WHAT IS THE UK-CHINA SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE (SDD)?

- A partnership between the UK and Chinese Governments to promote collaboration and good practice in sustainable development.
- A mechanism for fostering new alliances to promote mutual learning and understanding, and joint innovation and action on sustainable development involving civil society, the scientific community, business, and government.
- The SDD is managed by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in the UK and the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) in China. It is strongly cross-governmental, with nearly 20 UK and Chinese Ministries involved.

WHY DO WE NEED A DIALOGUE?

- With increasing economic and ecological interdependence, it is not possible for nations to address the challenge of sustainable development in isolation. The challenges are international and international collaboration is essential to share lessons and develop solutions. China’s environmental problems are global in scope. Every country therefore has a stake in improving China’s environment.
- The dialogue enables the UK an opportunity to share its expertise with China and learn from China’s work in sustainable development. The UK has rich experience in addressing the environmental dimensions of rapid economic and industrial transformation and urbanisation, which is relevant to China in its current economic development. At the same time the UK has much to gain in sharing the fruits of China’s growing innovation that can incorporate elements to address its developmental and environmental challenges.
- The top leadership of both countries have committed to this dialogue. At the 3rd SDD Ministerial Meeting in China in November 2008, the Chinese Vice-Minister to the NDRC, and the UK’s Minister for the Environment, committed to extending the SDD for a second phase to 2011.

Secretary of State Hilary Benn from DEFRA and NDRC Vice-Chairman Du Ying signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch the second phase of the Dialogue, in November 2008 in Beijing.
WHAT ARE SDD’S FOCAL INITIATIVES?

- Sustainable and innovative agriculture and fisheries
- Food security
- Forestry, domestic management and international trade
- Biodiversity
- Urban regeneration and low-income housing
- Sustainable planning and architecture
- Capacity building in chemicals management
- Industrial waste reduction and re-use
- Rural and farm waste management
- Sustainable development indicators
- Capacity building in sustainable development
- Economic tools for environmental management
- Water resources management

HOW DOES THE SDD WORK?

- Joint work plans set out specific objectives, activities, and deliverables under focal areas. Project working groups have been established to steer and drive collaboration on all areas.
- Ministerial and senior officials’ meetings take place at least once a year to review progress and agree future activities; working level meetings, workshops and technical exchanges take place routinely.
- Small amounts of funding for approved projects are available, including through an International Sustainable Development Fund (ISDF) mechanism, to underpin the delivery of the joint work plan objectives.

For full details of activities, see the separate SDD Actions and Achievements and latest SDD update.

“China is striving to embark on a new path to industrialization that features low consumption of resources, low emissions, high efficiency and high output, and this is an integral part of international efforts to protect the environment, address climate change and achieve sustainable development.”

– Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao

For more information please visit http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Where-we-work/Asia-East--Pacific/China/China-sustainable-development-/ or contact:

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