Chapter 4
Green Development

At the core of green development is finding ways to properly deal with the relationship between humans and nature. This is a key issue in China's new development idea, and is also the main constraint of economic and social development in China. Green development is a core idea guiding the creation of ecological civilization in China, and it is also a necessary condition for sustainable development.

The evolution of the relationship between humans and nature represents an extremely long historical process, as well as an extremely complex development process of understanding. This process is characterized by three stages. In the first stage, humans are nature's slave, and they are passive and controlled by nature in all activities; in the second stage, humans try to become the master of nature, and nature is passive and humans are active. Humans takes an inordinate amount of resources from nature. Humans understand nature so that they can change nature and resist nature's constraints. Furthermore, humans destroy nature, thereby destroying the foundation for human survival and development. This stage is the golden age of human development, and also highlights the contradiction between humans and nature. In the third stage, humans and nature coexist harmoniously. Humans are no longer the master of nature but the friend of nature, and they are no longer the destroyer of nature but its protector. Humans now understand nature; they can not only change nature but also let nature take its course. Humans can now use nature in a reasonable way and carefully protect nature. In this way, nature's support system becomes the foundation for the sustainable development of humans.

The 5th Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the CPC introduced the concept of green development. It further promoted green development to a new theoretical level, and pointed out that green development will be an important direction of future development in China. It is also a necessary condition to achieve sustainable development in China. This marks a new period of comprehensive reform: the overall deployment and promotion of green development and the implementation of ecological civilization in China.

A. Hu et al., *Xi Jinping's New Development Philosophy*,
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This chapter interprets and assesses green development at a deeper level to obtain a comprehensive interpretation and understanding of the origin, development law, development path, main direction, and long-term goals of green development.

4.1 Concept Origin

China's idea for green development strategy has three origins.

A. Green development is rooted in the wisdom of the "integration of humans and nature" in ancient China. This is the origin of the wisdom of green development. The concept of the "integration of human and nature" of ancient Chinese means harmony between humans and nature, complies with the laws of nature, and represents the use of natural resources based on self-discipline. It is also the natural and philosophical view of a long-term and permanent coexistence between humans and nature. The concept differs from the newer "concept of the opposition between humans and nature" found in Western capitalist civilization. The latter tends to conquer, plunder, and damage nature, and vainly attempts to permanently control nature. Under the guidance of the concept to integrate humans and nature, the Chinese people have "paid attention to following heaven, following nature, and integrating with destiny and nature since the ancient times."[1] Awestruck, Chinese culture naturally preserves nature and attempts to get close to nature. This is the wisdom of traditional Chinese culture, and pursues not only permanence but also eternity. Furthermore, this can be developed into the modern concept of the integration of humans and nature: humans come from nature, let nature take its course, and then we can benefit from nature and nurture nature. Only in this way, can humans grow together with nature, and coexist and flourish with nature. This is the only way for humans to step into the future.

B. Green development comes from Marxist dialectics of nature. This clearly shows the scientific law of green development. The dialectics of nature state that nature is the source and foundation of human life. From the viewpoint of historical materialism, Marx put forward that human history is the continuation of natural history, where "the history itself is the reality of natural history, i.e., the process in which nature becomes human."[2] Marx also believed that humans must depend on nature, "no matter for humans and animals, in terms of the human body, human life lies in the fact that humans (like animals) live in an inorganic world, and the more universality humans have than animals, the broader the scope of the inorganic world in which humans live."[3] Second, the dialectics of nature consider the

[1]Qian Mu: Future Possible Contribution of Chinese Culture to the Mankind, *New Asia Monthly*, (12), 1990.

[2]Marx & Engels: *Complete Works of Marx and Engels*, pp. 128, Vol. 42. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972.

