

Action Plan to Unlock Consumption Potential

Policy Express

By LIANG Yilian

China has unveiled a 19-point action plan to upgrade its consumer goods sector, aiming to cultivate trillion-RMB consumption markets and strengthen the role of consumption in driving economic growth.

According to the plan released on November 26 by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) and five other government departments, by 2027 the supply structure of consumer goods should be significantly optimized.

Under the plan, three trillion-RMB consumption sectors — elderly care products, intelligent connected vehicles and consumer electronics — will be formed by 2027. Also, 10 consumption hotspots will be nurtured, each valued at over 100 billion RMB.

The plan also targets creating globally recognized, culturally rich, high-quality Chinese consumer brands. By 2030, a high-quality development pattern marked by virtuous interaction between supply and demand should take shape, with consumption contributing more steadily to economic expansion.

Central to the plan is the idea of "adaptation," meaning that producers should proactively respond to evolving consumer trends, beginning with product design. The goal is to achieve dynamic alignment between supply and demand in terms of quality, structure,



A visitor experienced a home hyperoxic chamber suitable for the middle-aged and elderly at the exhibition area of the China International Import Expo. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

and utility.

"What people want and like should guide and encourage enterprises to think, innovate, and produce accordingly," Xie Yuansheng, vice-minister of MIIT, said at a press conference. "This ensures consumers can access satisfying products and attentive services, while enterprises can offer goods that match market needs and realize value through quality."

The action plan outlines key tasks across five major areas:

- Expanding new supply by accelerating the application of new technologies and business models, including nurturing emerging industries, advancing responsive manufacturing, and

deepening the integration of AI.

- Tapping into the existing potential by increasing the supply of distinctive and next-generation products, promoting greener goods, upgrading rural consumer goods and developing leisure and sports products. It also seeks to advance health-related innovations, revitalize classic Chinese brands, and expand supply for interest-driven consumption.
- Targeting segmented markets with greater precision, such as enriching products for infants and children, improving the supply of quality student goods, expanding fashion-oriented "trend" products, and optimizing elderly-friendly offerings.
- Promoting new scenarios and

business formats, including encouraging the launch of first-edition products, advancing platform-based consumption, and supporting the orderly growth of shared consumption.

- Creating a sound business environment through stronger fiscal and financial support, themed promotional activities, and improved market regulation.

There is particular focus on accelerating the use of AI in consumer goods. AI integration will be advanced through both product innovation and scenario development, according to He Yaqiong, director of MIIT's consumer goods industry department.

As of June 30, China had 515 million generative AI users.

Yang Nie, deputy director-general of the Ministry of Commerce's department of market operation and consumption promotion, said the ministry will promote pilot reforms in automobile circulation, expand the used-car market, and broaden the auto aftermarket.

Efforts will also focus on expanding appliance and home furnishing consumption, especially products that are green and smart.

The MIIT will work to publicize and implement the plan, strengthen coordination, and guide local governments and industry associations in carrying out the measures. The goal is to continuously foster new products, new consumption scenarios, and new consumption hotspots, further unlocking China's consumption potential.



Yunnan Strengthens Innovation Links with South, Southeast Asia

By LIN Yuchen & ZHAO Hanbin

Yunnan province in southwest China has significantly expanded its international science and technology cooperation over the past five years, leveraging its border location to deepen exchanges with South and Southeast Asian countries.

At a recent press briefing, provincial officials highlighted that Yunnan's

technology-driven openness has reached a new stage during the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025), with its influence across neighboring regions continuing to rise. Through platform-building, talent exchanges, and shared research, the province has strengthened technological linkages that now serve as an engine for broader regional collaboration.

One flagship achievement is a joint

laboratory for the study of renewable energy co-established by China's Yunnan Normal University and Laos' Renewable Energy and New Material Research Institute. The laboratory has made notable progress in solar energy applications, new materials research, talent training, and technology dissemination.

