

Aide Memoire and Agenda

Workshop on Governance for Sustainable Development: Global Practices and the Chinese Experience

(May 25-26, 2009; Beijing)

Sponsorship

The Workshop on Governance for Sustainable Development: Global Practices and the Chinese Experience will be jointly organized by the China Center for Comparative Politics and Economics (CCCPE) in partnership with East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii. The Workshop will be held from May 25-26, 2009 in Beijing.

Objectives

The objectives of the Workshop are to examine emerging regional and global issues in governance for sustainable development, discuss governance reform and innovations for sustainable development in China, and provide a forum to exchange experience and practices among training and research institutions and government officials.

Focus of Presentations and Discussion

The resource persons from East-West Center will present key issues and emerging trends in governance for sustainable development in Asia and globally, followed by and paired with a presentation of the Chinese experience. The Workshop will examine the following thematic dimensions of governance for sustainable development:

China's political economy in the global and regional context

This presentation has two objectives. The first is to present a macro-perspective on the dynamics of modern political economies that can aid in the design of sustainable governance models. The second is to apply this perspective to the imbalances facing both the American and Chinese political economies.

As the present financial crisis demonstrates, the American political economy suffers from fundamental imbalances. Certain business interests and markets have grown at the expense of society and state. The interests of financial capital, in particular, have been able to stay largely unregulated, allowing them to maximize private profits, yet creating large social externalities. Fashioning competitive, well-regulated and socially efficient financial markets to redress these imbalances is the greatest governance challenge facing the United States and the world's financial architecture at present.

In a similar fashion, China possesses a highly imbalanced political economy. China's political economy was originally designed for the mobilization and control of resources to ensure high-speed economic growth. The Chinese state thus remains heavily involved

in many markets and businesses, as well as in governing social forces. The result has been constrained domestic consumption, since the government's growth-oriented policies have created large distortions in income distribution and economic inequality. The macro-perspective presented here will elucidate the challenges facing China's governance reforms and, hopefully, foster a dialogue on global experiences in implementing governance reform.

Urbanization and its Impact on the Environment

Sustainable development is inexorably linked to economic growth, urbanization, and the environment. Globally, regionally, nationally and locally the governance of this complex inter-linked system, with its myriad of associated and more local individual issues, is a critical and ever-changing challenge. Key emerging global and regional urban and environment related governance issues specific to the above inter-linked system include: (a) rapid growth and expansion of urban centers and populations, (in terms of issues of planned and unplanned development, horizontal expansion into peri-urban and peri-agricultural land); (b) environmental impacts of urban development (specifically in terms of land use and environmental degradation); (c) global/regional climate change and urbanization (issues of estimating impacts and integrating climate change adaptation and mitigation into urban planning); (d) economics of eco-systems and eco-resources (economic evaluation of eco-systems, and the loss of eco-resources to urban areas) and (e) urban adaptation to change (planning for the future).

These issues will be discussed in the context of existing global and regional experience and sound practices and the Chinese experience in the application of these to China's situation.

Decentralization and Local Governance for Service Delivery

Over the past few decades, many countries have adopted decentralization policies and programs. However, the results of these efforts have been mixed. Successful experiments in decentralization have yielded many benefits such as improved access to services, citizen participation, and mobilization of local resources, and the institutionalization of democratic political process at the local level. Decentralization's limitations have also been highlighted by the skeptics – including the “elite capture” of local governments, the weak financial and administrative capacity of local governments, widening economic and social disparities among regions and increased levels of local corruption and nepotism. There are a set of implementation issues which are critical to enhancing our understanding of decentralization and local governance practice, including mechanisms for local participation and accountability and service delivery.

After an introductory framework, this segment of the workshop will present case studies of local Government in New York and Hawaii: Comparisons and Contrasts. Government in the United States operates at numerous levels to offer citizens a range of services. This presentation will examine how local and state governments are structured in two states. As one of the original states, New York has an evolved system based on a strong tradition of local autonomy. In contrast, Hawaii as the last state to join the union has a

considerably more centralized system. Experience of India and China will also be presented as examples of different paths to decentralization and local governance.

Civil Society Engagement in Governance

Civil society organizations are playing an increasingly important role in governance. In many countries in Asia and the Pacific, they identify and publicize critical socio-economic and political issues, challenge abuses of power and build coalitions to formulate new policies and monitor government performance. Furthermore, civil society assists governments in delivering services. Civil society organizations fulfill these and related roles at the local, national, regional and global levels. At the local level, civil society organizations are actively engaged in community development, skill improvements for sustainable livelihoods, and access to basic social services. At the national level, civil society organizations often perform a watchdog function to improve the quality of electoral and parliamentary process. At the global level, civil society organizations perform advocacy functions for global public goods, such as: debt relief for highly indebted and Least Developed Countries; greater awareness of climate change; implementation of UN conventions and treaty bodies dealing with civil and political rights; transparency in global governance; and increased foreign assistance from the donor community.