[3]Marx: *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (Chinese version), People's Publishing House, 2000.

relationship between humans and nature to be the unity of opposites. On the one hand, humans understand nature and can change nature. In the relationship between humans and nature, humans are the subjects, nature is the object, and humans change nature via initiatives gained through practice.[4] Finally, the dialectics of nature believe that humans must respect and follow the laws of nature so that humans are likely to change nature. Engels pointed out that "humans can allow the natural world to serve their own purpose by nature, and control the natural world, but at every step, we shall remember that humans must control the natural world from the perspective of the natural world, and all the ruling power of humans over the natural world lies in being capable of recognizing and properly using the laws of nature."[5]

C. Green development refers to and surpasses sustainable development. Sustainable development stresses that it is necessary to practically protect resources and environment, and to not only address current development but also to consider the sake of future generations. Furthermore, we should not exploit resources left by our ancestors without constraint, nor deplete the resources of future generations. It is also important that we do not waste resources nor reduce environmental pollution only after causing such contamination.[6] In the practice of sustainable development, China is now not only fully committed to following international trends in sustainable development, but is also reflecting unique Chinese features. We have gradually begun to reflect China, and highlight Chinese innovation in sustainable development. We first promised to provide a guide for sustainable consumption, and then encountered the fundamental limitations of capitalist development. This marked that China's sustainable development practices were gradually surpassing the Western concept of sustainable development. Furthermore, after 20 years of practical exploration, China's sustainable development practices have transformed into a transcendent development idea with Chinese characteristics—green development.

4.2 Practical Innovation

The "greenization" of China's development idea was not accomplished overnight, but entailed a long exploration process. The CPC's understanding of green development also experienced important changes.

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[4]Marx & Engels: *Complete Works of Marx and Engels*, pp. 519, Vol. 20. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972.

[5]Engels: *Dialectics of Nature*, *Complete Works of Marx and Engels*, pp. 383–384, Vol. 4. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995.

[6]Jiang Zemin: *Correctly Dealing with a Number of Significant Relationships in Socialist Modernization Construction*, *Collected Works of Jiang Zemin*, p. 460, Vol. 1, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2006.

As early as the 1970s, the CPC noticed that environmental problems were emerging alongside economic development. However, at that stage, limited to the development stage and overall understanding at that time, environmental protection remained in its initial stages.

Upon entering the 1990s, as the global environmental crisis intensified, China's ecological environment problems were also highlighted, and the CPC Central Committee started to realize, from a global scope, that ecological civilization was closely associated with China's all-round development. Therefore, in the late 1990s, the 15th Party Congress stated that they would implement a strategy of sustainable development. In this period, ecological construction and environmental protection were based on the perspective of long-term development.

In 2002, the report of the 16th CPC Congress incorporated "sustainable development" into the goal of building an all-round moderately prosperous society. In 2007, the report of the 17th CPC Congress considered comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable development as an important feature of the concept of scientific development, and aimed to "build a resource-saving and environment-friendly society". The "construction of ecological civilization" was presented as one of the five major goals of building an all-round moderately prosperous society by 2020.

In 2012, the report of the 18th CPC Congress further highlighted the status of ecological civilization. Not only was this concept proclaimed to be one of the five major goals to build an all-round moderately prosperous society, but it was also stated that, "ecological civilization construction should be a key priority, and integrated into all aspects of society and the processes of economic, political, cultural, and social construction". The Report titled "Vigorously Promoting Ecological Civilization Construction" dedicated an entire chapter on how to ensure an ecological civilization, so as to effectively build the five-in-one "general layout" of socialism with Chinese characteristics: economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological civilization.

On April 25, 2015, the *Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Accelerating the Ecological Civilization Construction* declared that it is necessary to "jointly promote new industrialization, informatization, urbanization, agricultural modernization, and greenization". It was here that the concept of "greenization" was first used, and the "four new modernizations" became "five new modernizations", reflecting that the CPC Central Committee attached great importance to the creation of an ecological civilization.

The 5th Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the CPC further committed that green development would become one of the new development strategies guiding development in the 13th Five-Year Plan period and building of an all-round moderately prosperous society. Thus, the aim for an ecological civilization was promoted to a new level.

