

# Exploration on the Way to Promote the Construction of Ecological Civilization in China in the New Era

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**Abstract:** Ecological civilization construction has achieved great results since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, but it still faces many difficulties and challenges. To promote the construction of ecological civilization in the new era, we must improve the reform of the property rights system of natural resources and strengthen the system of ecological civilization foundation; strictly enforce the responsibility system for ecological environment protection, strengthen the implementation of the system; improve the legal guarantee system to escort the construction of ecological civilization. In addition, the whole society should be promoted to firmly establish the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature which provides a strong ideological guidance and fundamental compliance for ecological and environmental protection.

## 1. Introduction

The construction of ecological civilization is a millennium project for the sustainable development of the Chinese nation. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has responded to the urgent needs and desires of the broad masses of people for a beautiful ecological environment, and has carried out overall design, strategic planning and overall layout for the construction of ecological civilization, putting it in a prominent position, and integrating it into all aspects and the entire process of economic, political, cultural and social construction. From understanding to practice of China's ecological civilization construction, historic, transformational and global changes have taken place. However, the fragile state of the ecosystem has not been fundamentally reversed. In order to build a well-off society in an all-round way and finally achieve the goal of a prosperous, strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious and beautiful socialist modern power, we must deeply promote the construction of ecological civilization, and constantly improve and rationalize the construction path.

## 2. Improve and Develop the Institutional System of Ecological Civilization

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the country has attached great importance to and accelerated the construction of an ecological civilization system, and achieved full coverage of the entire process including strict prevention at the source, strict control in the process, and severe punishment after consequences [1]. The important documents, such as Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of Ecological Civilization and Overall Plan for the Reform of the Ecological Civilization System, have been successively issued. The systems have been established systems such as the environmental protection inspection system, environmental accountability system for party and government leading cadres, emission permit system, and the prohibition of foreign waste from entering the country. The ecological environment management system has been reformed. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Ministry of Ecology and Environment have been set up, to avoid the problems such as overlapping of powers and responsibilities, and multiple policies. Land and space planning legislation has been launched. Land, urban and rural planning will become history. The laws, including The Environmental Protection Law, Environmental Protection Tax Law, Air Pollution Control Law, Water Pollution Control Law and the Law on Land Management, have been

revised. Nuclear Safety Law has been enacted. The institutional construction has led to significant progress in the building of China's ecological civilization.

However, the situation of China's ecological environment is still severe, environmental pollution is relatively serious, the land development pattern is not reasonable, and the social impact of environmental problems is prominent [2]. "Most of the prominent problems in China's ecological and environmental protection have to do with imperfect systems, lax institutions, lax rule of law, inadequate enforcement and ineffective punishment." [3] Therefore, we must focus on improving relevant specific systems to promote the solution of ecological problems [4].

## **2.1 Perfect property rights system of natural resources**

The property rights system of natural resources assets is an important basic system to strengthen ecological environmental protection and promote the construction of ecological civilization, and is the prerequisite and cornerstone for the functioning of other related systems of ecological civilization. The "unstable foundation" of the natural resource asset property rights system will lead to the "unstability" of the ecological civilization system [5]. At present, there are some problems in the property right system of natural resource assets in China, such as unclear base of natural resource assets, incomplete ownership, unclear rights and responsibilities, incomplete implementation of rights and interests, imperfect supervision and protection system, small scope of ecological compensation, too single form and repeated compensation, etc.; the types of rights such as the right to use state-owned agricultural land, self-reserved mountain and self-reserved land are blank, and the problem of heterogeneous rights with the same name is prominent. In addition, the inconsistencies between laws and inconsistent policy requirements in different periods have also increased the difficulty in judging the validity of the property rights of natural resource assets. In view of this, it is necessary to find out the real estate assets of various types of natural resources in a timely manner, and to promote the unified right confirmation and registration work of natural resources, to truly clarify the subject of property rights, implement owner's rights and interests, and further clarify the main structure of state-owned natural resources property rights and the relationship between the rights, responsibilities and interests of each subject, to strengthen the supervision of the whole process of natural resource asset protection, utilization and restoration, to improve dispute resolution mechanism of the natural resource asset property rights, to implement legal systems such as public interest litigation and ecological environmental damage compensation litigation, to promote the continuous improvement of the legal system for the property rights of natural resources assets, to deal with the problem of stricter policies than laws, rationalize and improve the preparation of natural resource asset and liability balance sheets. Finally, a property right system of natural resources assets with clear ownership, clear rights and responsibilities, strict protection, smooth circulation and effective supervision will be established to significantly improve the efficiency and protection of natural resources development and utilization [6].

