

US-China Climate Roundtable Discussions Held in Washington, DC

Washington, DC November 19, 2014 | On November 13 and 14, the 2014 US-China Climate Roundtable, jointly sponsored by the International Fund for China's Environment (IFCE) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), was held at the U.S. Capitol Hill, Dirksen Senate Office Building and the Melrose Hotel in Washington, DC. The discussion was consisted of two events. Event 1 was a congressional briefing on China's low carbon transition and post-2020 emissions reduction. Event 2 was a climate roundtable discussion participated by US and China think tanks.

In the afternoon of November 13, Ana Unruh Cohen from Senator Markey's Office delivered the welcome remark for the briefing held in the Dirksen Senate Office Building. She emphasized that cooperation between US and China plays an important role in compacting global climate change. Durwood Zaelke, President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development, moderated the briefing. Professor Joanna Lewis from Science, Technology and International Affairs Program of Georgetown University, Dr. Li Junfeng, Director-General of National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC), and Dr. Zhang Ying, Senior Researcher of CASS Research Center for Sustainable Development (RCSD), respectively delivered a presentation.

Dr. Li Junfeng introduced China's energy transition. He summarized primary drivers of China's low carbon transition in the energy sector, and presented different scenarios of GHG emissions reduction of China. In addition, Dr. Li described China's position and principals in global climate change negotiation. He emphasized that China would address climate change in the context of sustainable development. Through technology innovation, development and transfer, China would seek a balance between climate mitigation and economic development under UNFCCC. Dr. Zhang Ying presented on China's coal future with respect to its impacts on climate change. She pointed out that China needed to take positive actions on coal consumption to achieve the latest carbon emissions reduction target, which was released during the APEC Summit. She also listed some important factors that China should consider to reduce coal consumption.

Since the congressional briefing was held at the second day of the joint announcement of new carbon emission reduction targets by President Xi Jinping and President Obama, over 50 congress members and assistants participated in this briefing. It indicated a significant shift of congressional interests on climate change in recent years.

The Climate Roundtable Discussion of US-China Climate Policy was held at the Melrose Hotel on November 14. Over 20 experts from World Wildlife Fund, International Fund for China's Environment, World Resources Institute, Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, The Nature Conservancy, Brookings Institution, US Environmental Protection Agency and the World Bank participated in the roundtable discussion.

Dr. He Ping, President of International Fund for China's Environment, delivered the welcome remark. Dr. He stated that the new US-China climate agreement reached at the APEC Summit remained controversial. He also pointed out that US and China, as two of the world's biggest emitters of GHGs, should strengthen the bilateral cooperation on global climate change. Michael Obeiter from the World Resources Institute presented the EPA's Clean Power Plant Proposed Rule, and its political and legal risks of implementation. Elliot Diringer from the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions introduced other key policies of the Obama Climate Action Plan that could deliver U.S. emissions reductions, including US methane strategy, HFCs strategy, and progress of international climate negotiation. Professor Mao Xianqiang from Beijing Normal University introduced the co-control of CO₂ and local air pollutants in China, with an emphasis on reduction targets and measures of PM, SO₂, NO_x and other pollutants.

After presentations, experts from US and China conducted wide exchanges and discussions on the new US-China climate agreement and potential policies to achieve the targets. The US-China Climate Roundtable improves US, particularly the congress' understandings on China's responses to global climate change. Meanwhile, it provides an open platform for exchanges and communication between think tank experts from both countries.



Congressional Briefing was held at the U.S. Capitol Hill, Dirksen Senate Office Building



Climate experts participated in the Congressional Briefing



Ana Unruh Cohen was delivering the welcome remark in the Congressional Briefing



The Climate Roundtable Discussion of US-China Climate Policy was hosted at the Melrose Hotel in Washington, DC on November 14, 2014



Discussion section during the Climate Roundtable Discussion of US-China Climate Policy