In general, in the process of improving the blueprint of socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics, green development went from being "unachievable" to "achievable" and from holding an "auxiliary position" to a "primary position". Furthermore, it went from no goals to many goals, and from a general goal to an important goal. Green development is now an important pillar of the general layout

of the five-in-one socialist construction with Chinese characteristics. It is key within all five areas, political, economic, cultural, social, and ecological.

The development idea of greenization also gradually drives the greenization of China's national development goal. In the early stages of the founding of New China, the goal of national development did not even consider any impact on the ecological environment. After the reform and opening-up, because of a rather one-eyed view about "focusing on economic construction", economic development was pursued at any cost while the costs to the environment were ignored.

The 10th Five-Year Plan was the first to implement sustainable development within the national strategy, regarded as a "long-term strategy for the survival and development of the Chinese nation". A series of quantitative development indicators directly related to green development were introduced: "the natural growth rate of the population is controlled at 9%, and the nationwide total population is limited to 1.33 billion by 2005. The rates of ecological deterioration are kept within certain limits, forest coverage is increased to 18.2%, and green coverage in urban built-up areas is increased to 35%". Furthermore, "urban and rural environmental quality is improved, and the total discharge of major pollutants is reduced by 10% more than the discharge rates in 2000".

The 11th Five-Year Plan introduced a number of innovations regarding green development:

(1) To speed up building a resource-saving and environment-friendly society;
(2) For the first time, resource- and environment-orientated goals were included as major goals;
(3) A special article was included focusing on "building a resource-saving and environment-friendly society", with five chapters dedicated to these issues; and
(4) It was suggested that a binding indicator system (incorporating resource and environmental objectives) be introduced to clarify and strengthen government responsibility, and that green development goals would be connected with the assessment of cadres.

The 12th Five-Year Plan considered green development to represent the speeding up of the transformation of the economic development mode, and in Part VI to "build a resource-saving and environment-friendly society" with "green development" as the theme. The 12th Five-Year Plan further highlighted the green development indicators, and significantly increased the number of indicators. Among the 24 national economic development and social development indicators, eight concerned resource and environment indicators, accounting for 33.3% of all indicators, including four main pollutant indicators and two forest growth indicators. Among all 28 actual indicators, 12 are resource and environment indicators, accounting for 42.9%, close to 50%.

The *Recommendations for the 13th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development* adopted at the 5th Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the CPC clearly stated that the core goal of the 13th Five-Year Plan was the "overall improvement of ecological environment quality", including the following aims: to increase the green aspects and reduce carbon levels of industry and daily life,

increase energy resource development and utilization efficiency, effectively control energy and water consumption, land construction and total carbon emissions, reduce the total discharge of major pollutants, and establish an outline of main functional areas and ecological security barriers.

This fully reflects the new idea, goal, and direction of green development, and will kick-start a new period of green development in China and socialist ecological civilization. Thus, China will be at the fore of international green development in the 21st century.

4.3 Requirements for Green Development

The definition of green development includes three levels.

A. At the level of economic activity, green development can be defined as the green restructuring of resource use, and the forming of a new green production function. Regarding the new green ecological function, the function aims to develop toward a reasonable optimal configuration capable of reflecting ecological value. Furthermore, resources constantly flow toward a green configuration to promote the continual increase, accumulation, and change of green elements in human economic production and consumption activities. Eventually, human economic activities, production, and consumption patterns will cross the "green" line. Thus, human development will become sustainable development.

B. In the development stage, green development means to achieve a leap forward in green development. It also means an increase in energy resource consumption with a relatively low development level (per capita GDP). Green development at this stage means the separate growth of losses caused by environmental pollution and other ecological deficits resulting from the speed of China's economic and social development. In the language of development economics, an environmental Kuznets curve will be realized. A Kuznets curve divides the different relations between humans and nature into four stages: a period of slow expansion of ecological deficits, a period of fast expansion of ecological deficits, a period of ecological deficit reduction, and a period of ecological deficit surplus according to the different periods of human development. According to the traditional Western development mode, ecological deficit will peak only when per capita income reaches a high level in a later period of industrial civilization. Only then will humans gradually revise their development mode and allow economic development to be gradually separated from resource consumption and pollution emissions. By then, we will mainly rely on technological progress and production mode changes, thereby entering a period of ecological deficit reduction.