## **2.2 Strengthen the responsibility system for ecological and environmental protection**

The responsibility system for ecological and environmental protection is an important part of building a national ecological governance system and an important means to improve the modernization level of national ecological governance capabilities. The key to whether ecological environmental protection can be implemented lies in leading cadres. Leading cadres' accountability assessment of ecological environmental protection has been continuously strengthened. In the first half of 2019, Hubei's disciplinary inspection and supervision organs accumulatively accounted for 700 party members and cadres for environmental damage, including 7 bureau-level cadres. Party discipline and administrative punishments were given to 240 people. In spite of this, the phenomenon of dereliction of duty is still repeated, which cadres do not pay attention to the issue of environmental protection, do not act, take slow actions. Party and government cadres must be clear that they are the main subject of ecological and environmental responsibility, who should bear the same responsibilities of the party and government and two responsibilities for one job. Resource consumption, environmental damage, and ecological benefits should be included in the target assessment and evaluation system, forcing leading cadres to form a correct concept of performance.

The central ecological environmental protection inspection system should be further implemented. The intensity of environmental protection inspections will be increased. Correcting environmental violations will be combined with improving law-abiding capacity. The content of inspections should be expanded, focusing on promoting coordination between economic and social development and environmental protection. Multi-party supervision and accountability should be implemented. We should attach importance to the supervision of party and government cadres by the public and social organizations. It is necessary to comprehensively carry out the audit of leading officials' natural resources and assets when they leave office, and establish a lifelong accountability system for major policy decisions and an accountability review mechanism.

### **2.3 Improve laws and regulations**

China has initially established a legal system for environmental resources protection in line with China's national conditions. At present, there are more than 30 environmental protection laws of various types, and more than 90 administrative regulations related to environmental protection. However, there are still many problems because our country environment resource legislation started late. For example, the newly revised environmental protection law has blurred provisions on the ecological red line. There are still many urgent improvements to the protection of the country's endangered animals, especially the first and second class animals. In 2016, the "Wildlife Protection Law" was amended to explicitly prohibit the production and management of wildlife under national key protection, but wildlife such as bats and minks that may carry a large number of viruses have not been included. According to relevant data, 70% of new infectious diseases are related to wildlife. In addition, in China's current environmental resource legislation, there are still many connection problems between the legislative concept, legal content and other related laws and regulations. After the amendment of the environmental protection law, it is necessary to form synergy with other relevant laws. Therefore, it is necessary to modify and improve other relevant laws and regulations to form a perfect and harmonious environmental resources protection legal system. We have to comply with the provisions of international conventions and treaties on the protection of environmental resources in the world, revise and improve relevant domestic legislation.

### **3. Firmly establish the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature**

"Insisting on the harmonious coexistence of man and nature" is one of the fourteen basic strategies for upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era proposed by the party's 19th National Congress. The idea of harmonious coexistence between man and nature is the result of the innovation of Marxist theory on the relationship between man and nature. It is the theoretical inheritance of the idea of harmony between man and nature of the excellent traditional Chinese culture. It is the inheritance and development of the Chinese Communist Party's idea of harmony between man and nature. It is also the latest understanding of the relationship between man and nature in the new era. Man and nature are a community of life, and man is a part of nature. "We ... all belong to and exist in nature." [7] The fundamental meaning of the harmonious coexistence of man and nature lies in the fact that in natural interaction between man and nature, we must first restrict human behavior, and limit economic activities and human behavior to the limits that natural resources and ecological environments can tolerate, and sometimes use it appropriately.

