

Guiding Opinions on Integrating and Strengthening Efforts in Climate Action and Ecological and Environmental Protection ¹

To the ecology and environment departments (bureaus) of all provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the Central Government and the Ecology and Environment Bureau of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps:

Climate change is a major global challenge facing mankind. Actively responding to climate change is an inherent requirement for China to achieve sustainable development, an important driver for stepping up the development of an ecological civilization and achieving the goal of a beautiful China, and a historical responsibility for China to fulfill its role as a major country in promoting the building of a community with a shared future for mankind. At the General Debate of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, General Secretary Xi Jinping announced China would aim to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. General Secretary Xi Jinping announced further commitments to the latest measures of nationally determined contributions at the Climate Ambition Summit. In order to resolutely follow the guiding principles in the remarks of General Secretary Xi

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Jinping, unswervingly implement the national strategy of addressing climate change, better fulfill the responsibilities of the lead departments in response to climate change, accelerate to rectify deficiencies in awareness, policy tools, measures and basic capabilities and promote synergy between climate action, environmental governance, and ecological conservation and restoration, the following opinions are hereby provided on integrating, coordinating and strengthening efforts in climate action and ecological and environmental conservation.

I. General requirements

1. Guiding philosophy

Guided by *Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era*, we will put the guiding principles of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Plenary Sessions of the 19th CPC Central Committee fully into effect, thoroughly implement Xi Jinping's thought on promoting ecological progress, and unswervingly put into practice the new development philosophy. With the focus on high-quality development and enhanced synergy, and driven by the vision of peaking carbon dioxide emissions and carbon neutrality, we will adhere to a holistic approach to strengthen the

coordination between climate action and ecological conservation. Efforts will be made in stepping up synergy in responding to climate change, promoting the modernization of the environmental governance system and capabilities and making new headways in ecological civilization to bring positive contributions to building a beautiful China and a beautiful world.

2. Basic principles

We need to adopt a goal-oriented approach. We will focus our efforts on realizing the goal of peaking carbon dioxide emissions and achieving carbon neutrality, coordinating climate action and ecological conservation, strengthening top-level design, tackling the challenges arising from the changing circumstances, new tasks and requirements, and coordinating to pursue both high-quality economic development and high-standard environmental protection.

We need to enhance the coordination and integration of all efforts. Integrated measures will be taken in making plans, arrangements, implementations and inspections in addressing climate change and ecological conservation. We will establish an integrated strategy, planning, policy and action system.

We need to step up the synergy. Carbon reduction deserves our most strategic focus. We will coordinate our efforts in controlling greenhouse

gas and pollutant emissions, advancing climate change adaption and ecological conservation and restoration, and supporting the battle to prevent and control pollution and peak carbon dioxide emissions.

3. Main objectives

During the *14th Five-Year Plan* period, the overall pattern of integrating climate action and ecological conservation will take shape, and an optimized and efficient work system will be established. Major progress will be made in the drafting of integrated environmental policies, plans, and standards, standardizing monitoring and assessment, law enforcement and accountability inspections, remarkably enhancing climate governance capabilities.

By 2030, the synergy of climate actions and environmental and ecological protection will unleash its full potential, and the environmental governance system and governance capabilities will be steadily improved, providing support for peaking carbon dioxide emission and achieving the vision of carbon neutrality, and contributing to a beautiful China.

II. Adhering to systematic design and promoting the integration of strategies and planning

4. Strengthening strategic planning at the macro level. Tackling climate change is an integral part of building a beautiful China and crucial to mainstreaming ecological and environmental protection into macroeconomic governance. We will link up key strategies and plans in energy production and consumption revolutions, coordinate the formulation of the *Long-term Plan for Building a Beautiful China* and the *National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2035*, and adopt a holistic approach in developing medium and long-term major strategies for ecological conservation.

5. Enhancing integration in planning. We will formulate sound and targeted plans for climate change, integrate climate action targets and tasks into the ecological and environmental protection plan, launch policies, measures and key projects that are conducive to promoting the green and low carbon transformation of the economy, energy, and industries, and implement dual cap policies in both the total amount and the intensity of carbon emissions in relevant provinces. The principles of green development and climate-friendliness will be enshrined in plans for pollution prevention and control, ecological conservation and nuclear safety. Measures will be taken to align the efforts in achieving goals such

as structural adjustment and layout optimization, greenhouse gas emission control and improvement of climate change adaptation capabilities. We will move quickly to integrate the requirements for addressing climate change into national economic and social development plans, as well as plans for key areas such as energy, industries and infrastructure.

