

Building China into Maritime Powerhouse

Policy

By CHEN Chunyou

With a coastline stretching almost 32,000 km, China's future will forever be linked to the ocean. It is therefore inevitable that building China into a strong maritime country is a major strategic task for realizing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

According to the report delivered to the 20th CPC National Congress, China will develop its maritime economy, protect the marine ecological environment, and step up efforts to build itself into a maritime powerhouse.

The marine economy is seen as the key to building strength in the marine sector, and is important for overall national economic growth. Emerging marine industries, such as seawater desalination, marine energy, and marine biopharmaceuticals have all seen rapid growth.

According to data from the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), China's gross ocean product reached nine trillion RMB in 2021, up 8.3 percent year-on-year, contributing eight percent of the country's GDP expansion. This was a big boost to confidence in the development of the marine economy.



An aerial view of the Sanggouwan marine pasture in Rongcheng city, Shandong province. (PHOTO: VCG)

To promote high-quality growth of China's marine sector in the new era, much work remains to be done.

Monitoring oceans is vital for Earth's survival, and satellites are the primary means of long-term and independent observation of vast oceans and their associated coastal zones. According to Lin Mingsen, director of the National Satellite Ocean Application Service under MNR, the ability of ocean-observing satellite systems should be

strengthened, so as to get precise data, which can help contribute to marine disaster prevention and mitigation.

Lin also stressed advancing the integration of AI, big data and other frontier technologies with satellite remote sensing applications, to roll out high-performance observation and exploitation technologies.

The ocean has abundant renewable energy sources, which can be captured and transformed into clean electricity.

Wu Changbin, office director at China Ocean Mineral Resources R&D Association under MNR, said the exploration and research of deep-sea mineral resources should be strengthened, while enhancing the ability to evaluate resource and environmental carrying capacity in mining areas.

Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems is essential to the renewable development of ocean resources, which is also a requirement of green development, said Li Tiegang, director general of the First Institute of Oceanography (FIO) under MNR. He calls for exploring new technologies to prevent pollution in the basin, estuary and offshore waters, and establishing a comprehensive monitoring and management system for coastal zones, islands, and natural protected areas.

As China embarks on its journey towards its second centenary goal, the maritime community with a shared future proposed by China is expected to enter a new stage.

Centering on global frontiers in marine science, FIO will engage in the global innovation network, and initiate leading international marine research programs and cooperation projects, contributing Chinese wisdom to the development of global maritime affairs and the building of a maritime community with a shared future, said Li.

Making Rural Areas More Tech Savvy

By ZHONG Jianli

Rural vitalization and development have been among China's top priorities over the years. The No.1 Central Document for 2023, recently released in Beijing, outlines major tasks to "comprehensively push" rural vitalization, including offering more technological support for farmers.

The document stressed a number of projects to drive rural vitalization, such as strengthening agricultural infrastructure construction, consolidating the support of agricultural science, technology and equipment, and building beautiful and harmonious rural areas.

"This is the 20th No.1 Central Document this century that has focused on agriculture, rural areas, and farmers, which highlighted the government's emphasis on rural development. The main messages of the document can be summarized as securing bottom lines, bolstering vitalization efforts, and reinforcing support," said Tang Renjian, minister of agriculture and rural affairs at a recent press conference.

Experts noted that the document shows the country's emphasis on modernizing agriculture and rural areas, which is also indicated in the report to the 20th CPC National Congress. That report said that, "The most challenging and arduous tasks we face in building a

modern socialist China in all respects remain in our rural areas."

To secure the stable production and adequate supply of grain and other important agricultural products, the document underlined efforts to keep annual grain production over 650 billion kilograms, expand the acreage of soybeans and oil crops, and develop modern protected agriculture.

Another highlight of the document is that China will endeavor to build an agricultural science and technology innovation system with clear tier, division of labor and cooperation, and moderate competition, to accelerate breakthroughs in cutting-edge technologies.

It says the country will support the building of national laboratories, manufacturing innovation centers and other platforms in the agricultural field, strengthen the construction of long-term observation and experiment stations for agriculture, and improve the support mechanism for basic research on agricultural science and technology.

In addition, to develop green agriculture, the document calls for establishing a sound collection, utilization and treatment system for agricultural waste, developing a monitoring system for agricultural ecological environment protection, and preventing the illegal introduction of alien and invasive species.

SOE-run Medical Institutions Gain New Momentum

By CHEN Chunyou

Medical institutions run by state-owned enterprises are becoming an important part of China's healthcare service system.

In order to boost their development and allow them to play an active role in the Healthy China Initiative, an action plan was released by the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission and 12 other departments.

Historically, these medical institutions are scattered around the enterprises' projects or in remote areas. They spe-

cialized in one or two fields and were short of comprehensive services, as well as being less competitive when compared with their counterparts.

According to the action plan, they will be treated the same as government-funded hospitals, and will receive support in purchasing large medical facilities.

As a complement to the government-funded hospitals, SOE-run medical institutions are expected to provide basic medical services, and offer diagnosis and treatment for acute critical diseases, while offering help in emergency

medical rescue and foreign aid, as well as serving rural and border areas.

In addition, these SOE-run medical institutions are encouraged to cooperate with overseas hospitals, research institutes, universities, and pharmaceutical enterprises, so as to promote medical technology innovation, and the commercialization of research achievements.

In recent years, China has attached great importance to the reform of medical institutions.

In 2021, a plan for high-quality development of public hospitals between

2021-2025 was released, which proposed establishing a high-level public hospital network. In areas with weak and scattered medical resources, it is an option to intensify local medical strength and establish a medical network through SOE-run medical institutions.