Since the Industrial Revolution, especially the rapid development of science and technology since the 20th century, mankind's ability to transform nature has been unprecedentedly increased. Man's wanton destruction and greed for nature have surpassed the carrying capacity of nature, resulting in a global population expansion, a series of serious ecological crises, such as pollution, resource depletion, land desertification, sharp decline in forests, garbage disasters, water pollution, sharp decline in biodiversity, climate warming, and frequent natural disasters, also leading to the decline of civilizations such as Mayan civilization and ancient Babylon civilization. Therefore, Engels pointed out: "Let's not be overly intoxicated by our human victory over nature. For every

such victory, nature retaliates against us, and our original achievements disappear again." [8]

In the past 40 years of reform and opening up, China's economic construction has made great achievements, and it has also accumulated a large number of ecological and environmental problems. Water pollution, air pollution, white pollution, soil pollution are more prominent while more and more solid waste, and grassland and forest degradation, are also serious. These problems have become the bottleneck constraints of high-quality development and the obvious shortcomings of building a well-off society in an all-round way. The 19th CPC National Congress put forward the insistence on the harmonious coexistence of man and nature, which collectively reflects the CPC Central Committee's resolute determination and strong will for comprehensive promotion of ecological civilization and the building of a beautiful China. At the juncture of the "three-phase superposition" of ecological civilization construction, "adhering to the harmonious coexistence of man and nature" provides a strong ideological guidance and fundamental follow and practice motivation for further strengthening ecological environmental protection and meeting the people's needs for a beautiful ecological environment [9]. Especially when the NCP("Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia ") is raging, it is particularly important to firmly establish the concept of harmonious coexistence between human and nature. The outbreak of this epidemic is similar to SARS in 2003, and it is also related to eating wild animals. Essentially, it is a manifestation of tension and imbalance between human and nature [10].

To establish the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature, we need to strengthen education and publicity for the entire people. As an important part of national quality education, ecological civilization education is included in the curriculum system of universities, primary and secondary schools as well as the cadre education and training system. It is necessary to make full use of public media resources and resources of various social organizations to popularize ecological knowledge education to the public [11]. We should give full play to the guiding role of public opinion, use radio, television, newspapers, the Internet and other news media, WeChat, Weibo and other platforms to widely carry out multi-level and multi-form ecological civilization construction propaganda, strengthening the awareness of the people's awareness of ecological concerns, participation and responsibility, forming a good public opinion environment conducive to the construction of ecological civilization, and mobilizing the enthusiasm and initiative of the broad masses to participate in the construction of ecological civilization. The role of grass-roots party organizations and party members should be given full play, which actively guide and educate the public to respect nature, comply with nature, and live in harmony with nature. Major festivals and events will be utilized to guide the public to establish a view of ecological civilization that treats nature and coexisting harmoniously. Taking advantage of the war of prevention and control on NCP, departments at all levels vigorously called on the public to care for animals, treat them well, and live in peace with wildlife. The improvement of the entire society's ecological consciousness and the solid establishment of the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature is a long-term and arduous task that will take a long time to make a contribution.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Ecological civilization construction is a systematic project. From a macro perspective, the construction of ecological civilization is the responsibility of the government. The government must do a good job of top-level design and continuously improve the ecological civilization system. From a micro perspective, during the process of building ecological civilization in our country, every citizen has an inescapable responsibility and obligation, and all people must actively participate, especially to firmly establish the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature, which is an important prerequisite and foundation for building a low-carbon lifestyle and promoting green development. Both people and enterprises are led by people, the implementation of the system and enforcement of laws is done by people. If the whole people firmly establish the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature, the government and enterprises also naturally make decisions, produce and carry out all other activities in accordance with the requirements of ecological civilization construction. Then, the beautiful Chinese dream of "seeing

the mountains, seeing the water, and remembering nostalgia" will surely come true.

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