6. Pressing ahead with emission peaking. We will speed up the formulation of an action plan for peaking carbon dioxide emissions before 2030, and leverage relevant policy tools and measures to advance implementation. All localities should put forward proactive and clear goals based on actual conditions and formulate plans and supporting measures in peaking carbon emissions. Key areas such as energy, industry, transportation and construction will be encouraged to formulate specific plans for peaking carbon emissions. Efforts will also be made in promoting key industries such as steel, building materials, nonferrous metals, chemicals, petrochemicals, electric power and coal to set goals and formulate peaking plans. We will accelerate the building of relevant market mechanisms, systems and capacities in terms of the national carbon emission trading scheme, launch online trading within the power industry as a pilot project and gradually expand market coverage, promote the transition from regional pilots of carbon emission trading to the national level, and leverage the role of the market to control and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

III. Enhancing the synergetic effect and promoting the integration of policies and regulations

7. Promoting the formulation and revision of relevant laws and regulations in a coordinated manner. By prioritizing response to climate change in building environmental rule of law, we will accelerate the process to introduce climate-related legislation and promote the promulgation and implementation of regulations on the administration for carbon emission trading. Addressing climate change will be included in the formulation and amendments of laws and regulations on ecological conservation, resource and energy utilization, territorial space development, and urban and rural planning and development. Provinces and cities will be encouraged, with favorable conditions, to formulate local regulations on climate change.

8. Promoting the integration of standards. We will strengthen the efforts in formulating and revising standards concerning climate change, develop a framework of climate change-related standards consisting of carbon emission reduction assessments and performance evaluation standards, low-carbon evaluation standards, technical specifications for the administration of emission accounting reports and verification, as well as other basic ecological and environmental standards, and improve and expand the ecological and environmental standard system. Efforts will also

be made in carrying out research on standards for the coordinated control of air pollutants from mobile sources and greenhouse gas emissions.

9. Enhancing the integration of environmental and economic policies.

We will accelerate the establishment of an environmental and economic policy framework for actively responding to climate change. With climate benefits as an important indicator, efforts shall be made to advance the integration of climate investment and financing with green finance policies, accelerate the development of climate investment and financing, and develop an inventory of key projects for the implementation of intended nationally determined contributions. We will launch local pilot projects for climate investment and financing and encourage and guide practices in climate investment and financing at the local level. We shall work to include submissions and allowances surrendered by key emitters in the national carbon emission trading market into corporate environmental information disclosure in accordance with the law, and violations of laws and regulations shall be recorded in the corporate environmental credibility system.

10. Advancing the synergy between pollution control and carbon reduction.

Priority shall be given to addressing the problems from the source, such as choosing energy alternatives over fossil fuel, optimizing raw material processing techniques and upgrading industrial structures.

Strict control will be imposed on the construction of high-energy-consuming and emission-intensive projects. Measures will be taken to vigorously optimize the transport structure, set off the shift from road transport towards railway transport, waterway transport and multimodal transportation, and promote energy-saving and new energy vehicles. We will advance the pollution control and comprehensive use of waste from livestock and poultry farming, strengthen environmental management in centralized disposal facilities for sewage and garbage, coordinate the control of greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxide and encourage all localities to actively explore innovative measures and effective mechanisms for the coordinated control of greenhouse gases and pollutants emissions to achieve synchronized reductions.

11. Promoting climate change adaption and ecological conservation and restoration in a coordinated manner. Priority will be given to adopting nature-based solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change, coordinating efforts to promote biodiversity protection, taking a holistic approach to conserving mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes, and grasslands, enhancing the capability to adapt to climate change, and improving the quality and stability of ecosystems. We will actively promote synergy between the ecological conservation and restoration of terrestrial ecosystems, water resources, oceans and coastal areas with climate change adaption, coordinate and promote risk assessments of

climate change in agriculture, forestry, water conservancy and other fields, as well as cities, coastal areas and ecologically vulnerable areas. Actions will be taken to adapt to climate change and build up climate resilience in key areas and regions.