Yunnan's cross-border cooperation with Vietnam has also deepened, particularly in agricultural technology. A high-quality feed research center established in recent years has evolved into one of central Vietnam's largest enterprises in the swine industry, demonstrating how technological collaboration can translate into industrial growth.

Over the past five years, Yunnan has elevated its cooperation architecture by establishing stable partnerships with multiple countries. The province has built 140 international joint laboratories and R&D centers, 10 overseas demonstration parks, and 14 national-level international cooperation bases, forming a

comprehensive network of scientific collaboration.

The Tengchong Scientists Forum has attracted global researchers. Events such as the China-South Asia Technology Transfer and Collaborative Innovation have drawn participants from diverse countries.

Talent programs have further strengthened regional scientific capacity. Nearly 200 young scientists from South and Southeast Asia have conducted research or entrepreneurship activities in Yunnan, particularly in biology and agriculture.

The province has also hosted 27 technical training programs for developing countries, training more than 7,000 professionals, and becoming a hallmark of Lancang-Mekong human-resource cooperation.

To date, these efforts have yielded 110 new crop varieties, introduced 128 advanced technologies, and exported 65 suitable technologies abroad.

enables real-time synchronous collection of multi-source heterogeneous data," Yao said, adding that each task is also assigned a "timestamp" to pinpoint the equipment data associated with every task via search by time.

Currently, the dynamic testing system supports the collection, storage, computation, management and application of comprehensive shipboard data, along with seamless ship-shore data connectivity. It facilitates testing, validation, analysis and evaluation of various intelligent devices and systems.

Next, "Future" will continue pilot testing of intelligent medium-speed engines, intelligent steering gear, navigation radars and other tested equipment systems. It will provide data support for product iteration and upgrades, advancing the intelligent transformation and green development of the shipbuilding industry, said Zhang Haihua, director of the Lianyungang center of Taihu Laboratory of Deep Sea Technology Science.

Case Study

Huaibei Normal University Volunteers Engage in Rural Revitalization

By CHU Changsheng & LI Linxu

In the rural areas of Anhui province in east China, a dedicated group of student volunteers from Huaibei Normal University are making an impact on rural development.

For over 12 years, the Xiao Yu Di (literally meaning "Little Raindrop") volunteer team from the School of Foreign Studies has been a dynamic force in supporting rural education. Their consistent efforts have not only nurtured rural children's growth but also contributed to the broader cause of rural revitalization.

A 12-year commitment to rural service

Since its inception, the Xiao Yu Di program has grown into a cornerstone of the university's social responsibility initiatives. Its footprint has spread across three provinces, with over 800 student volunteers participating in a relay of dedicated service. They have delivered more than 3,000 teaching sessions for youngsters, many of whom are "left-behind" children in rural areas, whose parents work away in cities.

Daxu, a village in Anhui, sent a heartfelt thank-you letter to the team in this August, commending the volunteers for their outstanding contribution to rural education and revitalization.

This summer, six members of the Xiao Yu Di team went to Daxu. They not only meticulously planned summer classes for teenagers, offering academic tutoring and interest development courses, but also conducted field research on key issues of rural revitalization, such as industrial development and cultural inheritance.

They went to the fields and villagers' homes, and the direct engagement enabled them to use their professional skills to serve the countryside, connecting educational empowerment with the broader goal of rural development.

A two-way journey of growth

The Xiao Yu Di program embodies the principle of "serving society and educating through practice."

To spark children's curiosity about science, the team runs interactive sessions that demystify the world of natural phenomena. They also place a strong emphasis on cultural heritage, introducing pupils to the charm of intangible cultural heritage like Chinese paper cutting, and on safety education, covering critical topics such as water safety.

While the primary goal is to support rural children, the university students themselves undergo significant growth. They learn to adapt to challenging conditions, develop problem-solving skills, and gain a deeper understanding of their social responsibility. This experience becomes a valuable asset in their personal and professional lives, with many former volunteers excelling in their careers.

