

Review and Outlook Chinese Civil Society Organizations at COP29



C Team

China Environmental Grantmakers Alliance (CEGA)

January 2025



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Preface

The 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from November 11 to 24, 2024. The Chinese government dispatched an official delegation of nearly 1,000 participants, while Chinese civil society organizations (CSOs) with observer status sent hundreds of representatives to share grassroots climate stories and practical experiences. Some CSOs also provided logistical and financial support to assist the Ministry of Ecology and Environment in establishing the China Pavilion.

As a key platform for presenting China's climate narrative, the China Pavilion hosted approximately 50 side events organized by the Department of Climate Change of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment. These events covered topics such as public participation, renewable energy, carbon markets, climate finance and technology, adaptation, international cooperation, local actions, and corporate actions.

Beyond the China Pavilion, Chinese CSOs actively engaged in discussions and initiatives within the Blue Zone and Green Zone. According to statistics, members of the China Environmental Grantmakers Alliance (CEGA) organized 15 side events at the UNFCCC venue or China Pavilion, 9 press conferences, 6 roundtables or expert seminars, and 4 exhibits. In addition to these in-person engagements, they utilized digital media—such as vlog production—to enhance climate communication and broaden public awareness of key conference themes.

As COP29 unfolded, its impact extended beyond the conference itself. The heightened attention to climate issues continued to resonate domestically. The devastating wildfires in California in January 2025 further underscored the destructive power of global warming, drawing widespread attention to the climate crisis.

In response to this growing urgency, a group of CSOs committed to climate issues has expressed a keen interest in strengthening their climate initiatives and preparing for COP30. Reviewing Chinese CSOs' engagement in COP29, alongside their achievements and challenges, is essential for stakeholders to understand better the opportunities and barriers these organizations face in advancing climate action and engaging in international climate governance.

To facilitate this reflection and planning, C Team and the China Environmental Grantmakers Alliance (CEGA) have jointly prepared this report *Review and Outlook: Chinese Civil Society Organizations at COP29*. The report is designed for CSOs, government agencies, research institutions, media, enterprises, and consulting firms, fostering a deeper understanding of the role and contributions of Chinese CSOs at COP29. It also provides a foundation for these organizations to assess their current engagement and strategize for future climate actions.

We believe that creating favorable conditions for Chinese CSOs to engage in international climate governance will not only enhance global understanding of the need for climate mitigation and adaptation of China as a developing country but also facilitate the exchange of grassroots climate action experiences from China with other developing countries.

We hope this report will contribute to building consensus among diverse stakeholders, fostering breakthroughs on critical climate issues at COP30, and alleviating the immense pressure of achieving global climate goals.

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1 Background

1.1 NGO Observers to the UNFCCC

In 1992, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with the primary aim of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations at a level that prevents "dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system." The Convention underscores that this level should allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, ensure food production is not threatened, and enable sustainable economic development.

To achieve these objectives, the Convention came into effect in 1994 and now has 198 parties, organized into five regional groups: Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Europe and Others. To facilitate implementation, the UNFCCC Secretariat was established in 1992. Initially based in Geneva, Switzerland, it relocated to Bonn, Germany, in 1996 and currently employs approximately 450 staff members representing over 100 countries.

Since 1995, the Conference of the Parties (COP) of UNFCCC—commonly referred to as the UN Climate Change Conference—has been held annually (except for 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic). As the Convention's governing body, the COP provides a platform for parties to assess its implementation, set and adjust national emission reduction targets, and advance international cooperation to combat climate change.

Recognizing the importance of inclusivity, the COP actively encourages and legally supports the participation of multiple stakeholders, including Parties, Observers, and Press.

Observer organizations, in particular, play a critical role in ensuring transparency, fostering knowledge exchange, and advocating for impactful climate action.

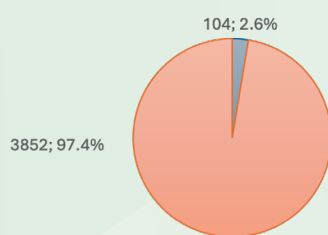
Observer organizations are categorized into three groups:

1. United Nations system and its specialized agencies
2. Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) admitted by the COP
3. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) admitted by the COP

As of 2024, a total of 3,956 NGOs have been admitted as observers to the UNFCCC. These organizations reflect a wide geographic distribution: 9.9% from Africa, 13.6% from Asia-Pacific, 1.8% from Eastern Europe, 8.2% from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 66.5% from Western Europe and Others (including countries such as the United States, Canada, Israel, and Australia). However, China accounts for only 2.6% of all observer organizations, with 104 admitted NGOs—74 from mainland China and 30 from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan.

The majority of NGO observers in the UNFCCC process are organized into constituencies, which are loose groups with broadly aligned interests. According to the UNFCCC Secretariat's classification, the top three constituencies of observers are Environmental NGOs (ENGO, 43%), Research and Independent NGOs (RINGO,

NGO Observers to the UNFCCC (2024)



■ Chinese NGO Observers ■ NGO Observers from Other Countries or Regions

Source: the UNFCCC official website, unfccc.int

23%), and Business and Industry NGOs (BINGO, 12%). Other constituencies include Youth NGOs (YOUNGO), Women and Gender Constituency (WGC), Farmers, Trade Union NGOs (TUNGO), Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPO), and Local Government and Municipal Authorities (LGMA). These align with the nine Major Groups identified in *Agenda 21*, adopted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and reaffirmed in *The Future We Want*, the outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). Additionally, the Secretariat provides limited support for faith-based groups, parliamentarians, and education and communication NGOs to participate in the conference.

During the COP sessions, observers engage in various activities, including monitoring negotiation agendas, showcasing research and actions, and applying to host side events, exhibitions, press conferences, and advocacy activities. Key sessions such as the opening, plenary meetings, contact group meetings, and the closing plenary are open to observers. Observers may also submit position papers in response to negotiation topics and attend Townhall meetings, where they can pose critical questions and offer recommendations to COP Bureau members and the UNFCCC Executive Secretary.

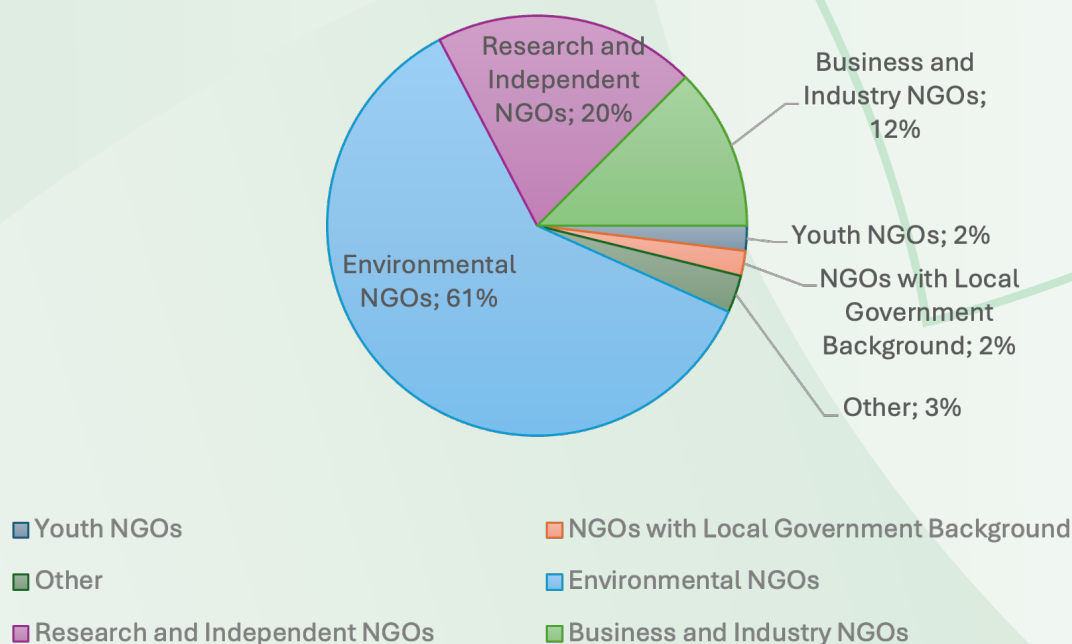
Side events and exhibitions are popular modes of observer engagement. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) recognized side events as an essential part of the UNFCCC process and an important tool for engaging observers in knowledge-sharing, networking, and exploring actionable options for meeting the climate challenges, side events are vital tools in the UNFCCC process, enabling knowledge sharing, networking, and the exploration of practical solutions to climate challenges. Observers may co-host side events with Parties or apply for conference meeting rooms managed by the Secretariat. Applications for side events are assessed based on their alignment with the following thematic areas:

1. Mitigation, including response measures
2. Adaptation, including loss and damage
3. Means of implementation and support
4. Integrated and holistic approaches
5. Other unique perspectives related to UNFCCC

Advocacy activities offer another means of participation. Interested organizations must submit applications online by 10 a.m. local time the day before the event. These activities require approval from the UNFCCC Secretariat and the United Nations Security and Safety Division and are conducted in designated areas.

Among the 104 Chinese NGO observers, 63 are environmental organizations, 21 are research and independent institutions, 13 are business and industry NGOs, 2 are youth NGOs, 2 are local government-affiliated NGOs, and 3 fall into other categories. This diversity underscores their potential to address varied aspects of climate governance, from grassroots action to policy advocacy. For a complete list of organizations, refer to the Appendix.

