLOBE International will take the Guiding Principles to the 2nd GLOBE Climate Legislation Summit in Bogota, Colombia, in October, where they will be discussed and endorsed by legislators from over 60 countries.
- The INTASAVE Partnership has announced a joint initiative to continue to build on this work with China, the UNFCCC, and developing countries around the world.
- The INTASAVE Partnership will establish a high-level international advisory board and will also hold an annual event on South-South Adaptation: Policy, Practice and Legislation taking place in South Africa in 2014.

About the "Guiding Principles"

The *Guiding Principles* provide concrete recommendations for the future direction of climate change adaptation, a synthesis of good practice and ways to strengthen responses by working together.

The primary points of the document are:

- There is a strong need for anticipatory adaptation, underpinned by a risk management approach,

solid monitoring and evaluation, and scaled up knowledge platforms to inform future work;

- Adaptation requires a broad range of practice, policy, and legislation that builds on responses from and engagement with all stakeholders. Responses will include those that use traditional knowledge;
- Public funding continues to be important but so too is an enabling environment for private sector involvement. This will include Public-Private-Partnerships, private investment, corporate responsibility and climate-compatible business practices;
- South-South Cooperation should provide opportunities to share lessons learnt and to contextualise these to national and subnational circumstances;
- Developed countries have an important role to play in encouraging and enabling South-South cooperation, in line with existing international commitments, to support the efforts of developing countries.

About the Conference

The conference was a rare chance for senior policymakers, experts and legislators to join together to assess ways to strengthen adaptation responses in their own countries and to discuss the ways to work with each other and international agencies to make this happen.

Day 1 of the conference began by focussing on China, the host country, and on key South-South partners, and by sharing what has been achieved during the ACCC project to reduce other countries' vulnerability to climate impacts. The conference was opened by Dr Rebecca Nadin who outlined the vision of the conference:

In a changing climate, policymakers and legislators are facing new challenges in development planning and responding to climate impacts across a range of sectors. Recognising the need for joined up working to face the common challenge of climate impacts, the Conference will not only bring together a full spread of policy makers from across ministries, but also build links with legislators who are building the legal framework for adaptation.

Each country is facing a set of individual and specific challenges as they respond to current and future climate change. This conference aims to unpick and develop solutions for some of those challenges. China has much to share with other countries on its experiences in responding and adapting to climate change and there is also much China can learn from others. Through cooperating together, countries are able to expand the options and good practice available to them.

ACCC, a unique policy research initiative now in its fourth and final year, has completed unprecedented work in helping China's policymakers build a response to climate change based on a solid foundation of evidence from various disciplines and sectors.

Madam Huang, Director of the International Cooperation Division of the Climate Change Department of China's National Development and Reform Commission*, said that UK and Swiss support has played an

important role in China's capacity building, noting that the drafting of China's National Adaptation Strategy had drawn upon the same expert pool and research base as the ACCC project.

Mme Huang expressed the wish for a continuing successful relationship through triangular cooperation as China meets its South-South Cooperation commitments and international commitments on climate change. China has made a significant commitment of 200 million RMB to cooperating with other developing countries on adaptation through technology transfer, training and mutual learning, making it a major part of the growing work in this area.

Opening remarks and key note speeches were delivered by Director General Su Wei, China's National Development and Reform Commission, Vice Director General Michel Mordasini, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Hon Cedric Frolick MP, Chairperson of the South African National Assembly.

This was followed by a chance to hear from the experts of the ACCC project who framed the discussion of the coming days by presenting on key issues for policymakers such as uncertainty, assessing risk and the practicalities of mainstreaming adaptation in the development planning process. Partners shared experience across pilot provinces and priority sectors.

Ma Zhongyu, Deputy Secretary-General, Ningxia Provincial Government, presented on the preliminary results of joint research into provincial decision makers attitudes and knowledge in China, noting that 50% of decision makers fully understand adaptation measures, with more awareness amongst decision makers in coastal regions. The survey found key knowledge gaps including public health and urban infrastructure.

Day 2 of the conference explored key opportunities and avenues for South-South cooperation through policy and practice across 4 thematic areas, how adaptation needs and challenges can be met by South-South cooperation on climate change, and what the entry points for addressing these issues might be.

Highlights:

- Dr Spencer Thomas, Government of Grenada, noted that closer collaboration would be likely to strengthen the voice of the South and change the rules going forward.
- In a thematic panel on stakeholders, the problems of language and jargon in addressing communities were noted and delegates discussed how to define barriers.
- In the thematic panel on capacity building, Li Ting, Tsinghua University, outlined the provision in the international arena and the strength of the unified position across G77 on capacity building but the weakness in lack of money for implementation.
- Abias Huongo, UNFCCC Focal Point, Angola, highlighted the need to mobilise regional

partnerships.

- Professor Cordia Chu, Griffith University, defined cross-cultural competency as an important element of successful partnerships to build capacity and understanding each others' needs.
- The Infrastructure and Technology Panel brought an interesting discussion of tech transfer.
- Victoria Wang, China IP Group, noted the steep rise in patent applications for adaptation related technology but that ownership of this technology remains largely in the North.
- In the Finance Panel, William Trent Beloe, IFC, World Bank Group, reminded delegates that if we don't leverage the private sector, we won't leverage the funds needed to adapt.
- Prof Zhang Wen gave an overview of the funds available under the UNFCCC and innovations such as private donations to the Adaptation Fund. This led on to a lively discussion on enabling private sector involvement through incentives and frameworks, including ideas on commercialising climate services and building confidence through communications strategies.

Day 3 focussed on legislation for climate change adaptation with discussions about the merits of various approaches to adaptation legislation and the sharing of case studies.

Highlights:

- Zhai Yong, Director General for the Environment Protection and Resources Conservation Committee in the National People's Congress made clear that, in future, all development planning should hang on environment, nature and carry capacity. He highlighted the significant legislative work going on in China for CCA, noting in particular the current revision of the environmental protection law and the drafting of the climate change law.
- Xianfu Lu, UNFCCC Secretariat, pointed out that domestic legislation on adaptation is as much about job creation, safeguarding economic growth and protecting public health and should be talked about in these terms. She talked about the importance of compliance to ensure implementation and legally created incentives for private sector involvement.
- Legislators shared case studies of domestic legislative efforts from Micronesia to Mexico.
- Delegates discussed the imbalance between responses in mitigation and adaptation.

The conference closed with **Hon Cedric Frolick MP**, Chairperson of the South African National Assembly, presenting the unanimously agreed upon Guiding Principles and a response by Dr Ma Amin of NDRC*:

"Although the impacts of climate change are local and varied, there is much we can learn from each other about how to approach our response. That is why we have developed a set of Guiding

Principles that will help legislators and policymakers to ensure that the response is as effective as possible and learns the lessons from others' experience." - Hon. C.T. Frolick, MP, Chairperson of the South African National Assembly

"These Guiding Principles will assist China to develop the adaptation elements of its climate change legislation." - Dr Ma Aimin of China's NDRC*

In Conclusion

Even if we stop emitting today completely there are huge and devastating consequences for the people, economies and environments of the developing countries and small island developing states that will continue decades into the future and require immediate action. The conference and the agenda going forward is about what can be done from a policy, legislation and implementation perspective to adapt to the massive challenges on livelihoods, nations and environments resulting from climate change.

Photos, conference PPT's, and the Guiding Principles can be found at the ACCC website: <http://www.ccadaptation.org.cn>

* The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) is the committee that heads the drafting of China's climate change legislation

For further information please contact:

Dr. Rebecca Nadin
ACCC Project Director
Rebecca-Nadin@ccadaptation.org.cn