IV. Solidifying the foundation and promoting the integration of institutions

12. Promoting the integration of statistical surveys. We will integrate surveys on greenhouse gas emissions into environmental statistics, improve the statistics filing system for climate action, and strengthen statistical surveys on the production, use, and import and export of ozone-depleting substances and F-gases. Efforts will be made to improve the working mechanism for compiling the lists of greenhouse gases at the national and local level, and enhancing the carbon emission accounting and verification systems at the national, local, enterprise, and project levels. Research will be carried out to include climate change response indicators in ecological conservation statistical surveys. We will promote the establishment of a mechanism that allows regular access to basic data on climate change and inter-departmental consultation mechanisms, strengthen coordination with energy consumption statistics, and improve the timeliness of data. Information sharing on energy-intensive and high-

emission projects will be advanced. The communiqué on ecology and environment will be further expanded to include progress in addressing climate change, and we will explore the establishment of a national communiqué system for response to climate change.

13. Promoting the integration of environmental assessment and management systems. We will include the requirements for addressing climate change into the “three lines and one list” system (i.e., an environmental zoning system defined by ecological conservation red lines, the boundaries for environmental quality, the ceilings on resource utilization and an access list based on environmental and ecological considerations). Measures will also be taken to promote local governments, industries and enterprises to meet the policy requirements of coal reduction and substitution, as well as greenhouse gas emission control, through environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental impact assessments. We will strive to incorporate climate change impact into environmental impact assessments. Studies will be organized in pilot projects for linking the management of greenhouse gas emissions with the pollutant permit regime in key industries. Efforts will be made to accelerate the transformation and upgrading of the national pollutant permit information management platform, and promote the unified collection, supplementation and cross-checking of the data on pollutant emissions and greenhouse gas emissions from enterprises and institutions.

14. Promoting the integration of monitoring systems. Efforts will be made to strengthen the monitoring of greenhouse gases, gradually incorporating it into the environmental and ecological monitoring system. In terms of key emission sources, pilot projects will be launched to monitor methane emissions from key industries such as oil and gas and coal mining. At the regional level, large-scale regional monitoring of non-carbon dioxide greenhouse gas emissions such as methane, HFCs, sulfur hexafluoride and perfluorocarbons will be explored. At the national level, efforts will be made to take advantage of satellite remote sensing and other means to monitor the classification, distribution and changes of land use as well as land cover (vegetation) classification and distribution to support the compilation of national greenhouse gases list.

15. Promoting the integration of oversight and law enforcement. Measures will be taken to strengthen the supervision and administration of data submission, verification and carbon emissions allowance surrender of key emitters in the national carbon emission trading market, and uniformly organize and implement supervision and law enforcement programs in accordance with laws and regulations. Enterprises will be encouraged to disclose information about greenhouse gas emissions, and support will be given to certain regions to take the lead in exploring a corporate carbon emission information disclosure system. We will strengthen the supervision of ecological and environmental protection in key areas such

as nature reserves, and areas designated within the ecological red lines, carry out monitoring and evaluation programs to check the effectiveness of ecosystem protection and restoration, and enhance the ecosystem's capacities in carbon sequestration and climate change adaptation.

16. Promoting the integration of inspections and performance evaluations. We will promote the inclusion of prominent issues detected in terms of responses to climate change and the progress of peaking carbon emissions into the scope of environmental disciplinary inspections, and we will make sure that follow-up measures will be taken to review the progress of the rectifications of the problems found during the inspections. Efforts will be made to strengthen the accountability for controlling greenhouse gas emissions. We will strive to list the control of greenhouse gas emissions as an integral part of the environmental performance evaluation system, and strengthen the evaluation of the progress in climate action. Local people's governments and heads of related departments that fail to reach the target tasks (of GHG reductions) will be admonished and held responsible, and the tasks for implementing climate action will be clearly and specifically assigned.

V. Enhancing innovations as the driving force and promoting the integration of pilot projects and demonstrations

17. Actively promoting the integration and innovation of existing pilot demonstrations. Measures will be taken to revise and improve regulations, evaluation standards and supporting policies of ecological demonstrations and low-carbon pilot projects, and make the integration of measures to control greenhouse gas emissions and enhance ecological conservation an important part of the pilot demonstrations. We will gradually drive the integration of pilot and demonstration projects in ecological and environmental conservation such as ecological demonstrations, low-carbon pilot projects and climate change adaption pilot projects to form policy synergy and integration effects.

