

Tian Guoli Attended the COP15 “Financial Sector Supporting Biodiversity” Forum

On October 11, the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations *Convention on Biological Diversity* (“COP15”) was held in Kunming, Yunnan province. On October 12, President Xi Jinping attended the Leaders’ Summit and gave a keynote speech via video link. On the morning of October 15, Tian Guoli, Secretary of Party Committee and Chairman of China Construction Bank Corporation, attended the “Financial Sector Supporting Biodiversity” forum and delivered a speech via video link.

Tian Guoli said that currently, the loss of global biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems have posed a material risk to the survival and development of humankind. As socially responsible corporate citizens, financial institutions should enhance consensus on three things. First, biodiversity conservation is an important content of the building of ecological civilization. Xi Jinping’s thought on ecological civilization has much in common with the three major goals of the *Convention on Biological Diversity* and the 2050 vision of humanity “living in harmony with nature”, which has provided important guidance for the realization of coordinated development between biodiversity conservation and high-quality economic development. Second, biodiversity conservation and addressing climate change support each other and must be implemented in a coordinated manner. Climate change is a major cause of loss of biodiversity, while loss of biodiversity can damage the capacity of ecosystems to sequester carbon, thus aggravating climate deterioration. Third, financial institutions should take the initiative to integrate into biodiversity conservation, give full play to their own advantages to mobilize social capital, deeply engage in global environmental governance, and promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization of resources. Meanwhile, financial institutions should avoid any negative impact of investment and financing activities that may have on biodiversity, which may cause financial risks.

Tian Guoli mentioned that the banking industry should especially pay attention to two major trends — digitization and green tide. The concept of green finance should become a consensus in the industry. Only by daring to explore models that promise coexistence and common prosperity between enterprise growth and green development can banks become riders of the green tide and win the future. CCB has made green the ecological base color of New Finance practices, continuously expanded the ecological layout of green finance, built eco-friendly investment and financing models, and accelerated the green and low-carbon transition of the credit structure. As at the end of September, CCB’s green loans exceeded RMB1.6 trillion. Meanwhile, CCB has continued to enrich the ecological connotation of green finance, carried out New Finance actions that integrate technology, inclusiveness and sharing, and empowered the green development of the economy and society with digital technology. Moreover, CCB has continuously strengthened the risk bottom line of green finance. Adhering to the idea of biodiversity conservation, CCB has incorporated climate and biodiversity risks into the management of credit business throughout the whole process.

Tian Guoli said that CCB will further base itself on Chinese characteristics, emphasize the ecological base color, and bring its financial attributes into full play. CCB will

actively participate in, promote and lead the development of eco-friendly banks, make innovation in green finance products, serve the value realization of ecological products and the ecological protection compensation reform, and increase support to the green, circular and low-carbon economy. During the 14th Five-year Plan period, CCB will achieve a rise in both proportion and growth of credit loans in the field of biodiversity, contributing its bit to building a shared future for all life on earth.

“Financial Sector Supporting Biodiversity” is one of the seven major forums of COP15, and CCB is a co-organizer of this forum. Representatives from international organizations, governmental departments, financial institutions, scientific research institutes and social organizations will discuss the theories and practices of Chinese financial institutions’ support to biodiversity under the framework of the United Nations *Convention on Biological Diversity*.

The heads of CCB Yunnan Branch and the head of the Credit Management Department of the Head Office attended the forum.

Full text of the speech:

**Focus on Ecological Objectives, Take on Social Responsibility, and
Build a New Finance Model for Harmonious Coexistence of All
Things**

**— Speech at the “Financial Sector Supporting Biodiversity” Forum
of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United
Nations *Convention on Biological Diversity* (COP15)**

Tian Guoli, Chairman of China Construction Bank Corporation and Chairman of
China Banking Association

October 15, 2021

Dear leaders and guests,

I’d like to thank the host unit for inviting me. Known as the “Kingdom of Animals and Plants”, Yunnan is abundant with biodiversity resources. COP15 has chosen Yunnan as its venue to discuss the plans for biodiversity conservation to build a harmonious and beautiful home together. It’s my great honor to have this opportunity to explore with you on this topic.

Currently, the loss of global biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems have posed a material risk to the survival and development of humankind. This year, the theme of

the International Day for Biological Diversity is “We’re part of the solution”. I think that financial institutions, as socially responsible corporate citizens, should enhance consensus on three things:

First, biodiversity conservation is an important content of the building of ecological civilization. Biodiversity conservation is of great significance to ensuring global ecological safety and building ecological civilization. China has laid down measures for systematic governance of mountains, rivers, forests, farmland, lakes, grasslands, deserts and glaciers, and carried out key projects for biodiversity conservation. In September last year, President Xi Jinping shared China’s experiences at the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity. He emphasized that “China has given high priority to building ecological civilization and incorporated it into all aspects and the whole process of China’s economic and social development”. Xi Jinping’s thought on ecological civilization has much in common with the three major goals of the *Convention on Biological Diversity* and the 2050 vision of humanity “living in harmony with nature”, which has provided important guidance for the realization of coordinated development between biodiversity conservation and high-quality economic development.