Likewise, in this action plan, eligible medical institutions are supported in establishing medical alliances, so as to make full use of their resource advantages and sharpen respective strengths, before integrating into the local medical system and better serving local development.

By LI Linxu

As part of its efforts to strengthen intellectual property rights (IPR) protection, China is leveraging the role of national IPR protection centers to provide one-stop services.

In 2022, China approved the construction of 10 national IPR protection centers and fast IPR service centers, responsible for offering fast and coordinated IPR protection focusing on industries such as advanced manufacturing, new materials, smart manufacturing and pharmaceuticals.

To date, a total of 97 national IPR protection centers and fast IPR service centers have been set up in China. Of particular note is that a large proportion of the newly approved centers are based in the central and western regions.

Yangtze Optical Fibre and Cable Ltd. is one of the beneficiaries of this IPR initiative. The company has recently applied for and successfully been awarded three patents within one month.

In the past, the process usually took one to two years. The significant

time saving has helped the company successfully land a contract worth 40 million RMB.

The markedly improved efficiency can be credited to China (Wuhan) Intellectual Property Protection Center, which has provided a precise one-stop service for the company.

In recent years, China has rolled out a series of IPR protection policies and measures to beef up IPR protection, to better serve the country's high-quality development and spur innovation.

National IPR protection centers are important to achieve fast and coordinated protection of IPR, said an official from the National Intellectual Property Administration (NIPA), adding that these centers can provide integrated IPR protection services for both domestic and foreign market entities, such as quick IPR pre-examination, verification and enforcement.

These IPR protection centers and fast IPR service centers vowed to treat domestic and foreign entities equally and offer the same standard IPR protection service, according to NIPA.

Demo Counties for Economic & Intensive Use of Natural Resources Released

By LI Linxu

In its latest push to promote high-quality development, China has released the first batch of national demonstration counties for economic and intensive use of natural resources.

A total of 258 counties or cities were selected from 373 applicants, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

The successful applicants can be further divided into three categories, with 183 for land resources, 57 for mineral resources and 18 for marine resources.

Hebei province, Henan province, Shandong province, Hunan province, and Jiangsu province are among the top performers in the number of successful applicants.

Zhangjiagang, a county-level city of Jiangsu province, is one such model city in land use. While actively optimizing the layout of industrial land, the city

has rolled out differentiated tax, water and electricity measures for industrial projects and enterprises, in line with their assessment results in economic and intensive use of resources.

The construction of national demonstration counties is a follow-up measure in the implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan for Natural Resources Protection and Utilization, said an official from MNR.

These counties or cities are tasked with promoting green and low-carbon ways of production and life, so as to set benchmarks in the economic and intensive utilization of land, mineral and marine resources for their counterparts.

Of particular note is that in the 20th CPC National Congress report, China vowed to implement a comprehensive conservation strategy, conserve resources of all types and use them efficiently.

Meanwhile, the report also pledges

to boost green and low-carbon industries and improve the system for market-based allocation of resources and environmental factors.



Zhangjiagang's Jinghu Lake Ecological Park. (PHOTO: VCG)

Focusing on the economic and intensive use of natural resources, innovative practices will be encouraged in these counties, according to MNR.

Xuntian Telescope to Survey Space

From page 1

Li Ran, researcher at National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said that 30 detectors are installed in the Xuntian module, with a total of 2.5 billion pixels. Filters on 18 detectors could capture images of

heavenly bodies at different bands, and the other 12 detectors are used to conduct slitless spectrographs, with each exposure acquiring the spectral information of at least 1,000 heavenly bodies. During the survey period, the Xuntian module will cover 40 percent of the en-

tire sky and collect high-quality data of nearly two billion galaxies.

CSST is also good at detailed observation, and the other four modules of the optical facility part are all used for that purpose. Specific observation, like extra-solar planet probes,

will be conducted.

The China Space Station Tiangong will act as the home port of CSST, but the telescope will fly independently in the same orbit as the space station, and keep a significant distance from it during its normal observations. When CSST needs supply or maintenance, it will dock with the space station, which not only guarantees its normal operation in its ten-year lifetime, but also extends its in-orbit service time.

Digital Technology Reshaping Future Education

From page 1

On March 28, 2022, the national employment service platform for college students was launched, providing a wealth of policies, job information and guidance services. In 2022, more than 13.7 million jobs were presented on the platform, helping 31.6 percent of college graduates find jobs, a 7.6 percent increase over 2021.

Urgent need of the post-pandemic world

Thanks to the wide coverage of Internet infrastructure and digital platform and resources, effective distance learning solutions have allowed Chinese teachers, students and policymakers to continue with the national lesson plans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, countries without necessary ICT infrastructure and well-resourced digital learning systems suffered the greatest education disruptions and learning losses. This situation left as many as one-third of students around the world without access to learning dur-

ing the school closures for more than a year, according to UNESCO.

Education transformation is urgently needed, and the power of digital transformation must be fully harnessed to ensure that quality education and lifelong learning are made available to all as a common good.

The World Digital Education Conference, recently held in Beijing, called for the international community to strengthen dialogue and exchanges, deepen practical cooperation and work together to promote the digital transformation of education and the realization of Education 2030 Agenda.

At the conference, the World Digital Education Alliance was initiated jointly by the Chinese government, universities, institutes and enterprise, under the auspices of international and regional organizations, including the UNESCO. The alliance is open to all stakeholders around the world to promote the sharing of digital education resources, strengthen interconnection and tackle challenges.