Chinese NGO Observers to the UNFCCC (2024)



1.2 About COP29

COP29 was held from November 11 to 24, 2024, in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. With the theme "**In Solidarity for a Green World**", the conference aimed to advance two key pillars: "**Raising Ambition**" and "**Facilitating Action**". These efforts focused on encouraging countries to adopt more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and mobilizing greater climate finance.

The conference agenda featured several thematic days following the opening meetings and a two-day World Leaders Climate Action Summit. The thematic days were organized as follows:

- November 14: Finance, Investment and Trade Day
- November 15: Energy/Peace, Relief and Recovery Day
- November 16: Science, Technology and Innovation / Digitalization Day
- November 18: Human Development / Children and Youth / Health / Education Day
- November 19: Food, Agriculture and Water Day
- November 20: Urbanization / Transport / Tourism Day
- November 21: Nature & Biodiversity / Indigenous People / Gender Equality / Oceans and Coastal Zones Day

The final stage of COP29 focused on negotiation sessions, where key agreements and decisions were debated and finalized.

THEMATIC PROGRAMME

Monday 11 Nov.	Tuesday 12 Nov.	Wednesday 13 Nov.	Thursday 14 Nov.	Friday 15 Nov.	Saturday 16 Nov.
COP29 opening	World Leaders Climate Action Summit	World Leaders Climate Action Summit	Finance, Investment and Trade	Energy / Peace, Relief and Recovery	Science, Technology and Innovation / Digitalization Day
Sunday 17 Nov.	Monday 18 Nov.	Tuesday 19 Nov.	Wednesday 20 Nov.	Thursday 21 Nov.	Friday 22 Nov.
Rest Day	Human Development / Children and Youth / Health / Education	Food, Agriculture and Water	Urbanization / Transport / Tourism	Nature & Biodiversity / Indigenous People / Gender Equality / Oceans and Coastal Zones	Final Negotiations

Source : Observer Handbook for COP29 by UNFCCC Secretariat

The main venue for COP29 was the Blue Zone, where climate negotiations, side events, exhibits, press conferences, and reporting activities took place. Access to the Blue Zone required registration and credentials issued by the UNFCCC Secretariat. In addition, the conference featured a Green Zone, managed by the host country, which was open to the public and hosted diverse exhibitions, meetings, and cultural exchanges.

According to UNFCCC statistics, 54,148 participants attended COP29 events in the Blue Zone, categorized as follows:

Category	Participants	Notes
193 Parties	26858	Includes 14,074 Party delegates and 12,784 Party Overflow representatives. For example, guest speakers invited by China's Ministry of Ecology and Environment received Party Overflow credentials.
UN System and Specialized Agencies	1989	Includes the UNFCCC Secretariat units and bodies, specialized agencies, related organizations, and overflow representatives.
106 Inter-governmental Organizations	925	By 2024, China had three IGO observers: the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR), and the New Development Bank.

Category	Participants	Notes
1,776 NGOs	8356	By 2024, there were 104 observer NGOs from China in total. It is estimated about half of them attended COP29.
Marrakech Global Climate Action Partnership	306	Formed at COP22 to unite stakeholders in key climate action areas and inspire stronger ambitions and actions.
940 Media Outlets	2220	Media representatives could apply for credentials to attend and report.
Others	13494	Includes conference invitees, host country guests, temporary passes, technical, support staff, volunteers, security, and secretariat.
Total	54148	

As noted by Carbon Brief, the largest delegations at COP29 came from Azerbaijan, the host nation; Brazil, the host of the upcoming COP; Turkey; the UAE, the host of the previous COP; and China. It is estimated that approximately 1,500 representatives from China, including party delegates and NGO observers, participated in COP29.

COP29 reached a balanced package of outcomes known as the Baku Climate Solidarity Pact, addressing critical issues such as the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on Climate Finance, the international carbon market mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA):

- A target was established for developed countries to provide at least \$300 billion annually to developing nations by 2035. The "Baku-to-Belém \$1.3 Trillion Roadmap" was launched, calling for a global increase in climate financing to developing countries, aiming to reach at least \$1.3 trillion annually by 2035.
- Consensus was reached on the implementation guidelines for the carbon market mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. This ended nearly a decade of negotiations and provided a unified quality framework for global carbon trading. The framework aims to enhance transparency and credibility in carbon markets while reducing the costs of achieving emission reduction targets through international cooperation.
- Agreement was achieved on the standards for setting indicators for the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), the expected outcomes of the UAE-Belém Working Group, and future workflows. The conference also launched the "Baku Adaptation Roadmap" and established the "Baku High-Level Dialogue on Adaptation." These measures are designed to track and support the expansion of adaptation financing.

- The Loss and Damage Fund was officially launched, with operations set to begin in 2025. The fund is expected to provide substantial financial support to countries most affected by climate change. Current pledges for the fund total \$760 million.
- Agreement was reached on enhancing transparency in climate actions through the establishment of the Baku Global Climate Transparency Platform, which encourages Parties to submit Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) ahead of schedule. This initiative aims to strengthen international trust in the progress of national climate actions.

Despite these accomplishments, COP29 faced several challenges and left important issues unresolved. Disagreements over the NCQG highlighted deepening divisions between developed and developing countries, further complicating efforts to mobilize climate finance. While adaptation received increased political attention, the funding remained inadequate, and discussions on National Adaptation Plans were postponed. Progress on mitigation was also limited, as key issues such as the follow-up to the Global Stocktake, the Mitigation Work Program, and the Just Transition Work Program were deferred to 2025.

The tensions at COP29 were further underscored, when on November 22, the Climate Action Network (CAN), representing over 1,900 civil society organizations (CSOs), awarded the "Fossil of the Day" to Azerbaijan. Fossil of the Day Awards are given by CAN to the countries who are "doing the most to achieve the least" and "doing their best to be the worst" in terms of the progress in climate negotiations and climate action. CAN criticize the host country for not understanding the gravity of the Presidency or for that matter the value of civil society. This criticism pressured Azerbaijan to take more proactive measures, which helped to advance negotiations during the extended sessions of the conference.

1.3 About the China Pavilion

Since COP17 in Durban, South Africa, in 2011, the Chinese government has hosted the China Pavilion at the annual COP conferences. Designed to broaden engagement in climate governance, these two-week side events aim to mobilize government departments, research institutions, enterprises, and CSOs to participate and comprehensively showcase China's climate policies and actions. Over the past decade, the China Pavilion has played a pivotal role in expanding climate governance discussions from the government level to broader societal engagement.

Each November, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment publishes the White Paper *Responding to Climate Change: China's Policies and Actions*, which highlights China's annual progress on climate action and articulates its stance and proposals for the current COP session. As a key reference document, it provides guidance for the organizers of the China Pavilion's side events, helping shape discussions and communications. It also guides the organizers' regular work.

Since 2013, the Vanke Foundation has provided long-term support for the establishment of the China Pavilion and its side events at the Conference of Parties. In 2023, additional organizations, including the Alibaba Foundation and the China Investment Association, joined the efforts to support the pavilion and its activities.

During COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, the China Pavilion hosted ten thematic days, including Public Day, Summit Day, New Energy Day, Carbon Market Day, Cooperation Day, Digitalization Day, Climate Finance and Technology Day, Adaptation Day, Enterprise Day, and Local Government Day. Under these themes, approximately 50 side events were held, demonstrating China's diverse engagement in global climate governance.

Schedule of Events for China Pavilion at COP29 (Chinese CSOs participated in the organization of the meetings highlighted in green).

