

More Global Efforts to Enrich Scientific Perspective

Dialogue

By Staff Reporters

Norwegian biologist Nils Stenseth, a professor at the University of Oslo, straddles the scientific communities of different countries, proving that science has no border. Formerly president of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, he is also a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the U.S. National Academy of Sciences.

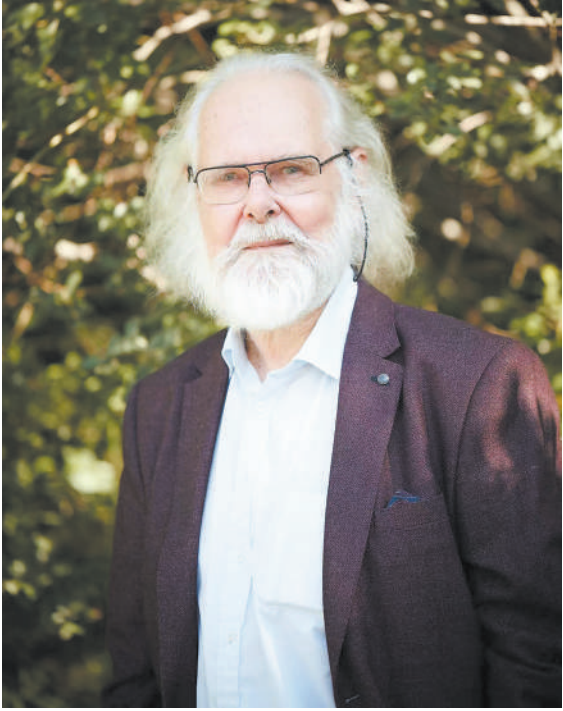
His research spans a wide range of topics, including the ecological effects of climate change, population dynamics theory, and spatiotemporal models of disease. His work has significantly influenced the understanding of evolutionary biology, particularly studies like the "Red Queen Hypothesis", a hypothesis in evolutionary biology proposed in 1973 that says a species must adapt and evolve for survival because its competing organisms also are evolving.

In 2019, the 76-year-old received China's International Science and Technology Cooperation Award and the Chinese Government Friendship Award, two honors presented to those who have made great contributions to global sci-tech exchanges.

Collaboration with China

Since his first visit to China in 1982, four years after China's historic reform and opening-up policy had started, Stenseth has collaborated closely with institutions like CAS, Tsinghua University and Beijing Normal University. Through these collaborations, he has witnessed the high level of expertise of Chinese researchers, professors and students, who have also contributed to his own research. China today surpasses the U.S. in the volume of the high-impact research papers it publishes, demonstrating the rapid progress of its scientific community.

Stenseth's partnership with China has led to numerous findings that have enriched his own research. For instance, his ongoing historical study of



Professor Nils Stenseth. (COURTESY PHOTO)

plague dynamics draws on China's precise historical data.

Despite some negative views towards Chinese scientists in the West, Stenseth regards cooperation with China as a win-win scenario. "Chinese scientists approach scientific questions differently from Western scientists. Combining these two distinct ways of thinking not only enriches our scientific perspective but also yields more fruitful research outcomes," he said.

Formative influences

What triggered his interest in biology? Growing up near a farm, he had ample opportunities to interact with animals and nature, which sparked his initial interest. Then his high school teacher, seeing his interest in both biology and mathematics, advised him to study mathematics first before delving into biology. Following the advice, Stenseth developed a robust interdisciplinary background in statistics, biology and zoology, which has

played a crucial role in his career development.

In the 1980s he went to Africa to do fieldwork, which left an indelible mark on him, particularly his time in Ethiopia, where he observed wildlife in their natural habitats. There, Stenseth and his team identified a new species of wolf that was previously misclassified as a jackal.

