



澜沧江-湄公河环境合作中心
Lancang-Mekong Environmental Cooperation Center

Newsletter

Issue 6, 2023

June 25 2023

The Symposium on “Green Lancang-Mekong Initiative: Synergies between Climate-Resilient Infrastructure and Energy Transition” is Successfully Concluded in Beijing

On April 25, 2023, a symposium themed on “Synergies between Climate-Resilient Infrastructure and Energy Transition” was held in Beijing in a hybrid online and offline modality as part of the “Green Lancang-Mekong Initiative: Roundtable Dialogue on Knowledge Sharing of Green, Low-carbon and Sustainable Infrastructure”. The symposium was guided by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) and organized by the Lancang-Mekong Environmental Cooperation Center (LMEC)/Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China (hereinafter referred to as “the Center”), under the support of the World Resources Institute (WRI) and The Asia Foundation. Representatives from the Ministry of Ecology and Environment and local ecological and environmental departments, environment and climate departments of Mekong countries, UN agencies in China, relevant international organizations, research institutes and enterprises participated in the meetings offline.

Liu Qing, vice president of China Institute of International Studies, Wang Qian, programme management officer of UNEP China Office, and Zhang Jianxin, country representative of The Asia Foundation Beijing Office, delivered introductory speeches. Huang Zhengxue, research fellow at the Institute of Land Development and Regional Economy under National Development and Reform Commission of China, delivered a special speech.



Liu Qing pointed out that Lancang-Mekong green development cooperation faces both opportunities and challenges. The challenges should be tackled jointly in four aspects. First, strengthening the exchange and dialogue on green cooperation to foster continuous growth in mutual trust and consensus-building. Second, establishing a knowledge system for green cooperation and enhancing knowledge sharing. Third, developing green financial instruments to promote green finance and green economy. Fourth, maximizing the synergy of multilateral cooperation mechanisms such as Lancang-Mekong, China-ASEAN and the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS). In addition, Lancang-Mekong Countries should explore green cooperation in the third-party market in areas such as product services, engineering construction, infrastructure investment, and industry-financing integration under frameworks such as RCEP.



Wang Qian stated that to promote sustainable infrastructure development, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has established the Sustainable Infrastructure Partnership (SIP) to bring together experts from various fields and has set out ten guiding principles that policymakers can follow to help integrate sustainability into infrastructure planning and delivery. Furthermore, UNEP is focusing on addressing the challenges of nature-based infrastructure development, including policy mainstreaming, project financing, and data sharing. In the future, the UNEP will promote nature-based infrastructure development through three approaches: 1) promoting conceptual consensus among member countries; 2) assisting member countries in building nature-based infrastructure; and 3) supporting project financing for nature-based infrastructure projects.



Zhang Jianxin believes that environmental and climate challenges in China and the regional context have been an important focus of The Asia Foundation for over a decade, covering various topics such as environmental policy and governance, community disaster prevention and reduction, as well as climate resilience. The Asia Foundation and the LMEC have yielded rich results through projects such as the research on the Lancang-Mekong Green Economic Development Belt and climate finance in the region. In the future, The Asia Foundation will continue to collaborate with the Center to address climate change in the Lancang-Mekong countries and foster the synergy between climate-resilient infrastructure and energy transition.



Huang Zhengxue provides five recommendations for the construction of regional resilient cities based on the evolution and construction practices of resilient cities in China. Firstly, mechanisms for urban meteorological disaster and public health monitoring, early warning and assessment should be established. Secondly, an emergency prevention and control system should be set up with improved contingency plans for urban lifeline systems and distributed new-type infrastructure in place. Thirdly, a scientific system should be put in place to safeguard the emergency space in cities. Fourthly, emergency material reserve systems should be improved with reserves of physical assets, capital, and production capacity. Fifthly, the construction of smart city management systems should be expedited to enhance the early warning and response to natural disasters.



The symposium includes two panel discussions on “Energy Transition Actions and Prospects in Lancang-Mekong Countries” and “Practices of Climate-Resilient Economic Development in Lancang-Mekong Countries”. Participants shared practices in climate resilience and energy transition development in the Lancang-Mekong countries and discussed regional cooperation opportunities, planning pathways, challenges, and potential solutions for climate-resilient economic development.

The attendees unanimously agreed that climate-resilient infrastructure and energy transition are key drivers of regional economic growth and crucial measures for countries to realize their self-determined contributions. They hope to capitalize on the new phase of the Lancang-Mekong Environmental Cooperation Strategy framework, enhancing coordinated development and cooperation in climate-resilient infrastructure and energy transition, and promoting regional green recovery as well as sustainable economic and social development.



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About LMEC: Lancang-Mekong Environmental Cooperation Center (LMEC), established in 2017 in Beijing, China, aims to boost the capacity of environmental governance of each country and achieve regional sustainable development through the promotion of environmental cooperation among the Lancang-Mekong Countries.