Date	Nov 11	Nov 12	Nov 13	Nov 14	Nov 15	Nov 16	Nov 18	Nov 19	Nov 20	Nov 21
	Public Day	Summit Day	New Energy Day	Carbon Market Day	Collaboration Day	Digitalization Day	Climate Finance and Technology Day	Adaptation Day	Enterprise Day	Local Day
1	Ecological Civilization and Beautiful China Practice		International Zero Carbon Island Cooperation Initiative Launching Conference	Innovation and Management Practice of China's Carbon Market	High-Level Forum South-South Cooperation on Climate Change	Green AI & AI for Climate Resilience	"Climate Investment and Financing: Financing and Integrating Wisdom to Stimulate Innovation" Agenda	Actively Guard against Climate Risks and Building Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities	China's State-owned Enterprises Act on Climate Change Agenda	Responding to Climate Change: Tianjin's Actions
2	Global Alliance of Universities (GAUC) 'Climate X' High Level Event	Global Enterprises for Building a Green Belt and Road Initiative & the First Yabuli CEF Sustainable Development Annual Conference	Workshop on China Energy Transition and New Energy Development & Launch of "China Energy Transformation Outlook2024" and Other Publications	International Cooperation on Energy Conservation, Emission Reduction and Environmental Governance		Digital Transformation and Global Climate Governance	Advancing Climate Action for the Implementation of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda		Developing New Quality Productive Forces: Exploring New Ways for Chinese Enterprises to Cope with Climate Change	Developing New Quality Productive Forces and Advance the Transformation to Green and Low-Carbon Development in Chongqing
3	Advancing Transition Finance and Cross-Border Green Financing - Engaging the Public to Achieve a Net-Zero Economy		International Cooperation in New Energy Science and Technology Innovation - Application Cases of Frontier Science and Technology	Building High quality Chinese Certified Emission Reduction (CCER) Market		BRI South- South Cooperation on Climate Change and Green Opening Up Cases and Practices	Sustainable Consumption - Global Perspective and China's Actions	The Practice, Innovation and Cooperation on Green and Low Carbon Technologies	Active Actions on Methane Emission Control in China	Empowering Green Value Chains, Contributing to New Productive Forces
4	Youth Action for the Future of the World	Collaborative Promotion of Pollution Reduction and Carbon Reduction, Promoting Low Carbon Transformation of Industries	Hydrogen Powering Climate Action: Towards a Clean Energy Future with Net-Zero Emissions	Green and Low Carbon Development of China Power Industry	China's Action on Energy Conservation and Carbon Reduction	Standardization Facilitates Implementation of Climate Actions	Harnessing Climate Action to Reduce Plastic Pollutions "Bamboo as a Substitute for Plastic" Initiative	The 10th Global Climate Change Think Tank Forum and the China Germany "Second Track" Dialogue Results Conference.	Global and Chinese Efforts in Advancing the Circular Economy to Combat Climate Change	Actions and Progress for Addressing Climate Change in Beijing
5	Public Participation Supporting the Construction of a Beautiful China	Coordination of Industry, Climate and Trade Policies	Climate Action: From Climate Science to Opportunities to Develop New Energy	Tell the Story of China's Response to Climate Change and Create New Advantage in Addressing Climate Change with New Quality Productivity	Global Climate Governance and International Cooperation	wDialogue with the World to Craft a Sustainable Ecosystem for a Net Zero Future	Green Low Carbon Industry and Architecture in the Vision of Carbon Neutrality: Technological Breakthroughs and Policy Dialogue on the 3060 Path	China's New Sustainable Development Practice Towards Carbon Neutrality "Evaluation Report on The Sustainable Development of China (2024)" Blue Book Publish	Responding to the Climate Change, Chinese Civil Society Organizations in Action	
6	Women's Power in Sustainable Development		Green and Low-Carbon Development of C China's Automobiles					Communication for Climate Films & "Green Action for A Better Future" Award Ceremony		

Organizers and Co-Organizers of the China Pavilion Side Events

The main organizers and co-organizers of the China Pavilion's side events include the following types of entities:

-
- **National Ministries and Affiliated Institutions:** Examples include the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, the Department of International Exchange and Cooperation of the State Council Counselor's Office, the National Energy Conservation Center of the National Development and Reform Commission, the National Forestry and Grassland Administration, the State Administration for Market Regulation, the National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation, the China International Development Knowledge Center, and the China Center for International Economic Exchanges.
 - **Local or Regional Governments and their Departments:** Examples include the Shandong Provincial Government, Yantai Municipal Government, Huzhou Municipal Government, the Guangdong and Hubei Provincial Departments of Ecology and Environment, the Beijing, Tianjin, Shenzhen, Chongqing, and Shanghai Municipal Bureaus of Ecology and Environment, the Hong Kong Environment and Ecology Bureau, and the Hong Kong Financial Development Council.
 - **Enterprises and Business Groups:** Examples include the China Energy Engineering Group, China Power Construction Corporation, China Energy Conservation and Environmental Protection Group, Alibaba, and the Yabuli China Entrepreneurs Forum.
 - **Mainland and Hong Kong CSOs and International Groups:** Examples include the All-China Environment Federation, China Environmental Protection Foundation, the China Association for NGO Cooperation, the China Federation of Industrial Economics, the China Electricity Council, the China Enterprise Confederation, the China Circular Economy Association, the Guangdong Cleaner Production Association, the Global Environmental Institute, the Vanke Foundation, the SEE Foundation, C Team, Polar Hub, Friends of the Earth (HK), the Global Sustainable Development Planner Association, and the Belt and Road Green Development International Alliance.
 - **Intergovernmental Organizations:** For example, the International Bamboo and Rattan Organization.
 - **International NGOs:** Examples include Greenpeace, the Environmental Defense Fund, the Rocky Mountain Institute, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, the World Resources Institute, and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation.
 - **Academic Institutions and Youth Organizations:** Examples include Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Sun Yat-sen University, the Institute of Carbon Neutrality of the Peking University, the Institute of Climate Change and Sustainable Development of the Tsinghua University, and the Global Alliance of Universities on Climate.
 - **Media Outlets:** Examples include China News Service, Phoenix TV, and the *China Sustainability Tribune*.
-

Civil Society Organizations' Participation in the China Pavilion

Nearly half of the side events at the China Pavilion were organized, co-organized, or assisted by CSOs. These events covered a wide range of topics, including youth action, women's empowerment, public participation, low-carbon technology, South-South cooperation, climate communication, corporate engagement, sustainable consumption, and the circular economy. Examples of these events include:

- "Youth Action for the Future of the World"
- "Women's Power in Sustainable Development"
- "Public Participation Supporting the Construction of a Beautiful China"
- "International Cooperation on Energy Conservation, Emission Reduction and Environmental Governance"
- "BRI South-South Cooperation on Climate Change and Green Opening Up Cases and Practices"
- "Dialogue with the World to Craft a Sustainable Ecosystem for a Net Zero Future"
- "The Practice, Innovation, and Cooperation on Green and Low Carbon Technologies"
- "Sustainable Consumption – Global Perspective and China's Actions"
- "Communication for Climate Films"
- "Empowering Green Value Chains, Contributing to New Productive Forces"
- "Global and Chinese Efforts in Advancing the Circular Economy to Combat Climate Change"
- "Responding to the Climate Change, Chinese Civil Society Organizations in Action"

Highlights of CSOs' Contributions

These events vividly demonstrated the diverse perspectives, policy responsiveness, and implementation capacity of social forces in advancing climate goals. Many discussions focused on solving practical challenges faced by stakeholders at various levels. Through the China Pavilion, experiences and articulated needs were effectively conveyed and disseminated in a bottom-up approach, contributing to broader climate governance dialogues.

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Chinese Civil Society Organizations at COP29

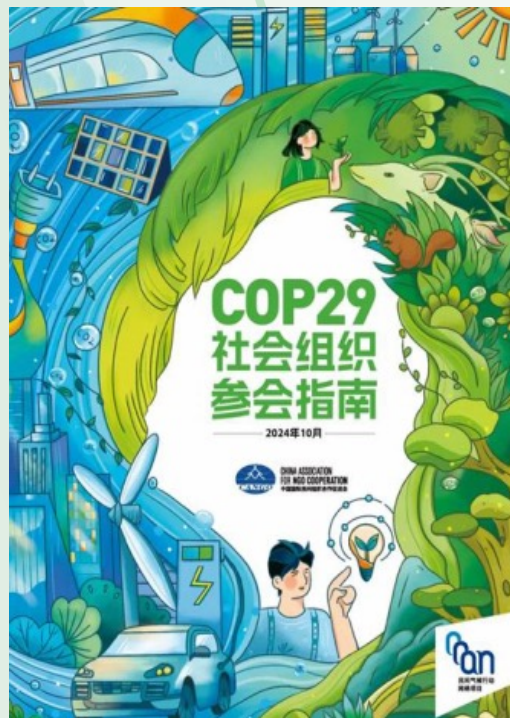
2.1 Overview

As with every COP, the participation of CSOs in COP29 followed a three-phase process: before, during, and after the event.

Before COP29, several climate organizations and platform institutions conducted capacity-building and seminar activities for CSOs. These efforts introduced international climate governance knowledge to the public and stakeholders, helping organizations prepare for COP29, and enhancing their understanding of negotiation priorities and expected outcomes.

For instance, the China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO) focuses on creating an "international hub" and a "platform for going global." Empowering domestic CSOs supported their participation in international affairs and encouraged them to "step out" onto the global stage. In mid-2024, CANGO, in collaboration with the Vanke Foundation and C Team, launched the "COP Together" project. Through workshops and pre-COP meetings, the project assisted eligible organizations in applying for observer status with the UNFCCC, coordinated participation quotas for first-time attendees, and supported their involvement in side events and exhibitions during COP29.

Similarly, the Greenovation Hub (GHub) tracked the UNFCCC's 60th Subsidiary Body Meetings (SB60) held in Bonn, Germany, in June 2024, summarizing key issues and disagreements for its readership. In October, it organized a pre-COP seminar titled "Toward COP29: Bridging the Climate Finance Gap and Accelerating Action". Representatives from universities think tanks, and CSOs attended to discuss the priorities and anticipated outcomes of COP29 in Baku.



Media partners also played a role in preparing organizations for COP29. For example, The Paper hosted the seminar "Looking Ahead to COP29: How to Accelerate Action Amid Intensifying Climate Impacts" through its climate-focused monthly journal Critical Point. Phoenix TV partnered with international and domestic NGOs to organize the "Zero-Carbon Mission International Climate Summit: Climate Ambition and Global Action" on the eve of COP29. These initiatives helped certain CSOs deepen their understanding of COP29 and enhanced their intent to participate in international climate governance dialogues.

