



LOW EMISSIONS CITIES ALLIANCE

China and its cities are the world's largest emitters of CO₂ – dramatically warming the planet while creating and trapping ground-level smog-inducing ozone, noxious gases, and fine particles we breathe as air pollution. As such, China's role in reducing global warming and air pollution, one of the world's largest environmental health risks, is critical. These emissions have a direct relationship to the health and safety of the region and beyond, as they reach as far as the Western United States. Air pollution is one of the largest contributors of non-communicable disease and death, attributed to 7 million annual deaths globally, 4 million in Asia, and 1.6 million in China alone. Reducing CO₂ and air pollutants will prevent disease and save lives. China has made strides to promote low emissions development, but cities lack the skills, tools, and models to design and implement low emissions development and drive deep reductions in emission and air pollution.

China also has the largest demand for infrastructure, representing \$28 trillion in investment by 2040, which could severely heighten, not reduce, pollution and major global environmental hazards. To address both challenges, the Chinese government has committed to a major initiative to “peak” CO₂ emissions by 2030 or earlier. This will accelerate much-needed improvements to air quality as well as incentivize low-emission infrastructure development, the benefits of which will be felt globally.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The Low Emissions Cities Alliance (LECA) activity is a \$10 million partnership funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Energy Foundation China and implemented by the Institute for Sustainable Communities. Working with stakeholders in the public and private sectors to build cities' capacity, the three-year program will help 13 selected partner cities to significantly accelerate emissions reductions and turn China's commitment into action – with a life-of-award reduction target of 30 million MTCDE and air quality improvements and a total projected reduction of 50-100 million MTCDE.

Illustrative activities include:

- Climate Action Planning, including GHG inventories and emissions forecasting;
- Green building, near-zero and low carbon solutions for the built environment;
- Renewable energy utilization and low emissions technology;

- Green transportation and co-control of air pollution and carbon emissions;
- Sustainable land use; and
- Green finance, including green bonds and public-private partnerships.

The activity will accelerate emissions reductions more broadly throughout China by creating a network of Chinese trainers and supporting the expansion of national-level policies and regulations that draw on best practices. Capacity building and policy support will be customized to participating cities' priorities.

ALIGNING LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

Alliance interventions occur at and with the highest areas of commercial potential in critical sectors of energy generation, transport, waste, building, and industrial production. Rapidly enabling this energy transition requires open market-based approaches, especially where domestic solution gaps exist. The Alliance works to activate domestic resource mobilization and low-emissions market linkages to address partner city needs for low-carbon solutions and services. Alliance cities represent inroads into a huge addressable market, that the U.S., as the largest exporter of low-carbon goods and services, can offer mature market solutions to fulfill China's development needs for a low emissions pathway that benefits everyone.

DRIVING SOLUTIONS THROUGH CITY EXCHANGE

LECA will include city exchanges between China and the United States. Exchanges allow cities from both countries to share strategies and approaches to shared challenges. In addition, the activity will provide market opportunities for U.S. businesses, particularly in energy and technology sectors. As select Chinese cities implement their early peaking strategies, mutual benefits will result from engagement with U.S. companies that offer relevant technologies and services addressing urban priorities.

PARTNERS:

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) has worked in Asia since 1996 and in China since 2006, engaging with stakeholders in government, industry, academia and local communities to reduce GHG emissions, improve environmental health, advance resource efficiency and support environmental governance.

The Energy Foundation China (EFC) is a grant-making private foundation that is part of the U.S.-based Energy Foundation and that is dedicated to China's sustainable energy development. Since 1999, EFC has worked to support China's transition to clean energy sources.

Other partners: American Chamber of Commerce, China's National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation, the U.S.-China Energy Cooperation Program and the Energy Research Institute.

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