Following Xiao Yu Di's founding oath, "I wish to be a little raindrop, sprinkling sweet dew on the fields of hope," these young volunteers' sustained efforts prove that with dedication, it is not just possible to nurture profound change in rural education and revitalization, but it is already happening.

In the next five years, the program vows to train over 1,000 primary and middle school students and 500 volunteers, further bridging education and rural revitalization through action.



A member of Xiao Yu Di team from Huaibei Normal University conducts summer volunteer teaching activities at the Nishui Central Primary School in Qianshan city, Anhui province. (COURTESY PHOTO)

Promoting Embodied AI Tech and Context Application

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In addition, more than 20 embodied AI enterprises presented their products on site, including an integrated physiotherapy bed and an AI-powered traditional Chinese medicine diagnosis robot.

Xing Huaibin, director of the New Quality Productive Forces Promotion Center, said AI has become a crucial engine driving the development of new quality productive forces. Embodied AI, an important frontier direction, has realized deep integration of cognitive intelligence and physical entities. It is rapidly transitioning from laboratory research to industrial implementation, demonstrating robust development momentum and broad application prospects.

In the future, the center will continue to track and collect cutting-edge technological information, strengthen analysis and assessment of the commercialization and application of frontier technological achievements, and conduct precise matching between supply of sci-tech achievements and demand for innovation. It will accelerate the efficient

commercialization and application of sci-tech achievements.

Wang Junming, member of the editorial board of *Science and Technology Daily* and president of *Context Innovation* magazine, said the key to context-driven development of embodied AI lies in advancing it from "laboratory technology" to "scalable application."

Embodied AI's "perception-decision-action" capability can optimize resource allocation through real-time data, and transform "contexts" into hubs connecting technology and industry. With onsite verification, data feedback, model iteration and scalable service, it can drive continuous emergence of new productive forces, Wang said.

The conference aligned with the requirements outlined in the guidelines released by the General Office of the State Council in November on accelerating scenario cultivation and opening up and promoting large-scale application of new scenarios.

It built a bridge between technologies and applications, and fostered a shared vision for the industry's development.

'Future' Drives Deep-Sea Exploitation Green Progress

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It will also be more efficient for researchers to operate equipment for underwater observation, sampling and special operations.

Still, getting a submersible into the sea steadily via the moon pool was a challenge.

A researcher proposed securing the submersible inside the operation compartment, laying tracks from the fore cover plate of the moon pool, connecting them to the compartment's clamping device, and allowing the submersible to travel along the tracks like an elevator, directly to the ship's bottom.

This idea was impressive, but precise validation was required. For the next several months, the research team continuously improved the design of the moon pool lifting system, cover plates, tracks and clamping devices, and rein-

forced the moon pool structure.

The construction team meticulously refined their techniques, ultimately controlling the straightness deviation of the two tracks to within one millimeter, enabling the operation compartment to descend smoothly and unimpeded to the seabed.

Widely applicable testing and validation

As a pilot test platform, "Future" is equipped with more than 8,000 data collecting points to monitor the situation of equipment and sense the changes of surrounding environments.

Then a challenge occurred: How can a scientific, rational and efficient method be established for conducting real-vessel testing and validation of smart devices and systems from different manufacturers and with varying functionalities?

On the one hand, the researchers went through the technical specification formulated by the International Organization for Standardization and International Electrotechnical Commission and requirements by large classification societies, according to Yao Fengxiang, engineer for the development of dynamic testing systems of "Future".

On the other hand, Yao said, they clarified the function boundaries, performance index and test demands of smart equipment with equipment manufacturers and research institutes respectively. Test plans were formulated and an evaluation index system established subsequently.

The key challenge was how to efficiently collect the operation data of the tested equipment and systems.

"We developed a distributed intelligent data acquisition architecture that