During COP29, the participation of Chinese CSOs could generally be categorized into three levels. At the highest level were think tank NGOs, which closely tracked and contributed to negotiations. Their involvement included compiling daily briefs, writing observation reports and analytical articles, and proposing policy recommendations and action strategies. These organizations, though few, demonstrated strong expertise due to their long-term engagement in climate negotiations.

The second level comprised action-oriented NGOs or hub organizations. These groups used COP29 as a platform to advance specific agendas by hosting or participating in meetings, exhibits, and advocacy campaigns. Many organizations launched initiatives, published research reports, or presented case studies during the conference. These groups represented the backbone of Chinese CSOs' engagement in climate governance and international dialogues.

At the foundational level, organizations attended primarily for observation, exchange, and learning. Some of these groups actively engaged in self-media coverage, sharing their experiences through articles and vlogs. Upon returning to China, they participated in public forums and shared their COP29 takeaways with a broader domestic audience. The involvement of some grassroots organizations was

supported by hub organizations and funders, such as CANGO, the All-China Environment Federation, the China Environmental Protection Foundation, and the Vanke Foundation.



According to incomplete statistics, during COP29, members of the Civil Climate Action Network (CCAN), coordinated by CANGO, organized at least 18 UN/China Pavilion side events, 4 press conferences, and 4 exhibits in the Blue Zone. They also actively participated in discussions at pavilions hosted by other nations and international organizations, addressing topics such as methane reduction, coal transition, renewable energy targets, climate finance, resilience, public health, South-South cooperation, talent development for carbon neutrality, and climate education.

Similarly, members of the China Environmental Grantmakers Alliance (CEGA) hosted 15 UN/China Pavilion side events, 9 press conferences, 6 roundtable discussions, and 4 exhibits during COP29. They contributed to advancing discussions on mitigation, adaptation, gender, South-South cooperation, and climate philanthropy. Additionally, CEGA members produced vlogs to disseminate COP29 highlights, amplifying public awareness of the conference's progress.

Furthermore, the GAUC Pavilion, which was established by the Global Alliance of Universities on Climate (GAUC) in collaboration with Tsinghua University, and the Solutions Pavilion, which was jointly set up by C Team and Biosphere 3, organized a series of side events and exchange activities throughout the two-week conference. These activities facilitated in-depth dialogue and discussions on climate issues from multiple perspectives.

After COP29, some organizations hosted review and sharing sessions to reflect on the outcomes and plan future climate actions leading up to COP30. In December 2024, CANGO and the ClientEarth Beijing Office co-hosted the seminar "**From COP29 to COP30: Supporting Chinese Environmental NGOs' Participation in the International Climate Governance Mechanism**". The China Development Brief also organized the "**Facing Challenges, Seizing**

Opportunities: How NGOs Can Participate in Climate Action" forum under the theme of promoting the deep engagement of Chinese CSOs in the climate field. This forum aimed to foster collaboration between international NGOs and domestic organizations in addressing new climate challenges.

At the forum, Professor Teng Fei, Deputy Director of the Institute of Environment and Energy at Tsinghua University, delivered a keynote speech titled "**Global Climate Governance Through the Lens of COP29**". The C Team representative shared reflections on Chinese CSOs' participation in COP29 and outlined future directions for engagement.

These concerted efforts before, during, and after COP29 underscore the evolving and increasingly impactful role of Chinese CSOs in international climate governance.

2.2 Modes of Engagement with Examples

2.2.1 Tracking and Advancing Negotiation Processes

The *Observer Handbook for COP29* compiled by the UNFCCC Secretariat outlines various ways for observers to engage in the official proceedings. The first listed method is: tracking the negotiation process and providing targeted, substantive recommendations to Parties. This approach ensures transparency in the complex intergovernmental process, raises public awareness and improves access to information.

Chinese think tanks, such as the **Institute for Global Decarbonization Progress (iGDP)**, **Greenovation Hub (GHub)**, and **Abundant**

Climate Action Institute, were prominent players at COP29. These organizations actively tracked key climate negotiations by producing daily briefs, writing analytical articles, and formulating actionable recommendations. Beyond this, they engaged in hosting thematic side events and informal discussions, fostering dialogue on critical issues, and helping participants access timely information. These activities also contributed to promoting agenda awareness and advocating for policies. Their engagement at COP29 includes:

Organization	Activities & Meetings	Briefs & Articles
iGDP	<p>Side Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's Power in Sustainable Development • Superpollutant Action in Agriculture • Global methane leadership: A Roadmap to International Methane Action by COP31 • Accelerating Methane Reduction: Subnational Challenges and Solutions • Subnational Climate Action – A Civil Society Dialogue among China, Europe, and The U.S. • Engaging New Players in Climate Action to Make Collective Impact • Empowering Change: The Role of NGOs & Businesses in Forging Public Health & Climate Change Solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baku Today With the opening of COP29 approaching, these five key issues will shape the future of climate • Baku Today Reducing non-CO2 greenhouse gas emissions is urgent • Baku Today COP29 releases the world's first nitrous oxide assessment report, highlighting urgent need for attention on the third largest GHG emission reductions • Baku Today Hottest year on record: COP29 tracks progress on global cooling commitments • Baku Today With a new round of NDC submissions on the horizon, how can COP29 drive countries to raise their ambitions? • Baku Today COP29 negotiation results underwhelming, climate action still requires effort <p>(The above is partial)</p>
GHub	<p>Side Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towards Azerbaijan Baku COP29: Multiple Stakeholders Bridging the Finance Gap Accelerating Action Implementation • Scaling Up Zero-Carbon, Climate-Resilient Financing Between China, Central Asia, and Beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towards Azerbaijan Baku COP29 the 60th Sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SB60) Observation • Baku COP29 An Overview of Global Climate Governance • Baku COP29 Focus and Divergence at the Climate Finance COP • Baku COP29 First Week NCQG Structure Reflects Core Differences, Many Agendas Left for the Second Week • GHub COP29 Summary The Challenging Achievement of Climate Finance Goals: Multilateral Governance Depends on Ambition and Action
Abundant Climate Action Institute	<p>Side Event: Shape the Future for Climate Action in Asia</p> <p>3 Abundant Coffee Corner Talks to facilitate interactive dialogues between climate policy experts and entrepreneurs to efficiently track negotiation highlights, and explore future possibilities for invigorating climate action in Asia with entrepreneurs and philanthropic leaders.</p> <p>Dinner Reception: New Momentum for Climate Impact in Asia</p>	<p>Produced 13 editions of Daily Briefs in collaboration with Seaside Conservation during COP29.</p>

2.2.2 Hosting Events and Driving Agendas

Every year, COP serves as the highest-level and largest-scale global conference on climate issues. Many action-oriented NGOs take this opportunity to connect with stakeholders, establish collaborations, showcase their research findings, summarize practical experiences, and present case studies through side events, exhibits, and press conferences. These activities also facilitate broader public dissemination of their work.

The UNFCCC Secretariat highlights that press conferences allow observers to utilize the media's extensive reach to convey their views and advocate for change. This platform is instrumental in shaping public discourse and influencing climate policy on a global stage.

Examples of Chinese action-oriented NGOs' engagement are as follows:

Organization	Side Event / Press Conference	Exhibit / Communication Activities	Supporting Activities
CANGO	<p>China Pavilion Side Event: Responding to Climate Change, Chinese Civil Society Organizations in Action</p> <p>UNFCCC Side Event: Engaging New Players in Climate Action to Make Collective Impact</p> <p>Press Conference: CSOs' Participation in Sustainable Development and Climate Governance</p> <p>Press Conference: The Initiatives of CSOs and Enterprises Integration to Support Public Engagement in Sustainable Development</p>	<p>Exhibit: Youth Visions for a Sustainable Future: Empowering Children as Stewards of Gender-Equal Climate Action:</p>	<p>Assisted CCAN members to attend COP29 and host exhibits; co-initiated COP Together and supported Chinese NGOs to apply for Observer Status with the UNFCCC.</p>
Vanke Foundation	<p>Participated in or supported 5 side events at the China Pavilion, organized one side event and 2 press conferences at the UNFCCC venue, and spoke at the Aisa Climate Solutions Pavilion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Participation Supporting the Construction of a Beautiful China Dialogue with the World to Craft a Sustainable Ecosystem for a Net Zero Future Empowering Green Value Chains, Contributing to New Productive Forces Responding to Climate Change, Chinese Civil Society Organizations in Action People-Centered Transition to a Circular Economy: Creating the Enabling Factors Pathways for Methane Reduction: Leveraging Technology and Economic Opportunities in the Waste and Agricultural Sectors 	<p>Exhibit: Zero Waste in the Forbidden City, Snow Leopard Conservation on Mount Everest, Construction of the Dameisha Carbon-Neutral Community, Black Soldier Fly Processing of Food Waste, and The Health Benefits of Little Beans</p> <p>Shooting and release of 4 vlogs titled #Exploring COP29 with VKF</p>	<p>Assisted the MEE to establish the China Pavilion</p> <p>Co-initiated "COP Together" and supported C Team to implement it</p> <p>Supported to release "Impact Report: Climate Philanthropy Case Studies" by CEGA and "2024 'Act towards a Beautiful China' Corporate Climate Action Cases" by C Team and CECC</p> <p>Supported Abundant Climate Action Academy in hosting three Abundant Coffee Corner Talks, facilitating in-depth dialogues in a small setting to interpret the international climate process</p>
SEE Foundation / Society of Entrepreneurs and Ecology	<p>Side Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responding to Climate Change, Chinese Civil Society Organizations in Action Green and Beautiful Bay Area, Low Carbon for A Better Future Empowering Change: The Role of NGOs & Businesses in Forging Public Health & Climate Change Solution Collaborative Green Supply Chains: Joint Climate Responsibility for a Zero-Carbon Future DLDD MITIGATION – Down to Earth Press Conference: Progress in Fostering Climate Action among Civil Society and Business Actors by Chinese NGOs 	<p>Exhibit: The Achievement of Climate Action by Chinese NGOs and Enterprises</p>	