However, we believe that the different relationships between humans and nature depend not only on the human development period and development level, but also on the choice of the development mode and development path. The degree of tolerance and accommodation offered by the natural system is very limited, and the

bearing capacity of China's natural system is at its limit. If we continue to develop according to the traditional development mode, then it is likely that the safety threshold of the natural system will be exceeded. This will pose a major threat to China's economic and social development. Therefore, green development in China must recognize the subjective initiatives of humans, the macro guidance of the national strategy, and the strengths of local innovation. It is also imperative to pay attention to the subjectivity of enterprise innovation and ensure universal participation by all. The speed of the transformation of economic development must be increased; this can be achieved by political will, institutional arrangements, cultural training, and international cooperation. The original development path and environmental Kuznets curve must be changed, as we must realize the separation of development from non-renewable resource consumption, pollutant emissions, and greenhouse gas emissions. Resource, environment, and ecological costs must be reduced. Thus, we must enter a stage of ecological deficit reduction or ecological surplus in a period of relatively low economic development and human development.

C. In the period of the ultimate goal, green development represents the "integration of humans and nature" and the "mutual benefit between humans and nature" so as to realize the goal that humans come from nature, let nature take its course, benefit from nature, and nurture nature. The former development concept criticized black development, which "exploited resources left by our ancestors without constraint, and used up the resources of future generations". However, it failed to look for a path to promote the sustainable development of humans, and it took a negative view of the relationship between humans and nature. Different from previous development concepts, green development pursues a positive, active, and mutually beneficial relationship between humans and nature. Green development stresses the importance of forming a mutually beneficial relationship between humans and nature—"one generation plants the trees in whose shade another generation rests"—by the orderly use, control, and input of the ecological environment.[7] In green development, the role of humans is more active. Humans not only "follow nature", but can also "benefit nature". Humans not only come from nature and let nature take its course, but can also benefit nature and nurture nature. Thus, humans and nature can not only coexist but also flourish together. This concept outlines the future sustainable development path of humans, and is also the only way for humans to exist in the future.

Green development requires the complete awareness of the unity of three major systems, reflects the value of the ecological environment, and gives play to the energy of different subjects. It requires respect for the unity of the economic system, social system, and the natural system in development. This means that green development is not only the development of the natural system, but also an organic unity of the economic, social, and natural systems. We shall integrate green

[7]An exclusive interview of Jao Tsung-I: human and nature not only are integrated, but also benefit each other, *Nan Fang Daily*, November 18, 2009.

development into all aspects including the processes of economic construction, political construction, cultural construction, and social construction. We shall also promote the idea to integrate development and protection, and adhere to the strategic concept that development is the absolute principle. Development must be green development, cyclic development, and low-carbon development. We must balance the relationship between development and protection. Finally, in the creation of a natural system, we must promote the idea that mountains, water, forests, fields, and lakes are a living community. We need to enhance the capacity for ecosystem circulation via overall protection, system repair, and the comprehensive treatment of natural ecology based on the overall consideration of the various elements of the natural ecology. We need to look above and below mountains, above and underground, on land, in oceans, and upstream and downstream in river basins, all based on the integrality, systematicness, and inherent laws of the ecosystem. In this way we can maintain ecological balance.