This presentation will examine the emerging issues and trends in civil society engagement in governance process – including new spaces for CSOs, interactions between civil society, government and the private sector, roles of global civil society in promoting global public goods, capacity and accountability of CSOs and their impact on democratic governance. The Chinese experience and practice in engagement with civil society will be presented.

Legal and judicial reform including labor rights and contract law

Effective judicial systems and processes are necessary to strengthen governance for sustainable development. The lack of independence of the judiciary, court delays, outdated laws and slow procedures, corruption in the judiciary, increased crime and violence, crisis in prison systems, labor rights and contract law, and the lack of legal training facilities including outdated curriculum in law schools are some of issues that need to be dealt with. Effective judicial systems are required to enforce property rights, check abuses of government power, and enable exchanges between private parties.

This presentation will examine Asian regional experiences in legal and judicial reform for sustainable development including organization and management of the court system, humanitarian law, labor rights, minority rights, and contract law. The Chinese experience in introduction of new legal and judicial reforms to meet the requirement of "socialist market economy" will be discussed.

Participants

About 25 persons are expected to participate in the Workshop including representatives of Chinese training and research institutions and universities, Chinese government

officials, resource persons from East-West Center and representatives of other external partner agencies.

Expected Outcomes

The Workshop will contribute to our understanding of emerging issues in governance for sustainable development, and promote dialogue on the Chinese experience in implementing governance reform in the selected thematic areas. It will also promote capacity building of training and research institutions in China, and facilitate sharing of experiences and lessons learned among practitioners and resource persons.

Contacts

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Beijing, China

Shabbir Cheema
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Senior Fellow, Research Program
East-West Center
Honolulu, Hawaii

AGENDA

**The Workshop on Governance for Sustainable Development:
Global Practices and the Chinese Experience
Beijing, China
25-26 May 2009**

Co-sponsored by: China Center for Comparative Politics and Economics (CCCPE), in partnership with East-West Center

Venue : No.36, Xixie Street, Xicheng District, Beijing

MONDAY, 25 May 2009

9: 00 a.m. – 5: 00 p.m.

WORKSHOP

Venue: CCCPE Seminar Room

9: 00 – 10: 00 a.m.

OPENING STATEMENTS

Keping Yu, Director
China Center for Comparative Politics and Economics

Khalid Malik
UN Resident Coordinator/ UNDP Resident Representative
United Nations Development Programme, Beijing

Nancy Lewis
Director of Research Program
East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii 96848

INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

10: 00 – 10: 15 a.m.

BREAK

Workshop Moderators:

Hairong Lai
Deputy Director
China Center for Comparative Politics and Economics

Shabbir Cheema
Director, Asia-Pacific Governance and Democracy
Initiative (AGDI) and Senior Fellow, Research Program
East-West Center

10: 15 a.m. – 12: 00 p.m.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: KEY ISSUES AND EMERGING TRENDS IN GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CHINA'S POLITICAL ECONOMY IN THE GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Chris McNally
Fellow
EAST-WEST CENTER

Ying Liu
Senior Fellow
China Center for Comparative Politics and Economics

12: 00 – 1: 00 p.m.

LUNCH BREAK

Venue: CCTB Cafeteria

1: 00 – 2: 45 p.m.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: KEY ISSUES AND EMERGING TRENDS IN GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

URBANIZATION AND ITS IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Allen Clark
Senior Fellow
EAST-WEST CENTER

Zhen Lin
Associate Profess
Beijing University of Forestry

2: 45 – 3: 00 p.m.

BREAK

3: 00 – 4: 45 p.m.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

THE ROLE OF THE RULE OF LAW IN PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL STABILITY

Lawrence C. Foster, Professor
William S. Richardson School of Law
University of Hawaii

Daniel Fung
Chairman, Des Voeux Chambers
Hong Kong

Yong'an Liu
Senior Fellow
China Center for Party Politics

4: 45 – 5: 00 p.m.

SUMMARY OF DAY 1

TUESDAY, 26 May 2009

9: 00 a.m. – 1: 00 p.m.

WORKSHOP

Venue: CCCPE Seminar Room

9: 00 – 10: 45 a.m.

**PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: KEY ISSUES AND
EMERGING TRENDS IN GOVERNANCE FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

CIVIL SOCIETY ENAGAGEMENT IN GOVERNANCE

Shabbir Cheema,
Senior Fellow/ Director, AGDI
EAST-WEST CENTER

Songyan Chu
Associate Professor
National School of Administration

10: 45 – 11: 00 a.m.

BREAK

11: 00 a.m. – 12: 45 p.m.

**PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: KEY ISSUES AND
EMERGING TRENDS IN GOVERNANCE FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

*DECENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE FOR SERVICE
DELIVERY*

Gerard Finin,
Senior Fellow
EAST-WEST CENTER

Shabbir Cheema,
Senior Fellow
EAST-WEST CENTER

Mingxing Liu
Associate Professor
Peking University

12: 45 – 1: 00 p.m.

SUMMING UP and CLOSING