Organization	Side Event / Press Conference	Exhibit / Communication Activities	Supporting Activities
Shan Shui Conservation Center	<p>Spoke at meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Climate Fund Pavilion “Triple Renewable Energy Capacity Targets” – sharing the report on “the Opportunities and Challenges of Synergistic Development of Renewable Energy and Biodiversity in China” “Multi-Stakeholder Efforts to Promote Urban Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation” “Engaging New Players in Climate Action to Make Collective Impact” 	Exhibit: Postcards made from wildlife photos captured by infrared cameras, a set of stamps featuring species from different regions of concern, and peripheral cultural and creative products such as Tibetan fox felt handmade by Tibetan women from Jiatang Grassland.	
Shen Lan (Green Anhui) Environmental Protection Center	<p>Spoke at meetings:</p> <p>China Pavilion “Responding to Climate Change, Chinese Civil Society Organizations in Action”</p> <p>Asian Development Bank Side Event “Decarbonization and Electrification of the Transport Sector in Southeast Asia and India”</p> <p>The Institute of Japan Electrical Engineers “Decarbonization of the Transport Sector and the Role of Alternative Fuels”</p>		
Coshare Environment	<p>Press Conferences:</p> <p>Sub-national Action on Climate Change and Cultural Heritage Protection</p> <p>Renewable Energy Supporting Rural Development</p> <p>Side Event:</p> <p>Lessons and Experiences Sharing on Transitions from Coal: Case Studies from Coal Regions</p>		
C Team	<p>Co-Organized or Assisted 7 side events, 3 Press Conferences, and 1 Solutions Pavilion.</p> <p>Released or Reported:</p> <p>2024 “Act towards a Beautiful China” Corporate Climate Action Cases</p> <p>Progress Report of China Corporate Climate Action</p> <p>“Together We Act” Digital Platform for Chinese Dual-Carbon Talents</p> <p>“CarbonSpeak” New Media Program</p> <p>Evaluation Report on the Sustainable Development of China (2024)</p>	Exhibit: Corporate Climate Action South-South Collaboration (Solar Lighting and Solar Media Educational Products by a Chinese Social Enterprise)	Assisted six NGOs, including the China Building Energy Efficiency Association and the China Renewable Energy Engineering Institute, in applying for observer status, and supported the participation of six NGOs, including the Beijing Zero Waste Circular Economy Industry Promotion Association and CCM CSR Promotion Center.

2.2.3 Sharing Knowledge and Building Network

Some climate and environmental organizations with observer status have incorporated attending COP conferences into their annual work plans. At COP29, dozens of observer NGOs sent representatives to Baku to participate in discussions and networking, including the Chongqing Renewable Energy Society, Beijing Global Village Environmental Culture Center, Green Zhejiang, Gansu Green Camel Bell Environmental Development Center, Guangdong Earth Watch Environmental Protection Service Center, and Shanghai Qingyue Environmental Information Service Center.

Taking the China Youth Climate Action Network (CYCAN) as an example, this youth organization sends a delegation to the COP every year to observe and engage closely with the conference. In 2024, CYCAN supported seven young representatives to attend COP29 in Baku. These young delegates tracked daily negotiation agendas across various meeting rooms, following the latest negotiation highlights. They also explored over one hundred pavilions to learn from the experiences and practices of professionals across countries and fields. Additionally, they shared Chinese youth initiatives with representatives from other countries.

Beyond observing and engaging in discussions, the youth delegates documented their experiences in a series of articles detailing their observations from COP29. On November 15–16, CYCAN youth showcased innovative practices by Chinese youth in education, adaptation, and community actions at the shared UNFCCC venue. They actively exchanged ideas with peers from other countries, fostering lively discussions on advancing climate action globally.

Observation Articles by CYCAN Youth Delegates at COP29

Article	Author
How Did the United States Address Climate Anxiety Before Trump Withdrew from the Group for the Second Time?	ZHENG Yunxiao, CYCAN Climate Boardgame Organizer
At COP29, Which Country Pavilions Are Worth Visiting?	Ditto
Does Ukraine Still Care about Climate Change Amidst the War?	LI Zirong, graduate student in Public Administration, Fudan University, member of CYCAN Youth Working Group
Is Blended Financing an Excuse for Developed Countries to Shirk Responsibility?	Ditto
Loss and damage funds have a new name on COP29?	CAO Chunkai, PhD candidate in Anthropology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Camper of the 2024 CYCAN Climate Fieldwork Research Camp
Is “Gender” Mainstream Enough at COP29?	Ditto
From the New Round of NDC Submissions, We Can See the Division and Collaboration of Global Climate Governance	CHEN Haoran, graduate student in Climate Change, University of Copenhagen, member of the CYCAN Youth Working Group, and Camper of the 2024 CYCAN Climate Fieldwork Research Camp
How Will Re-electrification Reshape the World’s Energy and Economic Prospects	Ditto
Methane, Which Has Experienced Four COPs, Has Become a Landing Point for Emission Reduction	SHANG Xinshu, student of Shenzhen Academy for International Exchange, member of CYCAN Youth Working Group

Some NGOs that had not yet applied for or were awaiting approval for observer status participated in COP29 with the support of partner organizations. These include the Amity Foundation, Shanghai Jinsinan Financial Research Institute, Hunan Ecological Conservation Volunteer Service Federation, Hubei Yangtze River Conservation Foundation,

Guangdong Zhushui Yunshan Nature Conservation Foundation, Fujian Green Home Environmental Friendship Center, and the Shenzhen Longhua District Zero-Waste Promotion Association.

Green Jiangnan

For example, the **Suzhou Industrial Park Green Jiangnan Public Environmental Concern Center** participated in a roundtable dialogue at the China Pavilion titled "Consolidating the strength of environmental protection organizations and using environmental legal measures to assist in addressing the challenges of climate change". Its representative shared how the organization leveraged public information disclosure to push for better environmental governance. They introduced over 100 enterprises into information disclosure lists maintained by environmental departments, monitored corporate compliance, and used legal tools to advocate for climate information transparency and carbon reduction in key industries such as steel, cement, and chemicals. These efforts contributed to pollution reduction and climate change mitigation.

These organizations represent a new wave of Chinese civil society forces engaging in international climate governance. They brought tangible work results, local experiences, challenges, needs, and actionable proposals to the COP venue. Actively networking with international counterparts and stakeholders, they exchanged ideas and brought back first-hand updates, actionable solutions, and inspiring practices to share with domestic audiences.

China Development Brief

Beijing E-Share Civil Society Information Centre (a.k.a. China Development Brief) also sent two executives to Baku. In June 2024, the "Promoting Low-Carbon Actions in Civil Society Organizations" project was officially launched in Beijing, supported by the ClimateWorks Foundation, and partnered with the Beijing Service Center for Overseas Non-Governmental Organizations, with China Development Brief as the implementing organization.

At COP29, China Development Brief executives engaged in exchanges inside and outside the venue and organized a live-streaming event in the Blue Zone for domestic audiences. Representatives from Greenpeace, the Gansu Green Camel Bell Environmental Development Center, the Tianjin Hexie Social Work Service Center, and Blue Ribbon participated in the broadcast, providing key insights and updates on the conference for Chinese CSOs.

plant technology alliance

In media outreach, the Hong Kong-based observer **plant technology alliance** leveraged its expertise in community building and social-media operations to produce engaging and accessible vlogs during COP29. These vlogs covered topics such as:

- "Behind the Scenes of the Opening Plenary"
- "What's It Like to Host an Exhibit at COP29?"
- "Is Hosting a Side Event at COP29 Fun?"
- "What's the Experience of Attending COP29?"
- "A 20-Second Walk Through the Korean Pavilion at COP29"
- "Observers at Climate Conferences Are Not Bystanders"



IPE

Vlogs have become an important channel for NGOs to share knowledge and disseminate information. The **Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs (IPE)** released a series titled **"5 Minutes of Carbon Talk"** during COP29, including:

- "Why Did COP29 Become the Climate Finance COP?"
- "A Special Guest's On-Site Perspective: COP29 Like You've Never Seen It"
- "Story-Based Solutions Steal the Show at COP29!"

Beijing Zero-Waste Recycling Industry Promotion Association

As a KOL in sustainable practices, Ms. LIU Xuesong, Chairwoman of the Beijing Zero-Waste Recycling Industry Promotion Association (ZWPA), shared her experiences at COP29 through her social media account, **"Xuesong Talks Sustainability."** Her two vlogs demystified high-barrier climate governance topics, expanding their reach to broader audiences.