During his time in Africa, he also encountered some harrowing moments. For instance, while camping in the wilds of Kenya with his wife, they heard the roar of lions outside their tent. "At that moment, we were very close to the lions, and it felt like our lives were hanging by a thread. Fortunately, we left from the encounter unharmed. These experiences have deepened my respect and love for nature," Stenseth said.

An urgent challenge

Stenseth is keenly concerned about climate change and its influence on ecosystems. From his perspective, the increasing frequency of extreme weather events signals significant environmental changes that could lead to the collapse of the ecosystem.

However, there are some positive developments too. The younger generations have become more aware of the severity of climate change and are influencing the older generations to adopt greener practices. He emphasizes that global efforts must be scaled up to address this challenge urgently.

Regarding China's performance in combating climate change, Stenseth commends the clear carbon peaking and neutrality goals, as well as the efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, especially in addressing agricultural carbon emissions.

He also notes the Chinese government's resolve and commitment. Also, he says the communication channels between policymakers and scholars in China are relatively smooth, which makes China better equipped than many other countries to take effective action against climate change.

This article was edited based on the original version written by ZHANG Xinxin from Cover News based in Chengdu, Sichuan province.

My China Story

Stories Behind the Smile

By Hector Gomez Pinos

In 2016, while visiting the ancient Jianshan Mountain in Chongqing, I took a photo that seems to tell a story beyond its time. The photograph shows a local farmer in the rugged countryside smiling, and that smile says so much about how resilient, hopeful, and hardworking Chinese people are. It was such a touching moment that I had to capture it with my camera. This photo not only shows what life is like in rural China, but also has a special meaning for me.

My wife also comes from a modest village family in China, which has given me an intimate understanding of what this farmer's smile represents. Over the years, the lives of farmers in China have seen significant improvements, both materially and spiritually, bringing joy and hope that are evident in their expressions. The photograph shows China's efforts in eradicating extreme poverty and building a moderately prosperous society — a nation filled with confidence and aspirations for the future.

Beyond the lens, my journey in China is interwoven with academic pursuits and real-life experiences. China, as the largest economy in Asia, has always been central to my research interests. My fascination with its history, politics, and culture grew from textbooks and online resources into a compelling force that brought me here to study, live and work.

The initial years were full of curiosity and discovery. Each step I took allowed me to measure the vastness of China's geography that I had once studied in classrooms. Every scene verified the words read in books and from the internet. Witnessing firsthand the rapid development across all sectors, including online shopping coupled with efficient logistics, electronic payments, sharing economy and 5G technology, along with the eradication of absolute poverty, the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System, and space exploration, has helped enrich my comprehensive understanding of China.

A Chinese idiom goes, "Travel ten thousand miles, read ten thousand books." It emphasizes that true knowledge of a country comes from combining systematic theoretical studies with



Hector Gomez Pinos. (COURTESY PHOTO)

ample practical experience.

Since joining China Global Television Network (CGTN) in 2022, my work has provided me with an authoritative and macro perspective on China's all-around development. In March 2024, I hosted two episodes of the *New Observations* series in Spanish, focusing on the topic of whole-process people's democracy and human rights.

Through these programs, I shared my personal experiences of how people's lives and social economic development are comprehensively and effectively protected under such a democratic system, showcasing China's commitment to high-quality economic growth and the fulfillment of people's needs in various aspects of social and economic life.

In October 2024, I contributed to the special program *Marching Towards a New Chapter*, celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. During this process, I gained a closer insight into China and its efforts in protecting people's human rights.

My work has not only shaped my own observations and thoughts on China's development but also served as a bridge to convey China's voice and showcase its image to the international community.

The author is a Spanish expert at CGTN.

Man-made Sun Helps Meet Energy Needs

Science Outreach

By Staff Reporters

The International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) is an international nuclear fusion research and engineering megaproject, aimed at producing energy through a fusion process similar to that of the sun.

It is currently being built adjacent to the Cadarache facility in southern France. Upon completion of construction of the main reactor and first plas-

ma, scheduled for 2033-2034, ITER is set to be the largest of more than 100 fusion reactors built since the 1950s.