Green development demands that we fully reflect the value of the natural system in development. Comrade Xi Jinping explained that, "Green hills and blue waters are gold and silver mountains",[8] and therefore we must fully recognize that in green development, both the ecological environment and natural resources are of significant value. Only by depending on a combination of government and market means can the value be reflected in economic and social development activities. In terms of strategy, we should build up the idea that green hills and blue waters are gold and silver mountains. Fresh air, clean water, beautiful mountains and rivers, fertile land, and biodiversity are essential for human survival. Forests, grasslands, rivers, lakes, wetlands, oceans, and other natural ecologies have irreplaceable value for human development. We shall recognize the value of the concepts of natural value and natural capital. Nature conservation is the process of the appreciation of natural value and natural capital. It means to protect and develop productive forces, and should obtain reasonable returns and economic compensation. In terms of the means, we should establish a property right system for natural resources with clear ownership, well-defined power, responsibility, and effective supervision. We also need to focus on solving various problems such as the small number of natural resource owners and unclear ownership boundaries. We must make better use of the economic leverage for environmental governance and ecological protection, establish a systematic environmental governance market system, and make full use of the optimal allocation effect of the market mechanism on resources. The price of resource

[8]On September 7, 2013, Comrade Xi Jinping comprehensively interpreted the "two mountains" theory while delivering a speech at Nazarbayev University in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan: "We want not only green hills and blue waters, but also gold and silver mountains. We prefer green hills and blue waters, rather than gold and silver mountains, and green hills and blue waters are gold and silver mountains". The "two mountains" theory has three stages. In the first, green hills and blue waters are exchanged for gold and silver mountains, and in the second stage, we not only want gold and silver mountains, but also to keep the green hills and blue waters. In the third stage, green hills and blue waters are gold and silver mountains. Xinhua News Agency, Astana, September 7, 2013.

products should be increased, and we need to establish a system of resource user fees and an ecological compensation system reflecting market supply and demand, resource scarcity, ecological value, and intergenerational compensation.

Green development requires us to promote the energy of different development subjects in development. Different subjects play different roles in green development. Therefore, we should not only fully engage their energy, but also prevent any conflict or apathy. First, green development requires us to realize a leap forward in development, of which the government plays a leading and supervisory role. This requires an evaluation system to be established, as well as a supervision system, assessment method, and a reward and punishment mechanism. Indicators (e.g., resource consumption, environmental damage, and ecological benefit) can be incorporated into the evaluation system of social and economic development. Second, green development will solve the market externality, which requires tapping into the energy and self-discipline of market subjects. Therefore, we should pay attention to building a fee system for resource use and a system of ecological compensation, reflecting market supply and demand, resource scarcity, natural value, and intergenerational compensation. We need to strive to solve the problem of underpriced natural resources, the fact that production and development costs are lower than the social cost, and ecological protection without reasonable returns. A market system should be established, one that makes more use of the economic leverage for environmental governance and ecological protection. The issue of backward market subjects and market system development should also be addressed, as should poor social participation. Third, green development requires all-round development, demanding both participation and supervision from social organizations and the public. Since the 5th Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the CPC, green development now marks the beginning of a new period of green development for all people, and has established new societal attitudes towards ecological civilization.

4.4 Main Aspects

As China's green development plan, the 13th Five-Year Plan clearly presented the goal to achieve the overall improvement of the quality of the ecological environment by 2020. China's green development idea and practices can be divided into five major aspects.

(1) **Optimize the ecological space layout**

Accelerate promoting the strategy of main functional areas. The aim here is to promote forming the overall layout of the main functional areas for optimized development, key development, limited development, and prohibited development.

It is also essential to spatially regulate and control the development mode via a planning map and functional area directory, promote the development and evaluation of various regions based on their classifications according to the positioning of main functional areas, and to provide different types of products (e.g., industrial products, agricultural products, and ecological products). On the basis of planning the main functional area, we will comprehensively consider various types of spatial planning, promote the "integration of multiple planning", and strive to build a nationwide, unified, and mutually associated spatial planning system of hierarchical management. Spatial management and spatial structure optimization will form the main content of the strategy of the main functional areas. The strategy for the main functional areas is to strive to promote the implementation of the spatial development of national land on the basis of planning and with use-control as the main method. Furthermore, it entails coordinating relationships between urban and rural development and between regional development, as well as building patterns in the following areas: scientific and rational urbanization, agricultural development, and ecological security. This is achieved from the perspective of comprehensive development in economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological spheres. Moreover, the development of marine resources and the maintenance of national maritime rights and interests will also be incorporated into the construction of the spatial layout of ecological civilization.