2.3 Reflections from COP29 on NGO Engagement in Climate Governance

As the plant technology alliance stated, "Climate conference observers are not bystanders." The Observer Handbook for COP29 also emphasizes: "Observer organizations play a vital role in the global intergovernmental process to confront the climate crisis. They bring diverse experiences, perspectives and ideas from civil society, indigenous communities, youth, and academia, among many others, that are crucial to advancing our collective climate agenda, while ensuring transparency to the process."

At COP29, several experts, policy advocates, and practitioners shared their insights on NGO participation in climate governance.

On **November 11**, Friends of the Earth (HK) and the Hong Kong Financial Development Council hosted a side event at the China Pavilion titled **"Advancing Transition Finance and Cross-Border Green Financing - Engaging the Public to Achieve a Net-Zero Economy"**. In his keynote speech on "The Role of Civil Society in Climate Transition and Finance," **Professor Amos P. K. TAI** from the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the Chinese

University of Hong Kong underscored the importance of collaboration between academia and NGOs: "The synergy between academia and NGOs is crucial for promoting an equitable climate transition and financing. Scholars provide cutting-edge insights and solutions, while NGOs serve as vital bridges between stakeholders by mobilizing communities and businesses and advocating for practical climate actions to policymakers and stakeholders."

On **November 15**, at the China Environmental Grantmakers Alliance (CEGA) press conference for the release of **"Impact Report: Climate Philanthropy Case Studies"**, **Dr. WANG Binbin**, founder of the C Force Lab at Peking University's Institute for Carbon Neutrality and a Yale World Fellow, praised the report: "In the context of global climate challenges and funding shortages, this case collection demonstrates how private sector investments are reshaping climate philanthropy." She also recognized CEGA's efforts in telling the story of China's climate philanthropy on the global stage, emphasizing its strategic significance for intergovernmental negotiations.

On **November 16**, at China Development Brief's "**Promoting Low-Carbon Actions by Social Organizations – COP29 Baku Salon**" live broadcast, **Mr. ZHAO Zhong**, Director of the Gansu Green Camel Bell Environmental Development Center, shared: "Green Camel Bell had clear goals for participating in COP29. First, we aimed to bring grassroots voices to the international stage, ensuring policymakers consider the needs of diverse communities when formulating climate policies, making them more inclusive and equitable. Second, we sought to exchange knowledge with organizations from other countries and regions, learning effective climate solutions. Third, we aimed to expand our network, fostering dialogue with institutions and enterprises from different sectors to explore collaborative approaches to climate action."

On the same day, at the "**Mitigation and Adaptation Practices along the Belt and Road**" side event, co-hosted by the All-China Environment Federation and the Ethiopian government, **Mr. ZHANG Jie**, Vice Chair and Secretary-General of the Energy Investment Committee of the China Investment Association, proposed the creation of "Zero-Carbon Bilateral Industrial Parks" to strengthen global green investment. He remarked, "Green investment has become a key tool for addressing climate change. China's Belt and Road Initiative has promoted green development and energy transitions in participating countries. The construction of Zero-Carbon Bilateral Industrial Parks can facilitate balanced 'going global' and 'bringing in' collaborations with Belt and Road nations, achieving mutual benefits. However,

challenges such as financing, standardization, localization, infrastructure deficiencies, and industry competition remain critical issues requiring collective attention. We look forward to NGOs playing a key role in addressing these challenges."

Ms. CUI Nanying, Director of the Energy and Climate Change Program at the Global Environmental Institute (GEI), observed that "China has increasingly played a critical role in global climate governance. Through South-South climate cooperation, China has supported developing nations—particularly small island states, least developed countries, and African nations—in addressing climate change. Leveraging its expertise in solar energy, electric vehicles, and early warning technologies, China has provided material aid, technical assistance, capacity-building programs, and collaborative research. At COP29 in Baku, GEI shifted its approach—from solely presenting China's NGO contributions to providing more platforms for partners from developing countries to share their experiences working with Chinese NGOs."

At the **November 11** China Pavilion event "**Women's Power in Sustainable Development**" and the November 18 UNFCCC side event "**Sector-Based Green Transition from Urban to Rural Areas, and from China to ASEAN Countries**", GEI invited government representatives, scholars, and community leaders from the Americas (California, USA), Africa (Cameroon), Asia (Pakistan, China, Indonesia), and Oceania (Fiji) to share their experiences of partnering with Chinese NGOs on local climate actions and their achievements.

On **November 20**, at the China Pavilion's side event "**Responding to the Climate Change, Chinese Civil Society Organizations in Action**", **Dr. YANG Fuqiang**, Guest Research Fellow at the Institute of Energy at Peking University, remarked: "The development of CSOs is an important indicator of China's climate action progress. Chinese NGOs have actively aligned with government initiatives, engaging in top-down and bottom-up climate actions and adaptation efforts. However, compared to international NGOs—especially those in Europe—Chinese CSOs still have significant gaps to address in their climate-related activities."

On **November 21**, at the "**Engaging New Players in Climate Action to Make Collective Impact**" side event, **Ms. WANG Xiangyi**, the Vice Chair and Secretary-General of the China Association for NGO Cooperation reiterated the crucial role of Chinese CSOs, particularly in pioneering innovative and inclusive solutions in areas such as rural and urban development, biodiversity conservation, and climate action. She reflected on the growth and evolution of Chinese NGOs over the past decade, emphasizing the importance of international collaboration and the need to integrate gender equality and community resilience into climate work. She called for further empowerment of emerging organizations to contribute to a sustainable and resilient future.

Finally, in his post-COP29 reflection, **Dr. QIAO Feng**, Program Director at the China Blue Sustainability Institute, wrote: "I admire the efforts of climate NGOs onsite from developing countries, including their appeals and demonstration, inside and outside the COP venue. Who can say for certain that their advocacy hasn't had any impact on or exerted pressure on negotiators from developed nations? The engagement of CSOs at COP is critical. On a small scale, it helps participants deepen their understanding of climate issues and explore actionable solutions through global learning and exchanges. On a larger scale, it plays a crucial role in telling China's climate action story. The world must see that China's response to climate change is not only driven by strong government policies and the rapid rise of the renewable energy sector but also by numerous grassroots CSOs working on practical and community-based climate solutions."

3 Looking Ahead

3.1 Preparing for COP30

2025 marks the tenth anniversary of the Paris Agreement, and the international community—especially developing countries—holds high expectations for COP30, which will take place in Belém, Brazil, in November. However, U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to again withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement on his first day in office has cast a shadow over COP30 and the progress of global climate governance.

Brazil, home to the world's largest tropical rainforest, plays a critical role in global climate mitigation. COP30 offers Brazil an opportunity to showcase its efforts and commitments to ecological conservation and sustainable development while emphasizing the importance of protecting the Amazon rainforest to maintain global ecological balance.

As a member of the BASIC group of major developing countries, Brazil has historically prioritized cooperation with other developing nations. COP30 provides an avenue for Brazil to deepen South-South cooperation by facilitating experience-sharing, technical exchanges, and collaborative projects with other developing countries. This can strengthen the collective influence of developing nations in global climate governance.

Regarding implementation, all Parties are required to submit their updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the 2035 period by February 2025. At COP30, countries will discuss these updated NDCs, clarifying responsibilities and the scale of actions needed to achieve global emission reduction targets.

Further negotiations will be necessary throughout the year to define the implementation of the \$300 billion annual climate finance target by 2035, as well as to advance the Baku-to-Belém \$1.3 Trillion Roadmap. Concrete measures to operationalize these financial commitments are expected to be solidified at COP30.

Discussions at COP30 are also anticipated to finalize the indicators for the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA). This will enable countries to better assess and enhance their climate adaptation capabilities, providing clear direction and metrics for global adaptation actions.

Unresolved issues from COP29, including the follow-up to the first global stocktake, the Mitigation Work Program, and the Just Transition Work Program, will be further developed this year, with the expectation of reaching a consensus at COP30.

Additionally, the Gender Action Plan will be a focal topic at COP30, aiming to advance knowledge and understanding of gender-responsive climate action and women's equal and meaningful participation in the UNFCCC process. Considering that climate change tends to have a more severe impact on women, the formulation of this plan will help enhance women's participation and benefits in addressing climate change.

While Brazil's unique social structure and biodiversity are expected to invigorate COP30 discussions, concerns remain about Belém's capacity to host such a large-scale conference.

due to its infrastructure limitations. Despite these challenges, parties firmly committed to the Paris Agreement still hold out hope for the success of COP30. The conference is expected to reinforce the effectiveness of the UNFCCC's multilateral cooperation framework, foster broader consensus, and deepen cooperation across mitigation, adaptation, finance, and technology.

Climate action is one of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is closely intertwined with other SDGs. COP30's discussions and outcomes are poised to

inject new momentum into global sustainable development. By advancing climate actions in tandem with economic and social development, it is helpful to address poverty, inequality, health threats, resource shortages, and distribution inequities. The synergic efforts could also enhance disaster preparedness, strengthen community resilience, and improve the adaptive capacity of vulnerable groups. Moreover, there is potential to create green jobs, drive industrial upgrades, and achieve the synergistic and sustainable development of economic, social, and environmental systems.

