



CENTEC – Center for Environmental Technology

There are environmental cooperation activities between Sweden and China at many levels. The Swedish Embassy in Beijing actively pursues close cooperation with China in areas such as sustainable urban development, energy efficiency, urban transports and energy security. Together with the Swedish Trade Council and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the “Sustainable City” concept has been presented on a large scale in China. The experience and contribution of Chinese counterparts, the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), the Ministry of Construction, China Association of Mayors and provincial and local governments and business are highly constructive and appreciated.

In order to significantly increase the visibility of Swedish environmental policy and technology solutions in China, the Swedish government, through the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has decided to finance the new *Center for Environmental Technology* (CENTEC) in Beijing. CENTEC focuses on areas where Sweden and Swedish companies possess unique competence and where China is looking for solutions specifically in areas such as urban development, climate emission reduction, industrial pollution control, energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste-water treatment, water-supply, air monitoring, waste management, chemical control, urban transports and consultancy services. CENTEC will arrange high-level delegation visits in both directions, arrange seminars and workshops on relevant themes, participate in exhibitions, identify relevant demonstration projects and stitch together financial solutions. The budget for the three-year project phase is 6 million SEK. CENTEC will be a resource to Swedish agencies, organizations and business involved with environmental technological co operations in China. CENTEC will begin operation on 1 September 2007 and will have a staff of three professionals.

Environmental Challenges facing China

Premier Wen Jiabao addressing the Sixth National Environmental Protection Conference on April 17, 2006, explained that protecting the environment is of great concern for the long-term development of China and in developing a harmonious society. China is prioritizing the building of a resource-efficient and environment-friendly society. The efforts of the Chinese government so far deserves positive recognition but problems remain to be solved. Official Chinese sources state clearly that the environmental pollution is severe. One fifth of Chinese cities suffer from serious air pollution; one third of the land area is affected by acid rain; 3.56 million square kilometres experience soil erosion; 1.74 million square kilometres are in the process of desertification; more than 90 percent of natural grassland has degenerated and biodiversity has decreased. Environmental problems which developed countries have had more than 100 years to cope with, all occur in China at once. Recently and repeatedly China has expressed the desire to share in state-of-the-art knowledge and technology with developed economies.

The Swedish Experience

After World War II Sweden began to look more closely at the effects of industrial pollution, which initially were viewed as only local problems. In the 1960s and 1970s, when thousands of lakes and wide stretches of forest had already been damaged, Sweden became acutely aware that pollutants do not respect national boundaries. Measures to curb emissions from industries and incineration plants in Sweden were largely successful. The Swedish engagement in international environmental cooperation was here to stay, and the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was held in Sweden in 1972. At an early stage public private partnerships were formed, which combined a high level of technology with long experience. These partnerships became instrumental in developing the Swedish environmental technology sector, which today comprise more than 3 700 companies and has a turnover of around 102 billion SEK. One third of these companies are active exporters with an export volume of 24 billion SEK, almost 2 percent of the total Swedish export. Most Swedish environmental technology companies are SME:s.



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