(2) **Build a climate adaptive society**

The core goal of promoting low carbon cyclic development is to control total carbon emissions, and enter the stage of "absolute emission reduction" as soon as possible. This requires China to fully cooperate with the international community, and to actively adjust our energy consumption structure. We must also increase non-fossil energy consumption, improve energy utilization efficiency, and achieve the promised greenhouse gas emission reduction goal. Similarly, we need to actively increase carbon sinks and address global climate changes. Furthermore, when combining the circular economy with "innovation-driven development" and "economic structure adjustment strategy", great importance is attached to scientific and technological innovation, the achievement of new green industrialization, and the promotion of energy production and consumption revolution. Equally important are economy development and the promotion of fundamental changes in resource utilization methods. This includes establishing a resource recycling system for all society.

(3) **Building a resource-saving society**

The core goal of energy conservation and the efficient use of resources require the control of total energy consumption, the total consumption of water resources and construction land, and total consumption and intensity.

China must strictly control its total coal consumption. In 2014, China's coal consumption accounted for 50.6% of the world's total consumption, and for 66.0% of its energy mix. The aim is to reduce this to below 60% by 2020. This can be achieved in two ways. The first is to ensure that coal consumption becomes cleaner. It remains a polluting energy resource and should be replaced by clean green electric power. The second is to further develop fossil energy. Both the 12th Five-Year Plan and the 13th Five-Year Plan further strengthened the role of non-fossil energy. In 2014, China's hydropower consumption accounted for 27.4% of the world's total consumption and China's consumption of other renewable resources accounted for 16.7% of the world's consumption. Regarding wind energy, China consumed 12.4% of the world total, and 15.7% for solar energy. China will become a world leader, and innovator, providing inspiration for the green energy revolution in the 21st century.

Water is the most important and scarce resource in China. China's total water consumption is currently 622 billion m^3, with agricultural water consumption accounting for 63%. Therefore, the effective control of the total water consumption centers on the effective control of the total agricultural water consumption, and realizing the growth of agricultural products and the added value of agriculture. This should begin to separate from agricultural water consumption. In addition, industrial water consumption has already peaked and is now reducing somewhat, thus achieving complete separation from the added value of industry. If effective measures are implemented regarding industrial water consumption, the total water consumption of agriculture and industry will peak and then decrease during the 13th Five-Year Plan period, and is supplemented by other forms of water consumption, especially ecological water consumption.

After implementing a "red line" for arable land in 2005 (outlined in the 11th Five-Year Plan), the amount of arable land of China has not decreased, while the amount of built up areas has. Furthermore, without a corresponding increase in the urban population, a new trend has emerged where land urbanization is now growing faster than population urbanization. The 13th Five-Year Plan has clearly addressed the red line in this respect and includes a number of effective measures, thus improving the economic and population density of urban construction areas.

This requires the promotion of fundamental changes in the resource utilization patterns. Such changes can be achieved via the intensive and economical utilization of resources and stronger saving management. Significant reductions in energy, water and land consumption will also be made and improve utilization efficiency and benefits. From the perspective of the entire industry chain of production, circulation, and consumption, the following action must be taken: promote reduction, reuse and recycle, improve saving management within the entire process of resource and energy consumption, and significant reductions must be made in energy, water, and land consumption. Such actions will help to improve use efficiency and benefits. The development of energy saving and low-carbon industries

should be supported, as well as the advent of new and renewable energy sources. We must ensure China's energy security. Additionally, we need to act to strengthen China's water source protection and total water consumption management, and create a water-saving society. We also need to strictly maintain the red line of arable land protection, control land use, and strengthen exploration, protection, and the reasonable development of mineral resources.