Second, biodiversity conservation should be promoted along with addressing climate change in a coordinated manner. President Xi Jinping solemnly declared on behalf of the Chinese government the vision and goals of peaking carbon emissions and achieving carbon neutrality, fully demonstrating China’s commitment as a large responsible nation. The “30·60” goals not only focus on climate issues but also provide support to biodiversity conservation. On the one hand, climate change is a major cause of loss of biodiversity; on the other hand, the loss of biodiversity will damage the capacity of ecosystems to sequester carbon, thus aggravating climate deterioration. Addressing climate change and biodiversity conservation support each other and they must be advanced in a coordinated manner.

Third, financial institutions should take the initiative to integrate into biodiversity conservation. According to the statistics provided by the Secretariat of the *Convention on Biological Diversity*, the average annual funding gap on biodiversity conservation was about USD711 billion. Financial institutions should fully leverage their own advantages to mobilize social capital, promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization of resources, and deeply engage in global environmental governance. Meanwhile, financial institutions should avoid any negative impact of investment and financing activities that may have on biodiversity, which may cause financial risks.

Traditional banks were once being regarded as “21st century dinosaurs”, and being viewed as an economic species on the verge of extinction. In fact, the survival of any species depends on whether it can adapt to changes in the environment. The current banking industry should especially pay attention to two trends — digitization and green tide. Digital transformation has become a hot topic, and the concept of green finance should become a consensus in the industry even more so. Only by participating and integrating into the rich, diverse natural and economic and social ecology, and daring to explore models that promise coexistence and common prosperity between enterprise growth and green development can banks become riders of the green tide and win the future.

“The interests to be considered should be the interests of all”. CCB has made green the

ecological base color of New Finance practices, actively supported green transition and development, and striven to deliver impressive “green results”:

—We have continued to expand the ecological layout of green finance. We have built eco-friendly investment and financing models and accelerated the green and low-carbon transition of the credit structure. As at the end of September, CCB’s green loans exceeded RMB1.6 trillion. Our biodiversity conservation footprints are all over China. In Anhui, through on-lending of overseas borrowings, we have improved the building of state-level nature reserves which are known as the “gene bank” of species resources and “breeding farm” and “laboratory” for species genetics, and protected 1,881 species. In Inner Mongolia, we have supported enterprises in exploring the “two-way carbon neutralization” model featuring desertification control by tree planting and desertification control by PV. The species in the Kubuqi desert have increased from less than 10 to 530, including more than 100 wild animal and plant species that disappeared many years ago. In Hubei, we have supported the Yangtze River Protection campaign and assisted China Three Gorges Corporation in the first batch of projects involving the upgrading of drainage systems and water ecological restoration. In Yunnan, we have helped build plank roads in the Xishuangbanna Wild Elephant Valley and provided fund supervision and settlement services to the ecological restoration of the habitat of Asian elephants in Puer and the construction of food bases. We have helped solve the problem of degradation of habitats for 10 herds of 181 Asian elephants, and helped them to have a beautiful home.

—We have continued to enrich the ecological connotation of green finance. We have carried out New Finance actions that integrate technology, inclusiveness and sharing, and established the “Smart Ecosystem” green finance service platform to empower the green development of the economy and society with digital technology. The “One Mobile Phone for All Services” that CCB helped develop with Yunnan Province launched the first “Cross-province Government Affairs Services” and “Peak Carbon Emissions and Carbon Neutrality Column”. Those are vivid practices of New Finance actions that make better use of data, save a lot of legwork and reduce carbon footprint. We have issued multi-currency green finance bonds for many years straight and underwritten the first carbon neutrality bonds and the first sustainability-linked bonds in China, which received an overwhelming market response. We have launched the “CCB-Wind Green ESG Bond Issuance Index”, promoted the establishment of the national green development fund as a founding shareholder, and joined the Green Investment Principles (GIP) for the Belt and Road. CCB obtained an A from MSCI’s ESG rating, achieving the top ranks among global large banks.

—We have continued to strengthen the risk bottom line of green finance. Adhering to biodiversity conservation, we have exercised “veto power” over issues of environmental and climate risks and incorporated climate and biodiversity risks into the management of credit business throughout the whole process. Biodiversity review has become the prepositive procedure of project evaluation, and the proportion of loans to projects with high energy consumption and high pollution has further declined.

Biological safety concerns the life and health of the people, the long-term peace and order of the country, and the sustainable development of the Chinese nation. It is an important part of national security and also a major force that can influence and even reshape the global landscape. Protecting Mother Earth together and effectively preventing loss of biodiversity are of great urgency and are our bounden duty. CCB will further base itself on Chinese characteristics, emphasize the ecological base color and

bring its financial attributes into full play. CCB will actively participate in, promote and lead the development of eco-friendly banks, make innovation in green finance products, serve the value realization of ecological products and the ecological protection compensation reform, and increase support to the green, circular and low-carbon economy. During the 14th Five-year Plan period, CCB will achieve a rise in both proportion and growth of credit loans in the field of biodiversity, and contribute its bit to building a shared future for all life on earth.

Thank you!