18. Actively promoting key regions and industries to play a leading role in experimenting the feasibility of certain practices. Support will be given to regions and industries with favorable conditions to take the lead in peaking carbon emissions, promoting regions that have already reached carbon emissions peak to further reduce emissions, and supporting regions with a better foundation to explore and carry out pilot demonstrations of near-zero carbon emissions and carbon neutrality. Model cities and regions will be selected to carry out pilot demonstrations of “double reaching”, i.e., reaching the required air quality standard and reaching carbon emission

peaks. In industries such as steel, building materials, non-ferrous metals, pilot demonstrations will be rolled out to introduce integrated measures to synchronize the reduction of both air pollutant emissions and greenhouse gas emissions.

19. Actively promoting key technological innovations and engineering demonstrations. With a focus on climate action in the development of ecological and environmental science and technology, proactive measures will be taken to support national key research and development plans. Local governments will be encouraged to set up special funds to support technological innovation in response to climate change. Efforts will be made to promote the development of national key laboratories, major national scientific and technological infrastructure, provincial and ministerial-level key laboratories, engineering technology centers and other scientific and technological innovation platforms to respond to climate change. The national low-carbon technology catalog will be promulgated and the national comprehensive platform for the application of ecological and environmental science and technology will be leveraged to actively promote advanced and applicable technologies. Scaled-up demonstration projects of carbon dioxide capture, utilization and storage at every stage of the production will be promoted in an orderly manner. Efforts will be made to propel the development, demonstration and

promotion of technologies to synchronize the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the control of air pollution.

VI. Taking on the responsibilities of a big country and propelling the integration of international cooperation

20. Coordinating international cooperation and exchanges. We will actively participate in and lead international cooperation on climate change and other areas of ecological and environmental protection, accelerate the integration of existing mechanisms, and step up the joint development platforms for common benefits. Efforts will be made to coordinate and promote strategic dialogue and pragmatic cooperation with key countries and regions and strengthen cooperation with the United Nations and other multilateral institutions to establish long-term and institutional partnership in environmental conservation and climate action. Measures will be taken to deepen the regional cooperation on environmental conservation and climate action such as the Belt and Road Initiative and South-South Cooperation and implement the *China-ASEAN Collaborative Action on Climate Change and Air Quality Improvement*.

21. Coordinating the negotiation and implementation of international conventions. We will coordinate and promote international negotiations on

global responses to climate change, biodiversity protection, ozone layer protection, marine protection, and nuclear safety, and promote domestic compliance and implementation of the *Paris Agreement*, the *Montreal Protocol*, the *Convention on Biological Diversity* etc.

VII. Supporting measures

22. Strengthening organizational capabilities and leadership. The Ministry of Ecology and Environment will establish a mechanism for coordinating and strengthening responses to climate change and environmental protection, conduct regular checks on the progress made, strengthen follow-up evaluation, supervision and inspection, and coordinate and solve major problems encountered in the practices. We will strengthen the communication and collaboration with other members of the “national leading group for climate change, energy conservation and emission reduction”, and work together to press ahead with the key tasks for addressing climate change, energy conservation and emission reduction. All localities shall attach great importance to, make meticulous arrangements for, and improve the coordination of the mechanisms for coordinating and strengthening climate action and ecological and environmental protection to ensure effective implementation.

23. Strengthening capacity building. Efforts will be made to raise the awareness of party and government leaders and the competent authorities of ecology and environment at the local level to actively respond to climate change. Measures will be taken to build up the capabilities of personnel and technical support for climate change, increase financial support for research and development of technologies, statistics and accounting, publicity and training, and project implementation in the response to climate change. All localities shall incorporate funding for climate change into the fiscal budgets of governments at the corresponding level, and implement policies for securing funding. We will coordinate and promote the establishment of special funds for climate change and give full play to professional think tanks such as the National Ecological and Environmental Protection Expert Committee and the National Climate Change Expert Committee to provide support in the decision-making process.

24. Enhancing publicity campaigns and outreach. We will continue to engage publicity initiatives under the theme of the June 5th World Environment Day and the National Low-Carbon Day, make full use of routine news releases and the new media matrix of the government, coordinate the development of publicity and education on climate change and ecological protection, organize various forms of popular science programs and promote a green, low-carbon and thrifty lifestyle. Encourage

and promote large-scale campaigns to raise the awareness of carbon neutrality, and the best practices in achieving carbon neutrality will be promoted and replicated. We will actively introduce the philosophy of ecological civilization to the international community, vigorously boost the efficiency of green and low-carbon development and climate action, and share the "China story" of ecological civilization development.

Ministry of Ecology and Environment

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