Fusion aims to mimic the process that occurs in stars, where the intense heat at the core fuses atomic nuclei together to produce large amounts of energy in the form of heat and light. Harnessing the power of fusion under terrestrial conditions, would provide enough energy to meet growing demand of an increasing number of people in the world in a sustainable way, and will have relatively little impact on the environment. One gram of deuterium-tritium fuel mixture in the process of nuclear fusion produces 90,000 kilowatt-hours of energy, or the equivalent

of energy produced burning 11 tons of coal.

Nuclear fusion uses a different approach to traditional nuclear power. Current nuclear power plants rely on nuclear fission, in which the nucleus of an atom is split to release energy. Nuclear fusion takes multiple nuclei and uses intense heat to fuse them together, a process that also releases energy.

Fusion has many potential attractions. The fuel is relatively abundant or can be produced in a fusion reactor. After preliminary tests with deuterium, ITER will use a mixture of deuterium and tritium for its fusion because of the high energy potential of the combi-

nation.

The first isotope, deuterium, can be extracted from seawater, where it is an almost inexhaustible resource, while the second isotope, tritium, occurs only in trace amounts in nature, and the estimated world supply (produced mainly by heavy water CANDU fission reactors) is only 20 kilograms per year, insufficient for power plants.

In addition, a fusion reactor would produce virtually no CO₂ emissions or air pollutants, there would be no chance of a meltdown, and its radioactive waste products would be mostly very short-lived compared to those produced by conventional nuclear reactors (fission reactors).

Celebrating Spring Festival

Expats Activity

By WANG Pengwei & LONG Yun

The 2025 Shandong Foreign Experts Spring Festival Gala held in Jinan, Shandong province in east China, brought together 88 foreign experts



A Chinese artist and a foreign expert discuss the technique of Chinese paper-cutting. (COURTESY PHOTO)

from 24 countries, including the U.S., Japan and Germany, and their families to celebrate the festive spirit and the contributions these experts have made to Shandong's innovation landscape. The event was hosted by the Shandong provincial department of Science and Technology. Zhu Enyuan, deputy director of the department, expressed deep appreciation for the support foreign experts

have provided to advance Shandong's development.

Chong Chern Han, an entrepreneur from Malaysia, has made Jinan his home. Reflecting on his journey, Chong shared how the province's warmth and hospitality made him decide to stay and start his business.

"Shandong is not only the home of Confucius and Mencius, but also a place where cultural depth meets an open-minded spirit," he said. "The people of Shandong are warm and genuine, and I have been deeply influenced by the Confucian philosophy that 'harmony is precious.' This mindset has taught me to prioritize cooperation over competition in my entrepreneurial journey, earning the trust of clients and forming a global network of partners."

Chong emphasized that while individual expertise is important, true success comes from working within a passionate and positive team. "Shandong has nurtured both my personal and team potential," he said, highlighting the strong support from both the govern-

ment and the community. "This collaborative model has enabled me to reach my full potential, benefiting not only myself but also my business, my team, and Shandong as a whole."

The evening's cultural exchange was a celebration of Shandong's diversity and the fusion of traditions from around the world. The guests played the violin, sang and performed traditional dances, and there were also mesmerizing performances of Chinese acrobatics, Peking opera, and the art of face-changing.

Besides, the participants experienced hands-on activities such as calligraphy, paper-cutting, and sugar painting, which made them appreciate China's cultural heritage.

The event showed the harmony and mutual respect between Shandong and its international partners, and the province's welcoming atmosphere, where cultures converge and thrive together.

This is an edited version of the original article from the Shandong Provincial Science and Technology Department.

Photo News

Welcome Chinese Lunar New Year



Overseas students in Chongqing experience traditional Chinese folk art such as paper-cutting, sugar painting and gourd carving, January 7. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