3.2 Capacity-Building Needs for Chinese Civil Society Organizations

In climate governance, CSOs play vital and multifaceted roles. They act as advocates, guiding the public to pay attention to climate change issues; as watchdogs, urging all parties to fulfill their emission reduction responsibilities; as innovators and promoters of solutions; and as efficient resource connectors, integrating the strengths of various parties to form a strong synergy. As providers of social services, CSOs are indispensable in helping affected groups adapt to climate change. Outstanding CSOs have the potential to become powerful drivers of systemic change, working with diverse stakeholders to explore sustainable paths for long-term climate governance.

As an important non-state actor, CSOs are essential for achieving China's dual-carbon goals. With further policy guidance and support on their pathways to participation, they are likely to unleash tremendous potential. Moreover, in international dialogues on climate governance, CSOs amplify civil voices, contributing to mutual trust and understanding in communication with other stakeholders.

In August 2024, the He Yi Green Foundation and the Ginkgo Foundation jointly released the ***Survey Report on Multi-Issue Civil Society***

Organizations Addressing Climate Change.

This report surveyed 148 CSOs to assess their awareness of climate change, the relevance of their work to climate change, their climate action strategies, their climate fundraising status, and their capacity-building needs. The survey revealed that the reality of the climate crisis is the direct reason for CSOs to voluntarily or consciously take climate action. The report showed that 93.9% of organizations' core work areas were connected to climate change, and these organizations proactively carried out climate-related responses. Many frontline organizations, especially at the county level, have implemented various climate actions with limited resources, including water resource management, disaster prevention and mitigation, and aid for vulnerable groups. Survey results also indicated that over half of the responding organizations adopted a strategy of "synergistic promotion of climate mitigation and adaptation" in their climate action. Domestic CSOs currently have a low participation rate in international climate change affairs. However, with the emergence of new leading NGOs in various fields and encouragement from national policies, a surge in participation in climate change affairs is anticipated.

In terms of climate fundraising, the report highlighted that the absence of a comprehensive climate fundraising system in China limits the fundraising channels and scale for CSOs. One-third of the organizations had not yet begun climate-specific fundraising, while among those that had, one-quarter reported annual fundraising amounts for climate projects below 50,000 RMB. Most organizations identified unstable funding as their main challenge. Some organizations that had already implemented climate actions faced difficulties effectively integrating their working topics with climate issues and deepening their focus. The report also pointed out that, although nearly half of the organizations listed "expanding climate-related fundraising channels and securing stable funding" as their main capacity-building need, behind the funding, 76% of organizations prioritized building capacity in aligning their discourse with climate change, integrating the issue with their operations and strategies. In terms of funding formats, consistent microgrants combined with capacity-building initiatives were most welcomed.

The Survey Report on Multi-Issue Civil Society Organizations Addressing Climate Change concluded that CSOs' value lies in leading and inspiring efforts, focusing on grassroots exploration and practices to bring climate action closer to everyday lives. CSOs should master fundamental climate education and climate risk assessment methods. Organizations should align their missions and values with climate goals to ensure consistency in their operational logic. Practical, localized solutions under the principle of "small-scale implementation of big ideas" should be developed. Regional climate action networks should be established to enhance collaboration and resource-sharing.

To address the capacity-building needs of CSOs and their practitioners, domestic and international foundations focusing on climate issues have funded various empowerment projects, such as the Multi-Issue Civil Society Organization Capacity Building Project for Addressing Climate Change. Additional

initiatives include the Strategic Communication Elite Program, Heqi Action, Climate Change Innovative Action Fund, Linglong Plan, Hainan Climate Partners, Carbon Neutrality Public Communication Fellows, Chinese Social Organizations' Contribution to Global Ecological and Environmental Governance Project, Climate Companions Program, and the Promoting Low-Carbon Action Projects by Social Organizations initiative.

However, given the comprehensiveness, importance, and urgency of addressing climate change, these capacity-building projects fall far short of meeting the rapidly growing needs.

Based on this report, the authors offer the following recommendations for relevant stakeholders:

First, it is recommended that the Ministry of Ecology and Environment strengthen support for promoting the annual white paper "**Responding to Climate Change: China's Policies and Actions**" through outreach and educational programs targeted at CSOs. Furthermore, more government departments should provide support for international cooperation and exchanges in the field of climate governance, particularly involving civil society.

Second, local governments are encouraged to increase support for CSOs to collaborate with diverse stakeholders in driving climate change initiatives. For instance, **Shanghai Climate Week**, co-initiated by the Shanghai Environment and Energy Exchange, the Shanghai Modern Service Industry Federation, Fudan University, and the Xinhua News Agency Shanghai Bureau, brought together over 100 global partners. Modeled on the UNFCCC Regional Climate Weeks, the inaugural Shanghai Climate Week was held from April 22 to April 26, 2024. The event involved government departments, international and domestic CSOs, Fortune Global 500 companies, industry leaders, cities, and towns, achieving significant social benefits. During COP29, Shanghai Climate Week co-

hosted a China Pavilion side event titled "Public Participation Supporting the Construction of a Beautiful China" to showcase its achievements and proposals.

Similarly, the **SEE Climate Week**, held in Beijing from June 6 to June 9, 2024, under the theme "Public Participation, Innovation-Driven, Green Future", featured more than 40 activities. These included presentations on environmental project outcomes, themed conferences on sustainable development, international dialogues on climate finance, and public events such as a forest carnival, forest Eco Run, garden tours, and symphony concerts. During COP29, the SEE Foundation co-hosted a China Pavilion side event on civil society climate actions, sharing related experiences and insights.

The format of "Climate Week" activities can serve as a model for other regions, effectively building an ecosystem of interaction involving government units, CSOs, the business community, and other related groups. This can further promote the integration of climate

governance, dual-carbon goals, Beautiful China initiatives, urban renewal, corporate ESG practices, science, arts, sports, public welfare, and youth participation. The comprehensive and multidimensional engagement fostered by such events can advance society toward a greener and more sustainable future, contributing valuable insights and efforts to address climate change.

Third, both domestic and international resource providers are encouraged to prioritize the cultivation of climate governance talent within CSOs. Due to their public-oriented nature, flexibility, and close connections with communities, CSOs hold unique advantages in climate governance. However, a significant talent gap remains a pressing issue in this sector. It is essential to explore strategies for attracting professional talents to CSOs to support climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Additionally, we need to work on equipping existing practitioners with the necessary knowledge and skills. These issues warrant further discussion and concrete action.

3.3 Outlook for 2025 Climate Action and the Role of Chinese Civil Society Organizations

The year 2025 will be critical for advancing the progress of the climate convention and achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. Looking ahead to 2025, we anticipate several important developments.

First, we hope that more climate-focused organizations will enhance their capacity to track climate negotiations; deepen their understanding of key climate issues; and create favorable conditions for information sharing and data analysis. This will help foster the emergence of think tank-like expertise within CSOs.

Second, we look forward to business and industry NGOs playing a stronger role in supervising and encouraging corporate climate action. These NGOs can contribute to the achievement of the

goal to triple renewable energy capacity, drive technological and financial innovation, and catalyze stakeholders to develop more pragmatic solutions.

Third, environmental NGOs should leverage their social mobilization strengths to further promote public participation through knowledge production, information dissemination, and cross-sector innovation.

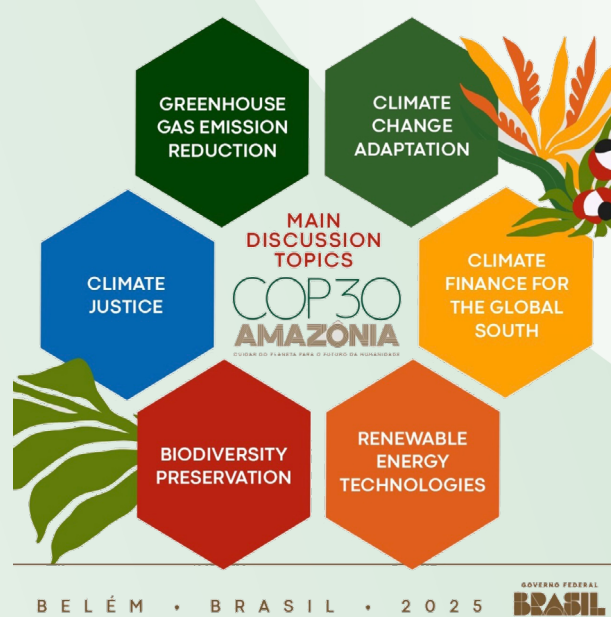
Fourth, NGOs focused on biodiversity should strive for breakthroughs in the synergy between climate change and biodiversity conservation. These efforts will help mainstream biodiversity protection and integrate it into broader climate agendas.

Fifth, multi-issue organizations should receive greater internal and external support to reflect deeply on how to align their institutional strategies and operational activities with addressing climate change.

Currently, many discussions around climate issues focus on technology and funding, while CSOs remain central to addressing the needs of vulnerable groups and highlighting often overlooked social demands. At COP30, we look forward to seeing more discussions from the perspectives of people and communities, addressing topics such as climate adaptation and resilience. Additionally, we hope to witness more South-South cooperation projects, just transition initiatives being implemented and shared, and the effective realization of climate finance, including philanthropic funds.