(4) **Build an environment-friendly society**

The core goal of declaring war on pollution is to significantly reduce the total discharge of main pollutants. To ensure environmental protection, we must continue to strictly control efforts to reduce pollutant emissions and reduce the flow control of environmental contaminants. Next, we must further promote the overall improvement of the quality of the ecological environment, especially acknowledging those outstanding environmental problems affecting the health and interests of people as the primary issues. Thus, we need to improve water health in key river basins, and monitor and prevent inhalable particulate matter (i.e., PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). We also need to reverse heavy metal pollution in soil. During the 13th Five-Year Plan period, we must continue with "significant reduction", and expand the range of target pollutants. For example, we need to use total nitrogen, total phosphorus, and volatile organic compound emissions as binding indicators. Moreover, we shall focus on improving the environmental quality. China is currently engaged in "three big battles": (1) the *Air Pollution Prevention and Control Action Plan*; (2) the *Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Water Pollution* has been promulgated and put into effect; and (3) the *Soil Pollution Prevention and Control Action Plan of China* is currently being formulated. Its goals are as follows: national soil pollution aggravation will not have exceeded acceptable limits by 2020, the quality of soil environment will be stable, farmland soil will be effectively protected, and the environment security of construction land soil is basically guaranteed.

(5) Protect and repair the natural ecosystem

The core goal of creating ecological security barriers is to significantly enhance China's national ecosystem stability,[9] as well as establish said barriers. This includes implementing major ecological restoration projects, strengthening the production capacity of ecological products, and promoting the comprehensive control of desertification, stony desertification, and soil erosion, and intensifying water conservancy. It also includes ensuring that forest coverage reaches more than 23%, comprehensive vegetation coverage of grassland reaches 56%, and wetland areas are not less than 800 million mu. We are also seeking to ensure that more than 50% of governable land suffering desertification is controlled, the retention rate of natural coastlines is not lower than 35%, and that the loss rate of biodiversity is basically controlled.

[9] *Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Accelerating the Ecological Civilization Construction*, April 25, 2015.

4.5 Summary

"Civilization will be prosperous in the case of ecological prosperity, and will decline in the case of ecological decline."[10] Green development is a new development concept based on a deep understanding of this historical law. Green development means the comprehensive transformation of development in various aspects including ideological understanding, strategy framework, policy support, and mechanism construction. Green development will become the guideline for the future development of China, and indicates the uniqueness of China in terms of its political ecology, cultural ecology, and social ecology. These features can coordinate with each other, jointly impact on China's natural ecological system, and create a unique ecological civilization path for China.

Green development is the biggest green contribution in the world. The philosophical origin of the term "ecological civilization" presented by the CPC is the philosophical view of the "integration of humans and nature", which is "the end result of traditional cultural thought in China". It is also the "contribution of the Chinese culture to the future survival of humans worldwide". Moreover, as can be found by examining China's long-term development practices and a summary of experiences and lessons, Chinese communists have incorporated Marxist dialectics of nature and Western theory of sustainable development as presented by Engels. They formed the concept of scientific development, stressing "tolerance, harmony, and unity", and devised the "five-in-one" socialist framework with Chinese characteristics. This framework integrates economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological development, and has enabled "green development" to become incorporated into the comprehensive five-in-one strategic framework.

This systematic, comprehensive, and theoretical "green development strategy" is very applicable in practice, and represents the biggest green contribution in the world. It is also a centralized reflection of China's various achievements including its cultural confidence and consciousness, and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and civilization. Promoting China's idea of ecological civilization means that China should take the lead in demonstrating green innovation, with the largest ecological surplus, and the greatest energy savings and emission reduction. China will lead with 20% of the world's population to realize new industrialization and green modernization.

[10]Xi Jinping: The civilization will be prosperous in case of ecological prosperity- promoting ecological construction and creating "green Zhejiang", *QiuShi*, No. 13, 2003.