Funding is essential for the sustainable development of CSOs, but creativity is equally crucial. At COP29, creativity was evident in multiple initiatives, such as the China Pavilion side event "Communication for Climate Films", which engaged the UNFCCC's Entertainment and Culture for Climate Action (ECCA) Group; the cultural exhibit "The Beauty of Chinese Miao Embroidery Linking Nature" in the blue zone; and the participation of Shaolin Temple's abbot SHI Yongxin in the Faith Pavilion, who called for the integration of Zen wisdom in addressing climate challenges. These examples illustrate how diverse actors are creatively thinking and acting. We look forward to practitioners in CSOs further mobilizing their enthusiasm and creativity to make a significant impact at COP30.

Most importantly, we hope to see the participation of more diverse forces, creating a powerful collective impact. As expressed by **Mr. XU Ye**, a special observer from WWF Beijing Office and Chinese content creator, in his observations and reflections on COP29, "The most shocking feeling from COP29 was that science fiction has become reality. We are truly at a moment where we need to pool the collective wisdom, compassion, and efficient actions of all humanity to overcome challenges and seize control of our shared destiny."



According to the COP30 host country, COP30 calls for "Taking Care of the Planet for the Future of Humanity" and will focus on six key topics: greenhouse gas emissions reduction, climate change adaptation, climate justice, climate finance for the Global South, biodiversity conservation, and renewable energy technologies.

Appendix

List of Admitted Chinese NGO Observers (2024)

All China Environment Federation (ACEF)	China Chain Store & Franchise Association
Association of Former Diplomats of China	China Chamber of International Commerce (CCOIC)
Association of Sustainable Ecological Engineering Development (ASEED)	China Electricity Council
Beijing Forestry Society (BFS)	China Environmental Protection Foundation (CEPF)
Beijing Friends of Nature Charity Foundation	China Green Carbon Foundation (CGCF)
Beijing Green Finance Association (BGFA)	China Meteorological Service Association
Beijing Greenovation Hub for Public Welfare Development (G:HUB)	China National Sand Control and Desert Industry Society
Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT)	China New Energy Chamber of Commerce (CNECC)
Beijing NGO Association for International Exchanges	China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE)
Beijing Rongzhi Corporate Social Responsibility Institute	China Renewable Energy Society (CRES)
Business Environment Council Ltd. (BEC)	China Science and Technology Exchange Center (CSTEC)
C Team	China South Low Carbon Academy (CSLCA)
CarbonCare InnoLab Limited (CCIL)	Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC)
Central University of Finance and Economics	Chinese Renewable Energy Industry Association (CREIA)
China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)	Civic Exchange
China Association for Science and Technology (CAST)	Coshare Environment
China Association of Circular Economy	CTCI Education Foundation (CTCIEF)
China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation (CBCGDF)	Dalian Youth Public Welfare Development Promotion Association
Delta Electronics Foundation	Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)
Duke Kunshan University	Hong Kong Climate Change Forum (HKCCF)
Environmental Quality Protection Foundation (EQPF)	Hong Kong People's Council for Sustainable Development Limited (HKPCSD)
European Union Chamber of Commerce in China (EUCCC)	Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI)

Foundation of Taiwan Industry Service (FTIS)	Innovation Center for Energy and Transportation (iCET)
Gansu "Green Camel Bell" Environment and Development Center (Green Camel Bell)	Institute for Environment and Sustainable Development (IESD)
Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization (Geidco)	Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development in Agriculture, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science (IESEA CAAS)
Global Environmental Institute (GEI)	International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)
Global Village of Beijing (GVB)	Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden Corporation (KFBG)
Green Council (GC)	Macao Association of Environmental Protection Industry (MEPI)
Green Inclusive Carbon Neutrality Center (GIC)	Macau Environmental Protection and Management Association (MAENS)
Green Zhejiang (GZJ)	Macau Environmental Protection Institute
Greenriver Environmental Protection Promotion Association of Sichuan (Greenriver)	Mom Loves Taiwan Association
Guangdong Low-Carbon Development Promotion Association	National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC)
Guangzhou County Yuexiu District Climate and Environmental Protection Center (CYCAN)	Operation Earth
Guangzhou Institute of Energy Conversion, Chinese Academy of Sciences	Plant Technology Alliance (PTA)
Guangzhou Vision Global Study Tour Center	Renmin University of China (RUC)
Hangzhou Eco-Culture Association (HZECA)	Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences in Shanxi (SXRCEE)
Research Centre for Sustainable Development (RCSD)	The Conservancy Association (CA)
Rock Environment and Energy Institute (REEI)	The Investment Association of China (IAC)
Shan Shui Conservation Center (Shan Shui)	Tianda Institute
Shandong Society for Sustainable Development (SSSD)	Tsinghua University, Global Climate Change Institute (GCCl)
Shanghai Minhang District Environmental Protection IT Service Center (SMDEPITSC)	University of Hong Kong (HKU)
Shenzhen Mangrove Wetlands Conservation Foundation (MCF)	Vanke Foundation
Shenzhen One Planet Foundation	Xiamen University (CCEER)
Society of Entrepreneurs and Ecology Foundation (SEE Foundation)	Zhejiang Agriculture and Forestry University (ZAFU)
South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange (SS-GATE)	Zhenjiang Green Sanshan Environmental Public Welfare Service Center

Taiwan Carbon Capture Storage and Utilization Association	Haikou Better Blue Marine Ecological Protection Center
Taiwan Institute for Sustainable Energy (TISE)	Institute of International Sustainable Development
Taiwan Research Institute (TRI)	Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs
Telecommunication and Transportation Foundation (TTF)	Northwest Institute of Eco-Environment and Resources, CAS
The ADM Capital Foundation Limited (ADMCF)	PeaceLand Foundation
The Administrative Center for China's Agenda 21 (ACCA 21)	Shanghai Ecocycle Circular Economy Research Center
The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)	World Historical and Cultural Canal Cities Cooperation Organization



CEGA (China Environmental Grantmakers Alliance), launched in Beijing on 29th January 2018, serves as a collaborative and information exchange platform for Chinese environmental grantmakers. CEGA aims to apply strategic philanthropy in environmental grantmaking to guide the funding direction so that to realize the maximum social benefit of charitable funds in the environmental field. The shared values of CEGA members include integrating resources, making joint efforts, and sharing success for a better environmental future.

CEGA is an environmental grantmakers collaborative program instead of an independent legal entity. It was affiliated to China Foundation Center from 2018 to March 2024. From April 2024 onwards, the program is affiliated to All-China Environment Federation and operates under the guidance of the CEGA Decision-making Committee. The 2024 Decision-making Committee consists of SEE Foundation, Alibaba Foundation, Mangrove Foundation (MCF), Lao Niu Foundation, Harmony Community Foundation, Vanke Foundation, China Green

Carbon Foundation, All-China Environment Federation. The Decision-making Committee works for three years term, with its Chairperson elected by the Decision-making Committee. Former chairpersons include LEI Yongsheng (Chairman of Lao Niu Foundation), ZHANG Li (former Secretary General of SEE Foundation), CHEN Yimei (former Secretary General of Vanke Foundation), and AN Yaqiang (Secretary General of Lao Niu Foundation). The current co-chairs are XIE Xiaohui, Secretary General of Vanke Foundation and YAO Yao, Secretary General of Alibaba Foundation. Other members and partners of CEGA include Qiaonyu Foundation, The Paradise Foundation, Friends of Nature Foundation, Beijing Afforestation Foundation, Changjiang Conservation Foundation, Beijing GreenSunshine Environmental Foundation, Huatai Foundation, Qinghai Lake Ecological Protection Foundation of Qinghai Province, Hubei Wetland Conservation Foundation, All-China Environment Federation, China Association for NGO Cooperation and strategic partner Energy Foundation.



To raise awareness of the climate crisis among corporates and the general public, Mr. WANG Shi and other business leaders and environmentalists initiated the China Champions for Climate Action a.k.a. C Team at COP20 in Lima, Peru in December 2014. In 2017, C Team was formally established in Shenzhen, with a mission to support Chinese entrepreneurs to be climate action leaders, facilitate green innovation and low carbon transition, and promote sustainable and eco-friendly development.

C Team focuses on three main areas: building partnerships, enabling industries/enterprises to take action, and scaling up impact. In 2018, C Team, in collaboration with 20 organizations, jointly launched the China Corporate Climate Action (CCCA) at the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco, USA. To date, 82 enterprises, industry associations, and supportive organizations have joined. CCCA annually publishes corporate climate action case studies and regularly holds seminars and workshops to connect enterprises with technical support and relevant resources. It has carried out a series of advocacy and empowerment activities in industries such as real estate and property management, textile and fashion, retail and catering, coal chemicals, and automotive.

C Team, together with our partners, actively promotes international exchange and cooperation in climate issues by organizing the China Enterprise Day, setting up a Solutions Pavilion, and hosting side events and press conferences at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP). These activities showcase the practices of Chinese enterprises and civil society organizations and contribute solutions to global climate governance.

Against the backdrop of China's growing demand for dual-carbon talents, C Team launched the "Net Zero Drive" project in 2023. By leveraging digital and intelligent technologies, it is dedicated to building a lightweight online training platform to support the just transition and efficient upgrading of key industries and regions in the context of climate change.

In the face of increasingly severe climate disruption, C Team has expanded its climate action empowerment programs targeting environmental organizations and multi-issue civil society organizations. We will further mobilize multiple stakeholders to participate in people-oriented climate action and strive to realize the vision of "a green future with harmonious development of society, economy, and ecology."